

Transcultural Roots Uprising

The Rhizomatic Languages, Literatures,
and Cultures of the Caribbean

Edited by
Nicholas Faraclas
Ronald Severing
Christa Weijer
Elisabeth Ehteld
Marsha Hinds-Layne



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This book, *Transcultural Roots Uprising: The Rhizomatic Languages, Literatures, and Cultures of the Caribbean*, is a collection of articles that present a critical perspective on the languages, literatures, and cultures of the Greater Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora. The volume incorporates invited papers as well as presentations made to the 15th annual Eastern Caribbean Islands Cultures Conference which was held in St. Thomas from 7 to 11 November 2012 in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the University of the Virgin Islands. The contributing authors include a wide range of voices old and new from the Caribbean and beyond.

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The Rhizomatic Languages, Literatures, and Cultures of the Caribbean

Proceedings of the ECICC-conference
Grenada 2012

Volume 2

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UNIVERSITY OF THE
NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

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Acknowledgements

The two publications: *Transcultural Roots Uprising The Rhizomatic Languages, Literatures, and Cultures of the Caribbean*, together with, contain a collection of articles that present a critical perspective on the languages, literatures, and cultures of the Greater Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora. The volumes incorporate invited papers as well as presentations made to the 15th annual Eastern Caribbean Islands Cultures Conference which was held in St. Thomas from 7 to 11 November 2012 in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the University of the Virgin Islands . The contributing authors include a wide range of voices old and new from the Caribbean and beyond.

This book forms part of a two volume set, with one volume focusing on the ABC-Islands (Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao) and other parts of the Caribbean which were colonized by the Netherlands and this volume focusing on the other parts of the Caribbean. Together, these volumes provide a platform for researchers and other cultural workers whose work treats the islands, topics, and/or perspectives that traditionally receive less scholarly attention than others at professional conferences and in academic publications. Special emphasis is placed on ensuring that new voices with fresh points of view find a place in these volumes, alongside contributions by more well established scholars.

The St. Thomas conference was co-organized and co-sponsored by the University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras, the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill in Barbados, the University of the Virgin Islands and Per Ankh Institute in St. Croix. We wish to thank the conference organizers, especially Dr. Chenzira Kahina and the local organizing committee from Thye Universty of the Virgin Islands, Peter Roberts from the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill in Barbados, and Dannabang Kuwabong and Nicholas Faraclas from the University of Puerto Rico. This publication received generous support from the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds Caribisch Gebied and the Fundashon Bon Intenshon in Curaçao.

The Editors

**SPECIAL SECTION FROM THE 14TH EASTERN CARIBBEAN ISLANDS
CULTURES CONFERENCE IN GRENADA NOVEMBER 2011**

INTRODUCTION: ‘BEHIND THE LOOKING-GLASS’: A VIEW FROM GRENADA THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL LENSES

JOAN ANIM-ADDO

GOLDSMITHS UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

We acknowledge with thanks the generous funding of the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) which made possible the research and presentations by our research network at the Fourteenth Annual Eastern Caribbean Islands Cultures Conference (2011). We thank also the organisers of the conference who graciously accommodated our request for panel presentations.

Not only was the fourteenth Annual Eastern Caribbean Islands Cultures Conference special for being the first of the series to be held in Grenada, it was also one in which our international research Network – funded by the UK’s AHRC – included the Caribbean in its concern with investigating ‘translating cultures’. Our Network, referred to as ‘Behind the looking-glass: “Other”-cultures-within” translating cultures’, aims at critically questioning meanings of cultural translation, by considering first, texts marked by creolisation, a discourse originating through much debated – and contested – intercultural exchanges, as eastern Caribbean theorists Edouard Glissant and Kamau Brathwaite, notably among others, have elaborated. We consider that their meanings also engage with ‘glocal’ discourse, the tension between tightly defended, narrow, and weakly-conceived understandings of the local and the global, as well as the longstanding ties that bind local to global citizens. In the light of these, we ask specifically: what are the implications of selected textual representations for diverse and diasporic communities within the Caribbean region, as well as in diasporic spaces, such as Britain, the USA and beyond? From a gendered perspective, how is creolisation shaped and what meanings might this lend to notions of translating cultures? Can the impact of creolisation, widely engaged as theoretical paradigm, make of new Britishness, for example, a hospitable global English, a medium that is not translation as appropriation/colonisation but a sharing of cultures regarding the world ‘not as the globe but as the planet’ (Karavanta, 2010)?

Focusing on the relation between ‘cultures within’ and their dominant counterparts to further understand how the texts that emerge may mediate cultural change, seven papers presented at the conference have been developed for publication. Joan Anim-Addo’s keynote, ‘Writing and resistance: Tracing Grenada’s written literary tradition’ interrogates early Grenadian writing and that of T. A. Marryshow as key not only to the island’s literary tradition but also to its translation of that tradition and its writing of modernity. Papers by Maria Helena Lima, Mina Karavanta and Marl’ene Edwin focus, in turn, on Anim-Addo’s *Imoinda*, as a Grenadian/ Caribbean diasporic text necessarily translating cultures in numerous complex ways. Lima’s article, ‘The choice of opera for a revisionist history: Joan Anim-Addo’s *Imoinda* as a neo-slave narrative’ highlights Anim-Addo’s dramatising of ‘the phenomenon of voice’ in her choice of opera for the recovery of historical memory that characterizes the neo-slave narrative genre, as well as the mutual transformativity afforded by creolisation, still insufficiently theorized in such context. Karavanta’s ‘Interculturality, creolization and Joan Anim-Addo’s *Imoinda* as a “signifying minority” narrative in-between cultures’ emphasises ‘intercultural translation’ to which “minor” cultures and histories’ are central. Karavanta further underscores creolisation ‘as the urgency to develop new concepts and disseminate contrapuntal but also affiliated histories’ so as to not only narrate the Caribbean diaspora but also the social, political, and historical development of relationships that are intercultural and concerned with communities yet-to-come. Also mindful of the yet-to-come, Edwin’s paper challenges existing notions of the ‘archive’ to consider *Imoinda* as ‘creolised text’ representative of ‘double’ or simultaneous archives including those of the ‘living archive’ implicated in the creolized black woman’s body. Privileging popular culture, Antonia Macdonald’s paper, ‘Jab Jab is we ting’: A socio-political analysis of ‘Jab Jab mas’ in Grenada’ considers the island’s carnival culture emblemized by the jab-jab figure, its meanings historically and its many transformations and translations. Suzanne Scafe’s ‘Translation, Resistance and the Transformational Poetics of Dorothea Smartt and Amryl Johnson’, on the other hand, engages the diaspora to examine the poetry of Caribbean British poets Johnson and Smartt with roots in Trinidad and Barbados, respectively. Scafe argues that translation ‘draws attention to the cultures that Caribbean diasporic writers straddle, the geographical spaces that their work traverses and the variety of cultural forms on which their work draws’. Furthermore, the ‘instability that translations produce’ serves to further the translation process. Finally, Peter A. Roberts, in ‘Piracy and creolisation: Issues arising from appropriation and adaptation’ turns to early colonial history to consider questions of appropriation and adaptation not only of notions of *boucaniers* and *pirates* but also of terms such as creole to suggest consequences that such translation and changes have had for words, texts and cultural history.

WRITING AND RESISTANCE: TRACING GRENADA'S WRITTEN LITERARY TRADITION

JOAN ANIM-ADDO

GOLDSMITHS UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

This paper was first presented as a keynote at the Fourteenth Annual Eastern Caribbean Islands Cultures Conference, the first to be held in Grenada. While the initial idea for the lecture was to draw on a century of writing as a framework through which a Grenadian literary tradition might be considered, my research within Grenada's archive has contributed to a longer view, that is, from the nineteenth century, within which the island's contemporary writing might be contextualized. In this discussion, I will focus on writing by selected authors, T. A. Albert Marryshow, Merle Collins, and Jacob Ross. I argue that early writing from the nineteenth century prepared the groundwork for a writing of resistance indicative of the island's emergent literature.

Among the three sections that structure the discussion, the first, 'Beginning writings: ambiguities, silences, hostilities', engages fragments of early Grenadian writing from the pre-abolition era. Highlighting more than two centuries of writing, the section is historicized to raise a trail of questions that thread the discussion as a whole. Principally, I ask: What might be understood about such early writing in relation to not only a tradition of writing, but a *literary* tradition? The second section, 'Envisioning a modernity of liberation', explores selected sections of T.A. Marryshow's writing which I suggest is key to the writing of Grenada's modernity. I engage questions of the writing of rhetoric and modernity as seedbed of a contemporary liberatory poetics. The final section, 'Literary modernity, a liberatory poetics' develops the argument to consider resistance as a defining feature of Grenada's literary tradition. While the attempt to present Grenada's written 'tradition' as sub-divided into discrete sections remains in some measure artificial, it nonetheless offers a construct that is useful to the necessary process of *thinking through* the selected concerns regardless of the evident overlap.

Additionally, since the nature of knowledge is sufficiently well understood to appreciate that it is seldom as objective as we might care to think, I shall flag at the outset my position as Grenadian, a literary writer, and a scholar, all of which will become interlinked in this discussion. I therefore do not propose to pretend that mine is a disembodied voice, ultimately removed from the subject matter in hand. Furthermore, I acknowledge the limitations of this discussion, principally that no

attempt has been made to include every Grenadian writer. Such an undertaking would demand a larger project and could not be the focus of a single paper. Rather, I shall attempt to sketch a tradition in order to highlight questions relevant to all and to reach some understanding of where we are as a people in terms of writing. I do so, always tentatively and with the understanding that as we are reminded by Caribbean poet, Derek Walcott, the region's literature is in its 'babyhood' (Sampietro, 1993: 37). Thus, Walcott rightly underscores for us, the need to temper our deliberations concerning a Caribbean literary tradition. Yet, while this 'babyhood' state lies beyond our control, I seek to connect in this discussion with a particular meaning of 'babyhood', for its relevance to Grenada's African-heritage peoples (and by extension those of the Caribbean) and its interplay with the dominant construction of the region's African-heritage population as distinctively incapable of thought and writing of any merit.

Beginning writings: ambiguities, silences, hostilities

While researching a project that has since been published as *Caribbean Scottish relations* (2007b), I came across a Grenadian publication, *The St Andrew's Journal and La-Baye Miscellany*, dated 1828. In the first number of that which the editor referred to as 'our provincial miscellany', a report is offered of what was described as a 'festival annually held by the Grenada Agricultural Society'. An extract follows:

"Among the *haut ton* were: the amiable misses Rowley; the equally amiable Misses Mc Ewan, and Misses Creft, the Hons. J. H. Bent, G.G. Munro, John Berkley and Owsley Rowley, Mr, Mrs, and Miss Longchamps, Mr and Mrs Edgar from St Vincent, with Francis Yelvington Checkley, Esq and his fascinating lady. The Revd. Mr Checkley, Major-General Sir James Campbell, K.C.B, present Governor."¹ (2007b: 5)

Reading such English/Scottish conceit nearly two hundred years later, it seems difficult to avoid a sense of voyeurism, a certain peeping in at high society with its comedy on English/Scottish manners at a private event. In other words, in no way does the writing appear to represent a public event, so that reading as a Grenadian, the writing is at the very least, displacing. Here, after all, was a festival being described. One might ask: where were the *real* people – the Grenadians – whom one might expect to find? Even though the writing suggests that only two people were outsiders, that is, the Edgars from St Vincent, the strongest sense remains for a Caribbean reader, that the Grenadians were missing from this writing.

Another extract referring to 'A record of fashion' appears, on initial reading, to be equally puzzling:

¹ I have drawn extensively on this section of the original keynote for another paper that has subsequently been published in the series on Grenada's Scottish connections. See Anim-Addo, 2007; 2013.

“A small but select party was invited to meet His Excellency Sir James Campbell, yesterday at Belle Air House. The dinner, which was served at seven o’clock, and was a very superior one, consisted of almost every delicacy the season affords: among which were wild ducks and other game; the wines too were of first rate quality.”

(*The St. Andrew’s Journal*, 1828: 22)

It was not that the wine or the wild duck displaced me as a reader. Rather, it was an absence, the real clue to which is unmistakably the date, 1828, since at that time, it was convenient for much of the European world, especially as colonisers, to assume a more or less exclusive humanity. I have written about this irony elsewhere in ‘Towards a post-western humanism made to the measure of those recently recognized as human’ (Anim-Addo, 2008a). The concern will be revisited in focusing on the writing of Marryshow, ‘the new human, the modern West Indian’, below.

A key question concerns the meaning of writing such as the ‘Record of fashion’ that is found in the early nineteenth century journal. How might this relate in terms of a writing tradition in Grenada when examination of the journal leads to the confirmation that it certainly is Grenadian. It is also assuredly not *of* the people but of the *haut ton*, the dominant, most powerful people on the island. I have already referred to the idea of *absence*. In Grenada’s early writing, the majority black population are characterised by that absence. In such writing of the connected histories of the colonisers and the colonised, the enslavers and the enslaved, in addition to the absence already mentioned, stereotyping was the order of the day. An effect contributing to some complexity regarding the writing was that the humanity of the stereotyped figure was diminished or denied. This can be illustrated in the most common categorising for that era, namely, use of the term ‘slave’. What is a slave? In Grenada, as in much of the world connected by Atlantic history, the term slave was used to indicate someone who was considered less than human and could *reasonably* be bought and sold as sheep or cattle. There are scattered clues to be unearthed in Grenada’s national archive (when it re-opens) concerning who those people celebrated in the journal were. For example, ‘the amiable misses Rowley’ perhaps had every right to be amiable since Owsley Rowley (also mentioned) was a very wealthy man indeed.

As Daniel Paterson’s ‘New Plan of the Island of Grenada’ (1780) indicates, in the parish of St John, Rowley owned four estates totaling 843 acres, the greater part of which produced sugar cane, and that of course meant slaveholding appropriate to the task of keeping the sugar estates functioning appropriately. The Crefts (or de Crefts) owned comparatively fewer sugar producing acres, namely a modest 224 acres. As for the Campbells – Major-General Sir James Campbell is mentioned above – already by 1763, another clan member, Alexander Campbell owned 1,863 acres in St Andrews. Similarly, G.G. Munro is listed as owning three plantations totaling over a thousand

acres (1,106 acres to be precise) in the parish of St Andrews. Munro's obituary appears in a later issue in which readers are informed that the Hon George Gun Munro, who died at fifty, had spent nearly 29 years in Grenada, that is, most of his life. Resisting the temptation to fill in the blank spaces concerning these Grenadians being celebrated in print, it is useful to pause in order to raise the question: when are you a Grenadian writer? How long does one have to live on the island to be Grenadian, or conversely: how long does one have to be away to stop being Grenadian? Most importantly for my argument, though, it is in this early writing of people with whom we may or may not wish to identify (as Grenadian), that the beginnings of an island writing tradition, and indeed that of the region is to be found.

Another key question remains: where were the enslaved? I suggest that they were metaphorically 'behind the looking glass', in terms of our collaborative research project, and out of the frame. According to Seymour et al, by 1776, the number of slaves in Grenada had trebled over the preceding decades to 30,021 (p. 330). Taking these numbers as a guide, the island's enslaved population may be considered as very significant. In actuality, so significant were the numbers that Grenada was said to have become 'the second most valuable colony in the British West Indies' (Craton: 140-141). That was, of course, before Fedon's rebellion when Grenada lost thousands of its black population in the atrocities that quelled the uprising. All of that serves as a reminder that the enslaved were, even in their absence, nonetheless somewhere at or near the beginning of writing in the region. They appear to be absent since they were being described in 'other' terms such as, 'healthy', 'able', 'prime', 'very infirm, almost useless' and so on. In other words, it is being emphasised that at this time the African-heritage person was generally considered less than human and not only was there absence and stereotyping, there was also voicelessness.

These factors are important to ideas of a tradition of Grenadian writing – and to a tradition of writing in the region – because subsequent writers would find themselves, when they discover it, heirs to a legacy within or against which they struggle to write. A crucial question, then, remains: how do you begin to write, given such a tradition *characterized by* the absence, dehumanizing, stereotyping and voicelessness of the majority population who look like you, precisely because they were your ancestors? Moreover, the tradition being considered is also one that has privileged other landscapes considered the cultural 'home' of the dominant group. So, while it is true that there is an account in the nineteenth century St Andrew's journal of horse racing on the beach, it is not the beauty of Grand Anse beach that is being eulogized. Rather, since the pages of the journal read like a *Who's Who* in Grenadian slave ownership, it is the plantocracy that is being celebrated in this early writing. I would argue that such celebration necessitates the silence of the enslaved. Had the enslaved been allowed to

speak about the Rowleys, Campbells, Munros, and the like, the story would in all probability, have ceased to be celebratory.

From this early writing, replete with ambiguity and hostility for the majority of Grenadians, an examination of T. Albert Marryshow's writing (1915-1924) raises the central question: If Marryshow as writer signified the modern Grenadian with a heritage of African diaspora, slavery and recent Emancipation, what might the act of writing represent? At the same time, thinking in terms of 'modernity', what was 'tradition' in the Caribbean? When was such tradition?

Envisioning a modernity of liberation

To shift focus to happier times when the majority of Grenadians could begin to be considered human and to be allowed a public voice, it is useful to foreground the 'new' human discovered by the western, European world following the Emancipation of enslaved peoples of African-heritage. As I argue in Mina Karavanta's and Nina Morgan's *Edward Said and Jacques Derrida: reconstellating humanism and the global hybrid* (Anim-Addo, 2008a) which reevaluates the work of those two European thinkers, if the slave could be recognised as a person after the end of British slavery in 1834 (give or take apprenticeship), and no longer be considered chattel, s/he was in effect, that is, in the eyes of Europeans, a new human. To emphasize, before 1834, the enslaved was *not* human but chattel. In the apprenticeship years, s/he – and this constitutes another puzzle – is in the process of *becoming* a human, that is, apprenticed to a new humanity, so that in 1838, aha, a new human! Although some of this might be considered patently tongue in cheek, my argument, developed in Morgan and Karavanta's book, is that the *becoming* of the 'new' human, who only begins to be recognised in the late 1830s is significant (consider when the USA finally recognizes this common humanity – in 1865, and when Brazil finally comes to accept the idea of black humanity – only in 1888). Furthermore, given that black people were not being recognized as such until well into the nineteenth century, a 'postwestern humanism' is now needed, one *tailored* to these 'new' humans. That is to say, the western world's accommodation to the notion of black people as fully human is one that is most pertinent to our concern with modernity especially since the 'new' human would need to adapt skills of resistance in the process of fashioning that modernity.

It is not coincidental that the post-Emancipation era was a period of new thought in Europe, as radical indeed as it was for the plantocracy based in Grenada to be obliged to discover new ways of being in the world. It is true, also, that while there was an immediate focus on compensation for the former slave holders within the region, there was also a bigger issue, the enormity of which only slowly percolated through to humankind. It is that there came the gradual realisation that those people believed for centuries to be genetically (biologically) inferior and 'less than human', namely, black people, were now to be considered human. This should be further underscored,

because the world has not altogether fully accepted it, with the result that negative residual and related meanings still accrue to blackness as a signifier. At the same time, resistance to the former order of things – when black people were property – would necessarily assume modes and registers of transference within which ‘a contemporary politics of black Atlantic remembrance’ (see Lima in this volume) would be inscribed. Within such ‘transference’ the ‘speech acts and acts of looking’ (Bal, 2000: 2) framed by ‘remembrance’ of the once-property now ‘new’ human becomes significant.

To understand and come to terms with the modern idea of the black person as human, while most white Creoles in the region sold their holdings and exited back to Europe, or adopted migration schemes to increase and whiten their local populations, European and American scientists became especially busy at tasks increasingly referred to today as pseudo-scientific. They measured the brains of black people, they investigated black genitalia. They exhibited such anatomically important parts of black people as their buttocks or behinds, in museums and galleries. The visual artists developed a fascination with things ‘black’, such as masks, the theatres gradually became enchanted with certain stage roles for black people and so on, so that black people *as entertainers* became established in some ways as the *new* norm signaling a new, that is, modern era. What is especially interesting for the focus of this discussion is that in the process of the white media declaring their wonder at black people performing humanity, the Grenadian population could allow their own human aspirations, stifled since they were first brought forcefully to the Caribbean region, to grow.

It is at this time that one might begin to think in terms of a Grenadian writing of modernity, and acknowledge the importance of *access to* public education, that Marryshow’s writing for a newspaper readership would imply. It is true to state that many Grenadians could not read in Marryshow’s time. My grandmother, for example, could not have read *The West Indian* which began to be published in 1915. Writing about her as Juliana Mulzac (Anim-Addo, 2007b), I indicate that many females in Grenada were denied an education, or were allowed access to only the most rudimentary education focusing mainly on domestic skills. In the light of such inequality, it is fortunate for Marryshow that firstly, he was born of the right gender for access to literacy skills, and secondly, that he was able to seize the opportunity to assume such a dynamic part in constructing the nation’s identity. Indeed, so driven was he to *think through* change, that he certainly attempted to shape the identity of the region through his ideas on West Indian Federation, for example, which, as we know, were rejected by the politicians at that time.

My concern in this discussion is less with Marryshow’s politics and more precisely with the nature of the vision he felt compelled to express in his writing. Thus, Marryshow’s rhetoric is considered here as emblematic of Grenada’s modernist

discourse, one that undoubtedly shares much with that of similar visionaries in the region who broke with a ‘tradition’ of voicelessness, particularly of those whom he referred to as ‘bare-footed’ people, and with whom he particularly identified. That the ‘tradition’ had been imposed by colonialism, helps us to resist any simplistic application of theories of modernity. Nonetheless, the claiming of the author(ity) to write, by one who considered himself descended from ‘bare-footed people’ was modern, and assumes a break with ‘tradition’. Marryshow himself repeatedly underscored the new in reminders such as: “particular families do not rule over the community, *as in the past*” (my emphasis), or, “a new generation is being fashioned with manly spirited and a wholesome independence of mind, and wants to know *why* (my emphasis). Marryshow also stressed that success was related to distinct causal factors, particularly because “we have been lashed and spurred to a condition of determined mind to disappoint our foes”.

For the ‘bare-footed’, tradition had become, firstly, enforced labour and simultaneously, a raft of punishments such as the ‘lashings’ or the whip referred to above. In this context, the tradition for the black population was *not* writing; it was *not* becoming an author or claiming a published author(ity). To the contrary, the ‘modern’ for the barefoot peasant or ‘folk’, was precisely the claiming of a denied authority. In effect, while Marryshow’s claiming of authority was through rhetoric, (he was, for example, central to the St George’s Literary Society in his early twenties), many previous attempts to break with the region’s violent history or ‘tradition’ necessarily entailed physical rebellion which had always been brutally aborted. Gurinder Bhambra argues that “despite having written volumes on human freedom, Western philosophers and theorists have been reluctant to theorise the emergence of the first black state” (2009: 148). Bhambra thus references Haiti’s successful revolution – or radical break with slavery – as “one of the momentous events that augured modernity” (p. 148). If this is true of Haiti’s silenced impact on the world (and that silence *is* the point), then how much more true is it of the silence or voicelessness *of* the region, since Haiti signaled a radical break with imposed tradition within the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas?

Similarly, if by 1793, the French portion of Hispaniola was ‘practically in the possession’ of the Haitian rebels, it is pertinent to our discussion to highlight the fact that in Grenada a year later in 1794, Grenadian H. Gordon Andrews argues in Nancy Cunard’s *NEGRO*, “rebellion only required a leader”. The leader who emerged was, of course, Julien Fédon under whose stewardship Grenada’s radical break with tradition was enacted in Belvedere, in Sauteurs, in Gouyave and so on. Of course this history would not have been taught in the school that Marryshow attended. It was not taught in my day either. Such a history would be silenced in the interest of the colonizers with the power to shape the schools’ curriculum. Nonetheless, the will to

change is consistent with and developed in Marryshow's rhetoric of the first decades of the twentieth century, as indicated in his writing in *The West Indian* from 1915 onward.

An assessment of what and how Marryshow contributed to Grenada's writing tradition is crucial. I would like to suggest that Marryshow modeled in the pages of *The West Indian*, what Simon Gikandi refers to in relation to a later wave of women writers as "consciousness and ultimate reversion of voicelessness into sound and word" (1992: 200). To focus on Marryshow's writing, I take as key, selected archived extracts by Marryshow whose role as Managing Editor of *The West Indian* extended for over a decade from 1915 into the 1930s (albeit with some interruption). To begin, I shall foreground an editorial which states:

"If *The West Indian* has played the least part in the above change, we are thankful. If it has preached successful moral rebellion against the old order, we cannot choose to apologise. We are glad.

One word, though, as a New Year message: If we are to be respected as a people, we must first respect our own people, and respect ourselves. No race, no matter its giants can rise above the level of its past. As is the past, so is the race. As is the weakest link, so is the united chain."

(January 1, 1926, p. 2)

Given the mores of slave society underscored in the earlier writing of, for example *The St. Andrew's Journal*, a century before Marryshow's, change in the region was certainly warranted. To borrow from Karavanta and Morgan (2008a), the work that Marryshow undertook within *The West Indian* comprised the radical shaping of 'the site' for a community which was 'yet-to-come'. For this reason, a strong concern is articulated with the kind of change desired, given the lingering effects of plantocratic values and behaviour.

It should be stressed that the planters had not all gone away by Marryshow's era. Many found new pivotal roles within the infrastructure of the island and resisted radical change. Equally, as Marryshow makes clear, he was not attempting to foment a Fedon-style rebellion with firearms and fatalities. Rather, he wished to inspire a 'moral rebellion' fostering such practices as respect for one's 'own people' because they remained insufficiently respected. For these reasons, he had in mind a community yet-to-come, so that as Marryshow's journalism suggests, he perceived himself at a crossroads allowing him to imagine the then-colonial subjects within the Anglophone Caribbean as 'subjects of the state and citizens of the world'. Articulating a daring vision, he created through his writing 'the site where the 'yet-to-come' might be reached through modern communication. Print culture is thus celebrated:

"Today is the birthday of *The West Indian*. We have reached our eleventh milestone. Our minds are reminiscent today of that New Year's Day 1915 when the first issue of this paper appeared. It was

near midnight, on the threshold of the New Year, when the first issue went to press. The noisy whirr of our printing machine was to us sweeter than music and sang out our wildest dreams which we sadly cherished... There came the glad chimes of bells, ringing out the old, ringing in the new..." (January 1, 1926, p. 2)

This discourse boldly centres the 'new', that is, Grenada as deserving of a 'new' relationship with the 'crown'. Marryshow's modern stance challenges white dominance and dominant discourses, elevates the oppressed and dominated, and discovers a voice that speaks with new and increasing authority, even to colonial figures. In 1928, for example, he confronted the then Governor of the island during a debate on the budget in this way:

"You are always butting in whenever I speak, at this council. Don't do it! Don't do it! Always remember when you do it that you are up against a bull dog. You repeated yourself a dozen times in that miserable address you first delivered and no one interrupted you."
(Emanuel: 79)

That Marryshow would liken his own sound and words to that of a 'bull dog' is itself telling of the tenacity he assumed regarding the need for breaking with the old order. At the same time, even as he signifies upon the British bulldog, he dares to appropriate its meanings and to link those to his own authority founded on the technology that would reach a wider audience than the oral word upon which the enslaved had depended.

While Marryshow's vision for the 'community yet-to-come' mixes and matches ideas and material drawn from limited resources, it is to the diaspora – where the new humanity was allowed a particular performativity – that he looks especially for inspiration. To emphasize, it is especially among those people with a shared transatlantic history that Marryshow finds the modern black person whom he chooses to hold up to Grenadians as a model, *par excellence*, of the possible and the desired in a community yet-to-come. The US figure Paul Robeson is presented as such a role model when Marryshow looks to the diaspora and, 'brings it home' to Grenada in his journalism. In January 1926, no fewer than five levels of headlines proclaimed Grenada's introduction to Paul Robeson. The first and largest announced 'PAUL ROBESON', spanning the width of the two columns. The second stated 'Negro actor who has conquered England'. The third announced, 'A conspicuous young man of many parts'. The fourth announced, 'Is a Lawyer and Well-Known Athlete, Actor and Singer. The fifth and final line stated: 'And in his Twenties is a Big-Bodied Giant 6 ft 4 ins high.'

Paul Robeson:

There is no praise too high for the acting of Mr. Paul Robeson. I had never seen a Negro act before. I had only seen white people with corked faces travesty

the Negro, banging tambourines on their knees and calling out, “Massa Johnson, I’ve got a conundrum, a beautiful! Conundrum.” The whole thing was a revelation to me, and I expect to nearly everyone else. It awed one. Here was the soul of a black man articulated. A great soul in a wonderful body. A soul using a deep, haunting voice like the voice of a giant, a woman, and a child merged into one. But the voice was marvelous because it was the voice of a soul. At the end Mr. Robeson received an ovation. He had to take eight curtains, and he took them with bowed head as a humble, unspoilt man. It was wonderful because it was more than acting. Mr. Robeson has taken Mr. Eugene O’Neill’s melodrama and made it into a message from the black peoples of the world (to the white peoples of the world). (January 17, 1926, p. 2)

It should be noted about the extracts regarding Robeson, that while the spotlight focuses firmly on him, an additional level of performativity is played out within Marryshow’s journalism. That is to say, even while some of the material about Robeson appears to be merely reproduced in *The West Indian*, Marryshow’s preoccupation with impact in terms of layout on the page constitutes its own dramatic performance. Indeed, by choosing Robeson, Marryshow rightly seizes the opportunity to highlight a remarkable protagonist of ‘new’ humanity, for within this lawyer, athlete, singer, and actor of imposing stature lays an unmistakable sign of the crucial break with the earlier tradition of Atlantic slavery. Yet, even though the nationalism that emerges through Marryshow’s writing reflects a Grenadian modernity, it is even more indicative of a transatlantic modernity.

Literary modernity: a liberatory poetics

That Marryshow discovered and nurtured a modernity shaped by print culture is certainly important for its communication possibilities that were different from the oral tradition. I would argue also that beyond his rhetoric, a distinct literary modernity would emerge as a liberatory poetics inclusive of orality, primarily from the latter decades of the twentieth century and the first decades of the twenty-first century. Writers such as Merle Collins, Chris DeRiggs and Jacob Ross, for example, would, in telling their own stories, substantiate the liberatory tradition to which Marryshow’s writing pointed. In addition, theirs would contribute to a poetics that would itself signal the island’s (and the region’s) literary modernity. Furthermore, within the writing, a certain resistance would become discernible as a defining feature of the island’s literary tradition. To illustrate, I propose to briefly examine the poetics of Collins and Ross. Concerning what is meant by the term ‘poetics’, I draw on Benjamin Hrushovski’s definition:

“The systematic study of literature as literature. It deals with the question ‘What is literature?’ and with all possible questions developed from it such as: what is art in language? What are the forms and kinds of literature?

What is the nature of one literary genre or trend? *What is the system of a particular poet's 'art' or 'language'?*" (1976: xv)

By borrowing from Hrushovski, I have no intention to fix or render static meanings of literature, nor am I, even as I am attempting to trace a national literary tradition, concerned to classify and claim the literary examples that I offer in any exclusionary way. Like Marryshow, I consider that my vision is both of Grenada and wider than Grenada, belonging to a Caribbean tradition, and at times even beyond that. That is true, also, of the writing that I offer by way of illustration. It is important to underscore that each belongs to a Creole tradition with certain impulses to be both here and there, local and global. It is perhaps instructive to point as well to a causal link in the twentieth century between greater access to public education and the tendency for more Grenadians to turn to print culture – a technology to which access remains limited – in order to articulate not only a creole poetics but a liberatory poetics.

I begin with features of a liberatory rhetoric that might be discerned in Marryshow's journalism, namely, its intention to teach, its articulation of a creole sensibility, and its weighting of the region's history of oppression, discussed above, in order to reinscribe the need for resistance to the prevailing order. The numerous ways in which the new wave of published Grenadan literary writers in the twentieth century extends the meanings of a creole liberatory poetics includes first of all attending to the vexed question of language, which has been addressed simultaneously across the entire Caribbean (for example, Brathwaite, 1984; Philip, 1992). The standard English (SE) usage of Marryshow becomes polyphonic, so that there are many voices on the page, including the creole voice. It might be argued that the novel as a genre carries just such a capacity to incorporate many voices on the page, and that is true. As do other new writers, however, Collins privileges the creole voice in her first novel *Angel* (1987), so that it represents the voice of specific characters, it is also the voice of the narration. Language becomes a theme of concern in the home.

"*Mu de fly*", says the young Angel and the statement causes mayhem in the family because someone being successfully educated is not, according to Angel's father, supposed to speak Creole, but 'proper' English, which, of course, *mu de fly* is not. Similarly, when Angel asks her mother, Doodsie to teach her Patwa, she replies, 'What you have to study is your book, not stupidity' (p. 91). The questions remain: why does Doodsie consider her mother tongue 'stupidness' and how global are such attitudes? In the dominant discourses of colonialism, it is certainly true that Doodsie's language was and still is considered a debased tongue. Yet, it is relevant to ask: which people consider their mother tongue a debased language or 'stupidness' and why does this continue to happen after 'independence'? While these specific questions are largely beyond the scope of this essay, they are the concerns of a liberatory poetics. Le

Page and Tabouret-Keller (1985) mention a prohibition in schools against the use of Grenadian Créole in 1884. Are there subtle ways in which that prohibition still applies today? Collins, Ross and myself have all been teachers. What we know about language includes what I explain to my students in this way: when I came to write about my grandmother, I could not write her without using the creole voice. I could write about her, certainly as I have, thus: ‘My grandmother was a mermaid’. But to *write her*, to bring her alive, I needed to retrieve the creole voice, to hear her voice: “Popo baby, don’t you want look pretty?” (Anim-Addo, 1998).

In *A way to catch the dust*, Jacob Ross has two endearing Ku-Kus stories that focus on the female protagonist, Ku-Kus. In the first narrative, ‘Ku-Kus: de laughing tree’ Ku-Kus tells a first-person story about her grandmother. In order to write Granny’s story, the oral, creole voice becomes important. Indeed, it is the privileged voice. On one level, these stories appear to function simply as entertaining tales. Yet, like the Anansi tales and countless other oral traditions of West Africa and the African diaspora with which many of us are familiar, tales like Ku-Kus are also meant to teach. I have written elsewhere about the auto-theorising creole text in my book *Touching the body* as follows:

“Auto-theorising as I deploy it here signifies a particular self-referentiality in writing related either to the individual or collective self. This feature appears particularly evident in Caribbean texts which infuse cultural knowledge of story-telling as partially didactic and thus refuse literature as wholly or largely entertainment.” (Anim-Addo, 2007a: 279)

In ‘Ku-Kus: de laughing tree’, the young girl thinks she is clever because she likes to use sophisticated words, a habit which her teacher encourages, so that in effect, her flair with words is validated by her school. Yet it is Granny, the illiterate older person, who needs Ku-Kus to read her letters to her, who perceptively reads the situation that is central to the plot on which the story turns. It is illiterate Granny who understands that the man trying to buy her land is primarily planning to exploit her as he has succeeded in doing with other families, since their land is by the sea and he has plans to ‘develop’ it. Ku-Kus’s story also brings into focus the role of gender relations in Grenada’s new literature. Indeed, a liberatory poetics necessarily includes a rewriting of gender relations if it is to break with a tradition which ascribes to women only specific restricted roles.

Ross’s recent novel, *Pynter Bender* (2008) opens:

“SATURDAY MORNING, THE women came down to the river. They were larger than their menfolk. They balanced basins as wide as ships on their heads and their voices carried across the foothills and washed the bright morning air.

As soon as their babble reached him, Pynter left home, let the slant of the hill carry him down towards the water to watch them wash and talk the day away. He chose a large boulder that overlooked the field of stones around which the water boiled and frothed before disappearing through the dark leaf tunnel of the bamboos overhead. He just sat there, feeding his eyes on the glitter and the green and on the throbbing reds and yellows of their washing spread out on the soap-bleached stones. The glare hurt his eyes.” (p. 3)

This extract illustrates how inescapable it is that Ross, as a Grenadian writer is firmly located in a tradition which claims the local landscape. This may be seen in contradistinction to the contributors to *The St Andrews Journal*, for example, who privileged other landscapes. That Ross peoples the Grenadian landscape as he inscribes it, not only with women, but with those who are ‘larger than their menfolk’ is interesting. It seems particularly significant to this writing of Grenadian modernity, though, that at the outset, globalized realities indicated in the ‘ships’ metaphor are connected to this particularised landscape in which women are washing their clothes by the river. Whether or not the women remain irrevocably restricted to the domestic, symbolized in the washing of clothes, is another question the answer to which must be sought in closer reading. At the same time, memory and history are being invoked, not the least through Pynter’s gaze – ‘feeding his eyes’ – which may or may not be benign.

To offer an additional example pertaining to memory and history, I draw on my own writing, specifically *Imoinda or She who will lose her name* (2008b). While the libretto *Imoinda* is neither preoccupied with a Grenadian landscape nor the deployment of Creole language, it poses the crucial question: if we have a nation, (a Grenadian nation/ a Caribbean nation) how was the nation born? To answer, I return to that history of oppression written from European perspectives in which the African is rescued from savagery and taken to the Caribbean. Yet, as Lima stresses in this volume, *Imoinda* should be considered a celebratory text. As a libretto, it is meant to be staged, to take on music and dance in order to enhance its celebratory intention (See also Edwin and Karavanta in this volume). It elevates and celebrates the Creole subject. As a Creole subject living and working abroad, I am aware that like all culture, Creole culture is not fixed in time. It is influenced by diaspora and homespace, all the more so because it engages with print which remains largely accessible through the diaspora. Yet, as a writer, I am a Creole subject and a creolising subject. Part of my writing project is to ask how we creolise writing and also how we creolise particular genres.

I suggested above that the early writing from the nineteenth century prepared the groundwork for a writing of resistance. The examples illustrate that a reading of the resistance inscribed in the writing is critical to any understanding to be gleaned from

it. Whether we write opera, fiction, poetry, or indeed any genre, the dominant culture – dominant in its control of print culture – really does not care. Yet many of us write, at one level, only too well aware that the act of writing itself resists the prevailing views that we cannot write or think. Indeed, it might be argued that we are quite happy flaunting our ‘new’ humanness which will not be constrained. Libretto? Opera? Why not? And we will make it our own.

In this telescoped tour of a Grenadian tradition, I have tried to show how a liberatory poetics has helped writers to develop a tradition emerging from beginnings within which the majority black population was excluded on the basis of being considered to be less than human. Resistance to this exclusion and its meanings have been powerful factors in developing literature by Grenadians. This is a literature that is polyphonic, that privileges the creole voice or the debased, though popular language, and articulates a creole sensibility that is always already translating a culture shaped by a traumatic history. This literature also teaches. Ours is the auto-theorising text which repositions the culture of the Caribbean even as it affords agency to the creole subject and carries the history that unites us. I close with a reminder from the choral voices in *Imoinda*:

“[A]nd when we erupt, rumble
spit stones of words; pour fires of rage
then you know we are not stone.” (p. 93)

This chapter is dedicated to my mother, Janie Joseph, who through ill health was unable to attend my lecture at the conference in St George's, Grenada. I also acknowledge with thanks the kind cooperation of Ms Lilian Sylvester, Grenada's Director of Library Services and Archive, who made access to the archive possible even when the building had already been closed down.

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THE CHOICE OF OPERA FOR A REVISIONIST HISTORY: JOAN ANIM-ADDO'S *IMOINDA* AS A NEO-SLAVE NARRATIVE

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For a while now I've been trying to understand why so many neo-slave narratives are still being written/performed/and read throughout the Black Atlantic. Why such desire to re-imagine slavery in the era of a so-called "transnational capitalism?" Slavery has been a contentious issue not only within the economic and political realms of Europe and the Americas, but it has played an important part in the history of cultural and aesthetic representation. Dubbed by the African-American critic Bernard Bell as a new genre, the "neo-slave narrative" brings into the public sphere certain questions regarding the relationship between modernity, colonialism, race, trauma, slavery, and representation. Indeed, any attempt to take into consideration the history of colonial slavery and slave-trade, forces us to reconsider the ideological and political nature of shared modernities in Europe, Africa and the Americas. Contemporary Black Atlantic writers are writing back to this older textual tradition in a continuous and continuing effort at reconnecting with their African heritage, at rebuilding identities and histories, as the trauma of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade still echoes across the Diaspora today.

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Following Margaret Walker's *Jubilee* (1966), fictionalized slave narratives of the late twentieth century have been stories that celebrate triumph not over escaping an institution, but over reclaiming the humanity of the enslaved. African-American neo-slave narratives by women, according to Elizabeth Beaulieu, have been "designed not merely to reclaim their enslaved maternal ancestors' stories and reposition their role in American history, but also to refute the stereotype of the enslaved women as breeder" (1999: 149). The women writing neo-slave narratives are concerned both with the past and with the future: "their special talent rests in their ability to use the past [...] to evoke the promise of the future" (Beaulieu, 1999: 156). Contemporary neo-slave narratives depict the institution of slavery through a variety of styles of writing and combining different generic modes: from realist novels grounded in historical research to speculative fiction, postmodern experiments, satire, and (in

Joan Anim-Addo's case) even opera. Despite their differences, these texts illustrate the centrality of the history and the memory of slavery to individual, racial, gender, cultural, and national identities. As Valerie Smith notes, "writers of these works of literature possess a measure of creative and rhetorical freedom unavailable to the freed and fugitive slaves writing during the antebellum period" (2007: 169). Behind neo-slave narratives, as Ashraf Rushdy emphasizes, is "the wish to return to the literary form in which African [...] subjects first expressed their political subjectivity in order to mark the moment of a newly emergent black political subject" and literary practice (1999: 7).

Because slave narratives were propelled by the Enlightenment demand that a 'race' place itself on the Great Chain of Being primarily through writing, contemporary neo-slave narratives foreground such original intention. As Henry Louis Gates notes, the earliest texts by black writers in English were "the central arena in which persons of African descent could establish and redefine their status within the human community" (1998: 2). Although the Enlightenment was predicated on man's ability to reason, as Gates writes, it also made the "absence" of reason the criterion by which to circumscribe the humanity of the people and cultures of colour that Europeans had been "discovering" since the Renaissance. Of course no one questioned then the premise that reason (and history) could only be found in writing. If slave narratives affirm the democratizing potential of print literacy, equating, to quote Gates again, "the rights of man with the ability to write" (1998: 3), the African-American literary tradition has been initially galvanised by the faith that literature can make the case for full black participation in American democracy. Revisiting the historical era of slavery, the neo-slave narrative takes us back to the origins of the African Diaspora and the African-American literary tradition and reassesses, from a contemporary vantage point, the promises of literacy. The neo-slave narrative thus participates in a widespread re-evaluation of the legacy of modernity, especially as this is ratified by the ideologies and institutions of print literacy.

Many writers in recent years (Edouard Glissant among them) have demanded that we regard the Atlantic slave trade as a (perhaps *the*) foundational event in the history of modernity so it is only fair that anyone attempting to re-evaluate such a vexed history of trauma and violence – enslaved Africans *were* after all *capital* – would resort to the conventions of the slave narrative. If the beginnings of the "global system" are to be located not in the technologies of the late twentieth century, but in those of the sixteenth and seventeenth, there would be no disagreement that the spread of European imperialism was initially energized – not to say fully financed – by the labor of enslaved Africans so central to the plantation economies of nascent

capitalism. It is *not only* the transformation of the world market from agrarian to industrial economies that constitutes modernity; the epistemic shift that precedes it--the European notion that *property is the mark of civilization* – is equally necessary to both capitalism and colonization. The Caribbean plantation was an intrinsically modern system. As Sybille Fischer writes, “the transatlantic slave trade brought about the first mass migration driven by capitalist development and the need for a workforce, long before there was a proletariat or even a working class in Europe” (2004: 12).

In this context, one would expect that the Haitian Revolution would figure prominently in most accounts of the period that shaped Western modernity and placed notions of freedom and equality at the core of political thought – but this has not been the case. According to Fischer, “the suppression and disavowal of revolutionary antislavery and attendant cultures in the Caribbean was, among other things, a struggle over what would count as ‘progress’, what was meant by ‘liberty’, and how the two should relate” (2004: xi). What is the role of the slave narrative in reminding us of such disavowal of modernity? A central reason for such disavowal, as Anim-Addo stresses in this volume, is that the African-heritage person was generally considered “less than human. So not only was there absence and stereotyping, there was also voicelessness.” The western world’s accommodation to the notion of black people as fully human is one that is most pertinent to understanding contemporary rewritings of slave-narrative conventions since resistance and full humanity are central to the refashioning of the genre.

What notion of value would then emerge from a contemporary politics of black Atlantic remembrance? Precisely because globalization continues to admit and subjugate different cultures into the realm of capital, the roots of the current system, its historical connections with earlier kinds of imperialism, demand both analysis and critique which, in my view, contemporary neo-slave narratives may trigger. Existing contact zones (to use Mary Louise Pratt’s term) demand a thorough re-examination of our paradigms for the analysis of subject-formation and representation across the Black Atlantic. In this light, the transcultural heritage of Caribbean culture forged from a history which so distinctively shaped Enlightenment thought might be retrieved from the margins. Foregrounding such a transcultural present underscores our research emphasis on interculturality since both the study and the questioning of the concept of cultural translation, through a creolization lens, allow for renewed understanding of ways in which cultural identity and power relations continue to operate within such global (and local) frameworks.

A key element of slavery and forced labor was (is) not just trade, but promotion of the view that the reorientation of poor economies to the consumer demands of the rich was (is) entirely legitimate. Or, as Michael Monahan explains,

“since the proper position of the less rational (the subhuman) is dependence, and the proper position of the purely rational (the fully human) is independence and control, it is incumbent upon the purely rational to expand the sphere of their influence, thus bringing the light of reason into the darkest corners of the globe, and providing the intellectual, cultural, and moral resources upon which those inherently dependent souls can ultimately rely (thus fulfilling their innate nature as dependent).” (2011: 160-61)

Understood this way, the European “Civilizing Mission” was about establishing a clear boundary between the world of reason, virtue, and full humanity preserved through conquest, economic exploitation, domination, and oppression and the others; this vision was reinforced through the ongoing interpretation and reinterpretation of history (the rise of Western Civilization as the flowering of human reason), the present (the struggle between the civilized lovers of freedom and reason on the one hand, and the barbarous forces of tyranny and tradition on the other), and the future (the inevitable triumph of market liberalism and the “end of history”).

While postcolonial critics agree that the political struggle for the transformation of the present is also a struggle about the meanings of the past, they have not focused much of their analysis on neo-slave narratives as sites where identities are not only rehearsed, interrogated and re-imagined but also where alternative (and cumulative) histories are developed and shared. For unfortunately, as Lars Eckstein writes, “while most colonial testimonies of slavery have long disappeared from the working memory of today’s Black Atlantic societies, the prejudices and stereotypes they conveyed [unfortunately] have not” (2006: 113). A close analysis of the genre allows us to argue that neo-slave narratives have not only been able to represent the complexity of black subjectivity, but have also given birth to an alternative mode of history-writing. Slavery for the British is yet to be acknowledged as the historical episode that inhabits and sometimes haunts the present. Reviewing the V&A 2007 Exhibit, “Uncomfortable truths: the shadow of slave trading on contemporary art and design”, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown notes that the story of slavery has slipped from Britain’s memory in terms of its centrality in the formation of British and European society. It is time, Alibhai-Brown writes, to question “a nation which has not looked into its own heart of darkness” (Alibhai-Brown, 2007).

The case of Joan Anim-Addo’s *Imoinda, or She who will lose her name* is particularly relevant to my investigation because of the genre she chooses to symbolically re-imagine the subjectivity of “the mother of the Caribbean nation” –

opera – and the questions the genre itself elicits. Because Anim-Addo aims to give voice to a character left silent in a seventeenth century novel, indeed one of the earliest novels in the British tradition, Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* (1688), which is at its core, significantly, a slave narrative, to what extent does she choose opera *precisely* to dramatize the phenomenon of voice? As a remaking of *Oroonoko*, the first literary work to grasp the global interactions of the modern world, Joan Anim-Addo's *Imoinda* (2003b) tells a story of the slave trade from the point of view of the African princess left silent in the earlier text. Anim-Addo tells us how difficult it was for her to read Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* because she

“could not tolerate Imoinda's silence; I had to write an opera because the capacity shown by African-heritage peoples to survive in the new world has to be a story celebrated in song, dance, music, all forms to which Africans have made an enormous global contribution. I envisage many versions of *Imoinda* but first, since I am here, ‘in the west’ and since this is as much a story of ‘Western’ culture as African, since it is a creolized narrative, it seems to me that the celebratory form which would be most appropriate, though unmistakably challenging, would be opera.” (2003b: 87)

Anim-Addo's choice of opera for her neo-slave narrative defamiliarizes conventional representations of slavery by depicting a more complex, nuanced view of black subjectivity designed to reshape our understanding of such contact zones and their impact on our present cultural condition. In other words, as Ian Baucom writes, “to the extent that the time of the past survives, non-synchronously, into the present, for Glissant [and Anim-Addo] that time survives”: time does not pass – it accumulates (2005: 319). *Imoinda* dramatizes not only the haunting of the former land but the panic of the new, towards some sort of relation. Rather than merely imitating or revising the slave narrative form, Anim-Addo's *Imoinda* emphasizes the links between black women across time and space. Anim-Addo's libretto reminds us that the violence of the slave trade was not only an ending but a beginning – the scene of the utter loss of place becomes a scene of replacement, a scene where what seemed to figure the loss of home has *become* home. *Imoinda* offers a challenge to essentialism and binary thought because its creolized nature rejects notions of purity and authenticity. As relation (in Glissant's terms), the text makes its audience become open to the creative possibilities of cultural contact zones, disrupting notions of a dominant center and a weak periphery, powerfully pointing to interactions, to the movement and migration of peoples being mutually transformative.

The cultural potential of Anim-Addo's text certainly explains the successful Guggenheim grant (85K) awarded in the USA (2007) for an “*Imoinda* in schools project” that culminated in the opera's first full production – School of the Arts,

Rochester, New York 3-5 May, 2007 – Glenn McClure, Composer. In contrast, in the UK context, *Imoinda* is known mainly within a small scholarly circle. Yet, the text has been translated into Italian and Greek, and has engendered academic study and performance interest in the United States, Italy and Greece. Why has the same work been treated so differently, and what meanings might be made of its reception? The answer can be found in British Universities which, despite changing demographics as far as student population is concerned, still hold whiteness as central to knowledge production and dissemination. Who, might we ask, has the power to translate cultures? More importantly, perhaps, on what basis – who would ultimately benefit? Precisely due to the transcultural dimension of *Imoinda*, performing it in British schools would help create a more equitable community. There is a need for many productions – hopefully one in the Caribbean in the near future – to create a forum that is simultaneously transatlantic and national for intellectual and creative exchanges concerning questions of power, creativity, representation – ultimately an attempt at articulating the conditions for re-imagining black subjectivity and histories.

Rewriting Aphra-Behn's *Oroonoko* as a libretto has also challenged the idea of opera itself as a Western genre. As Serena Guarracino writes, "the publication of *Imoinda* in Italy, home of the opera, with an Italian translation, shakes the very ground of Italian opera as it is known in Italy and elsewhere, opening the genre to the challenge of voices coming from the margins of Western cultural hegemony" (2007: 212). *Imoinda* thus invites audiences to rethink opera's role in the creation of European cultural identity, while at the same time exploring how through opera the "Empire Writes/Sings/and Dances back". *Imoinda* breaks ground in opera history by exposing the brutal truths of slavery in the "new" world. Like Toni Morrison's *Margaret Garner* (2005) – Anim-Addo's libretto is rooted in both history and fiction. Morrison notes that while the task of writing the libretto "often seemed beyond [her] grasp", she concluded that, "No human experience, however brutalizing, was beyond art. If it were", Morrison emphasizes, "then the brutalizers [would] have triumphed." *Imoinda* remembers her humanity, her capacity to love, however much slavery has sought to break her.

At the start of the libretto we meet an outspoken, naïve, and spoiled Imoinda, a young woman obviously accustomed to a life of privilege. Imoinda is very blunt upon meeting Prince Oko for the first time, as she does not swoon at his flattery, very unlike the way a female character would conventionally be depicted at the time. When Prince Oko praises her beauty, she retorts, "Beauty masks a multitude of defects. So we do not value it too highly. Besides, it fades" (Anim-Addo, 2008: 25). This exchange reveals that despite her birth and privilege, Imoinda is not a shallow

woman; she is capable of great wisdom and inner-strength, which will be necessary for her survival in “the new world.” Conditions of slave and post-slavery survival in the British West Indies underscore the significance of a gendered female identity, specifically related to the role of “other” and of “mother”. When newly transplanted, Africans lost language, status, culture and family; they had to find a way to survive in a hostile environment.

Unlike his father the King and the Chief, who treat women as objects to be dominated, possessed and exchanged, Prince Oko also does not conform to the gender and class expectations of his time. He truly wants to earn Imoinda’s love and honor her as his wife even though his culture dictates that he overpower and subdue her to follow his wishes. Oko’s servant Baku warns, “Good Prince, though you are wise, there is much you need to know of women. [...] My lord, you make a woman master of your will! This is not as it should be” (Anim-Addo, 2008: 27). Although different from his ancestors in that he will only love and marry one woman, Prince Oko is incapable of adjusting to the new reality where he’s constantly physically and spiritually brutalized. As James Walvin describes, “planters feared Coromantees especially, but they were in the hands of their suppliers and were forced to buy the Africans they feared” (1994: 267). Significantly, it is the blood of a Kromanti warrior that is necessary for the new nation to be born (Act 3, Scene 5). Once Oko realizes Imoinda’s pregnancy (the rape by the overseer), he chooses suicide instead of survival under such extreme circumstances.

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Imoinda, on the other hand, has the support of the women in the community (the chorus) and from her former maid, Esteizme. The libretto tells us that the chorus involves all members of the cast variously in each act, and its function in *Imoinda* goes beyond simple commentary on the action – it serves as support system, thus becoming central to its plot. The women of the Chorus cry to Imoinda when she seems ready to give up: “New life! Where there is new life there is hope [...]. Yes it is life given; for one taken. This land may still claim the final victory. [...] We chose life, a baby to wear red in necklace or amulet; a baby charged not to forget” (Anim-Addo, 2008: 94-95). Imoinda references red in the beginning of the libretto as the color of royalty: “red so befitting to a Kromanti warrior” to describe her father’s funeral cloth (11). Because the color red unites the baby to his grandfather--a ‘Kromanti warrior’ – readers conclude that the baby is not only a symbol of life and strength, but she also symbolizes the beginning of the new Caribbean nation.

Simply known as “Maid” in the first act, Esteizme eventually becomes the priestess of such a newly-born-African-Caribbean community. Even Esteizme’s supernatural powers are represented naturally – as part of the real in Old Guinea. When Imoinda

forbids her maid to “read her future” (Act One, Scene 3), the audience is left with the foreboding of inevitable change. She thus assumes the role of spiritual leader and catalyst, and also of custodian of the memory of the Middle Passage as the violence that cannot be named, but which is the common ground on which the community itself is born. What we discover through Anim-Addo’s depiction of the Middle Passage is that it was not only an ending but a beginning--the enduring, recurring, uncannily resurfacing signs of the violence of the slave trade and of the loss of homeland were, for Glissant also, the sign of “something shared” (1990: 6). Memory in *Imoinda* not only haunts the present, it translates. As Ian Baucom writes, memory “fuses the time of remembrance with the time of the remembered”; it’s joining a “now” to a “then” which is also a “yet-to-be”. To refuse to read these linkages in Anim-Addo’s text is to refuse to read.

Imoinda is not just a celebration of Africa – as Anim-Addo emphasizes – it is about a creole society, this culture that is a mixture, that has come about out of trauma, very difficult circumstances, out of pain, but nonetheless has given birth to a community, to a Caribbean nation that must be celebrated (2003: 219). The genre of opera creates an opportunity not only for a literary libretto, but for a *tangible* space for a physical representation of history. Anim-Addo explicitly addresses the importance of an imagined return to the past in order to get the record straight. In “Creolizing the Discourse” she writes, “I shall argue that *Imoinda* seeks not only to give voice to the creolized mother of the Caribbean region as Nation, thus inserting black women visibly into the history of the region, the text attempts also to assert a history which earlier male writers had sought to deny in conceptualizing the Caribbean space as one of *lack of history*” (Anim-Addo, 2003: 79). Her libretto offers an alternative space for the dramatization of history where the protagonists are honorably and rightfully depicted, not as victims, but as agents in their lives and cultures.

Glissant reminds us of the need to “remember the forgetting”, to develop a historical consciousness that will connect this forgetting of the past with the always possible forgetting of present. Such a need will be re-inscribed and reasserted every time *Imoinda* is performed, anywhere in the world. Performances of *Imoinda* will remind us that we live in a profoundly interconnected world, as Anim-Addo writes, “a creolized world – even when creolization is not recognized as such” (2003: 12). Interculturality as a praxis to understand our profoundly interconnected world projects the possibilities of a different kind of community to that of the nation, communities “formed by affiliation and fate, the fate of being thrust together by need and desire”, as Anim-Addo explains, “the need to survive (labor, belonging, possession) and the desire to live (to live with others, even those others you have

never imagined a living-with before)” (2003: 12). This need to “remember the forgetting” entails, as Giovanna Covi and Mina Karavanta emphasize, an acknowledgement that “European modernity is a colonial modernity” (2009: 17), which is *not* the same as to say that there would not be European Modernity without its colonies. Neo-slave narratives like *Imoinda*, then, allow us “to develop a historical consciousness that will connect this forgetting of the past with the always possible forgetting of present” (Anim-Addo, Covi, Karavanta, 2009: 17).

Imoinda embodies Glissant’s poetics of relation, a poetics which refuses such forgetting. Ian Baucom acknowledges this poetics as highly significant:

“Not only because the slave trade refuses to detach itself from slavery itself, nor the slave ship from the plantation, nor the plantation from the ghetto and the shantytown, but because this brutal passage of world history is not [...] terminal but originary, or, rather, a middle-passage into an experience of global modernity and a type of global responsibility [...]” (2005: 313)

It is because of such global responsibility that *Imoinda* must continue its travels.

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INTERCULTURALITY, CREOLIZATION AND JOAN ANIM ADDO'S IMOINDA AS A "SIGNIFYING MINORITY" NARRATIVE IN-BETWEEN CULTURES

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As a member of the Arts and Humanities Research Council project entitled "Behind the Looking-Glass: 'Other'-cultures-within translating cultures"¹, I ground my research in the wider problematic of reconfiguring the concepts of interculturality and community and focus on intercultural translation not only as a practice of cultural mediation and transference from one linguistic and cultural tradition to another but also as a strategy of "intertwining and overlapping" (Said, 1994: 19) the histories of oppositional cultures of uneven hegemonic power. I read this process of intercultural translation as the exercise of the political in a world that has become more connected, albeit unevenly, and more transnational while still interpellated by the competing agendas of national policies and politics.

By intercultural, I do not mean to refer to the multicultural policies implemented in various national contexts by way of accommodating and assimilating the growth of new diasporic and ethnic communities. To specify my use of the concept, I draw on *Interculturality and Gender*, a collection of essays that Joan Anim-Addo, Giovanna Covi and I co-edited as part of the work of ReSisters in Travelling Concepts, a transnational and interdisciplinary group formed within ATHENA, a European Thematic Network (200-2008). *Interculturality and Gender* explores the political, social and literary dimensions of interculturality within Europe and across the connections and affiliations between the different cultures that make up Europe from the differentiating perspective of gender that reflects an inflection of differences across the structures of class, race, religious, ethnicity, language and discipline. Interculturality does not refer to a given, namely, a multicultural society formed within a dominant culture. Instead, interculturality invokes the literary, social, historical and political processes by which new affiliations between the dominant or host culture and the non-dominant or migrant and diasporic cultures are forged in the

¹ The network is co-ordinated by Professor Joan Anim-Addo (Principal Investigator), Centre of Caribbean Studies, Goldsmiths, and Dr. Viv Golding (Co-Investigator), University of Leicester. For more information about the network and the participants, please go to <http://www.gold.ac.uk/caribbean/behind-the-looking-glass/>

age of transnationalism that has facilitated processes of transculturation – rather than acculturation – that unsettle former cultural hegemonies, despite the persistence and exponential growth of economically, socially and politically uneven and unequal relations between different nations and different communities within nations.

If in the 80's and the 90's multiculturalism signified the discursive and socio-political processes of acculturation by which the dominant metropolitan cultures on both sides of the North Atlantic reinvented themselves by co-opting, assimilating or at least trying to accommodate the other cultures within the dominant cultures², the past decade in the 21st century witnessed the radical transformation of the dominant cultures by the co-occurrence of interdiasporic, interethnic, interlinguistic and intercultural communities. Rather than affirming the binary between dominant cultures and the dependent minor cultures, interculturality names the new communities forged beyond the dream narrative and national imaginary of the sovereign nation state; in other words, it names the event of another post, post the national imaginary as the only vocabulary by which to form community and culture, and attends to new imaginaries and communities engendered by the forces of expropriations and deterritorialization of transnational capitalism, even as these processes are mediated by the nation as a persistent and at times growing economic, social and political category.

In other words, by interculturality, transnationalism and the postnational imaginary, I do not wish to suggest the disappearance of the nation-state; the recent economic crisis has revealed the failure of the rhetoric of the end of the nation to attend to the regulating and mediating forces of the nation in transnational capitalism and transnational flows. It also reveals the unevenness between nations rather than the waning of the nation as a social, economic and political unity. Instead, I wish to call attention to the transformation of the nation by the formation and development of other cultures within it and at its borders, cultures that contest the boundaries of the national imaginary and project a differentiated temporality to the myth of the nation as a more or less homogenous community of a restricted linguistic, religious, and ethnic identity. In *The Caribbean Postcolonial*, Shalini Puri aptly argues against identifying the postnational with the rhetoric of the end of the nation that is completely blind to the contemporary political scene where the nation-state is manifested as the omnipresent economic, political and social category. In my use of the postnational, I mean the project of formulating an unevenly shared imaginary of contrapuntal cultural origins to attend to the transformation of the national community by the emergence of new communities in the nation no longer located in a cultural insularity but rather

² See Charles Stewart, *Syncretism and its synonyms: reflections on cultural mixture* for a recent historicization of the terms transculturation and acculturation and the latter's attachment to the multicultural discourses that have been disseminated since the 60's in the US.

growing out of a long-lasting co-occurrence that has generated new affiliations between them.

The practice of intercultural translation that attends to “other cultures within” does not simply focus on the concurrency of cultures within dominant cultures and their exchanges; nor does it assume the existence of a comfort zone between them. It excavates the histories that produced these contact zones by revising and rewriting them from the perspective of constituencies and events that have hitherto been excluded or repressed by the dominant narratives but can be retrieved in the ruins of archives and the margins of the texts of the dominant discourses. Importantly, it engenders new narratives, typologies, and imaginaries that speak to the reciprocity between the past and the present of diasporic, inter-diasporic (the network of various diasporas within the same place), creole, hybrid, multi-ethnic, and multilingual communities as found in the former colonies and metropolises across the Atlantic and the American, European and African continents. It does not intend a revision of the past but rather a postnational writing of the past that excavates and articulates the anteriority of the future-in-the-present. In the ruins of the past, within the untold stories in forgotten archives, lie the futures of these intercultural and interdiasporic communities and their affiliations in the present. The emergence of intercultural and interdiasporic communities is the aftermath of transnational capitalism and its mechanics of deterritorialization and expropriation.

Creolization as an aesthetic process represents a hybrid world. To avoid emptying hybridity of its history of the slave trade, the slave plantation and racism, that is, of the history of colonization and capitalism, we must always relate it to imperialism and neo-imperialism. Rather than narrating creolization only in aesthetic terms by which to celebrate the hybrid world and forget the racist origins and neo-racist policies that continue to haunt hybrid, hyphenated and creole identities, we should also think of it as a concept-event.³ Creolization speaks both the history of expropriation and “exappropriation” (Derrida, 1994: 112) by which the loss (of community, of origin, of mother tongue) becomes the beginning of the new property, the new belonging, the new diasporic and trans-national living. The Atlantic is the historical and political site of this shared history of expropriation and exappropriation, a cartography drawn by the “circumatlantic flow of peoples, goods and cultures” (Boelhower, 2008: 86), the African diaspora’s “endless stories of woe but also of cultural resilience and creative survival” (p. 87), and the Caribbean’s “poetics of relation” against the politics of

3 Here I draw on Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s “What is a concept?” and their definition of the concept not as the thing that names but as an “incorporal” coordinate of “heterogeneous components” that “speaks the event, not the essence of the thing,” the “event of the Other” (p. 21). For Deleuze and Guattari, this “Other” signifies not only difference but the multiplicity of heterogeneity that cannot be contained in a discourse, no matter how powerful its hegemony is. The “event of the Other” unsettles, ruptures, and defers the centers of discursive fields. Creolization can be thought of as such an event of displacement, deferral, and transformation of knowledges, discourses, aesthetics and politics, what Glissant calls “errantry” and “diffraction” (1997: 11-35).

European exceptionalisms that have made peoples “an exception” to throw them “into the abyss” (Glissant, 1997: 8).

Displacing the center of modernity from the Western sovereign nation to the Atlantic flows and its contrapuntal histories, contemporary writings of its rich archives narrate the event of creolization, as the ongoing event that Enrique Dussel calls “trans-modernity” and refers to all the cultures that have been “actors in the history of the world system” counter to their having been “until now depreciated and undervalued” (Dussel, 2002: 223-224) by European modernity predominantly for their non-western, creole, hybrid, colonial and postcolonial origins. In *Penser la créolité* Maryse Condé critiques the articulation of the concept and its politics by “the Martinican writers Patrick Chamoiseau and Raphael Confiant and the linguist Jean Bernabé in their 1989 manifesto ‘Éloge de la Créolité’ [In Praise of Creoleness]” (in Dobie, 2004: 149) to demonstrate how their rhetoric is still entrapped in a binary between France and the Caribbean that further affirms rather than deconstructs the metropolis-periphery or empire-colony binary. To deconstruct this binary structure that affirms the Empire as the center against which the Caribbean needs to measure up to celebrate its difference, Édouard Glissant theorizes the concept of creolization as the event of deferred mobility that “carries along into the adventure of multilingualism and into the incredible explosion of cultures” (Glissant, 1997: 34) by alerting his readers to the rootedness of this explosion in the “consensual, not imposed, sharing” (p. 34) of cultures. He thus transforms the concept by relating to the event of affiliations and relations born out of imperialism and delimiting it from the antagonism of binaries.

If creolization was initially represented as the property of the postcolonial world, the sign of hyphenated cultures emerging from the slave plantation economy and the slave trade, it has become a concept that names the transformation of the dominant cultures from within the other “minor” cultures and histories with which they have been living. Creolization emerges as the urgency to develop new concepts and disseminate contrapuntal but also affiliated histories in order not only to narrate the Caribbean diaspora but also the social, political, and historical development of “the actuality of relationships among cultures, among unequal imperial and non-imperial powers” (Said, 1994: 55). As Said beautifully argues in his seminal *Culture and Imperialism*, “no one has the epistemological privilege of somehow judging, evaluating, and interpreting the world free from the encumbering interests and engagements of the ongoing relationships themselves. We are, so to speak, of the connections, not outside and beyond them” (p. 55). The co-occurrence of discrepant but intertwined cultures and their histories, the emergence of new hybrid communities, the transformation of the dominant culture from within the network of dominant and minor cultures and histories, the development of “New Englishes” (Dendrinos et al., 2008: 1-14), the rejuvenation and birth of new aesthetics and discourses are a few symptoms of the transnational growth of interculturality and creolization.

A Caribbean text that is an example of “translating other-cultures-within translating cultures” and develops an intercultural poetics to “speak plurally to different traditions” (Anim-Addo, 2003: 80) by drawing on the history of transatlantic slavery and the making of the Caribbean nation is Joan Anim-Addo’s *Imoinda, or She who will lose her name* (2008). Anim-Addo departs from Aphra Behn’s novel *Oroonoko* (1688) to search for Imoinda’s story, a story of expropriation and dispossession but also of survival and community making that the black enslaved woman achieves by forging a collectivity of resistance. Silenced in Behn’s text, a sacrificial victim of Oroonoko’s heroic act to give his beloved and his child an end to their enslaved lives, Imoinda becomes a “speaking subject” (Anim-Addo, 2003: 76) whose voice echoes “a whole collectivity of African slaves” (Covi, 2003: 85).

Centered on Imoinda and the chorus of women deracinated from their land, dispossessed and thrust into the matrix of the transatlantic slavery, Anim-Addo’s text stages the omitted history of the resistance of black women surviving the nightmare of the middle passage and the inhuman conditions of the slave plantation economy while forging connections and forming collectivities based on precarious solidarities. Their choice to keep their children of rape and persevere through the risk of their “flesh” (Anim-Addo, 2003: 76) is the history of the “‘Birthing’ of the Creole Nation and the reclaiming of the creolised black woman’s story” (p. 78) that Anim-Addo salvages from oblivion. The text hence stages this heroic act of “preserving” the life of their children, never allowing us to lose sight of the fact that “some of those black mothers, even in that dreadful time, would have been able to perceive” that their children “represented the emergent nation, the Caribbean nation” (p. 76) and were the only possibility of another future harvested in an impossible present.

This intercultural libretto critically revises the history of colonial modernity as the history of an interdiasporic and intercultural world by rewriting this history with rather than through the voice of Imoinda. By revising the genre of the libretto and inviting each operatic performance of her text to draw on the musical tradition that will host it, the libretto represents the traditions of music, language and sound of other cultures whose original voices are lost, translated, and distorted in the process of colonization. By choosing the forms of tragedy and opera to tell the story in “song, dance, music” (Anim-Addo in Covi, 2003: 86), Anim-Addo “blurs the boundaries of genres in order to articulate a politics of historiography which is inextricably conjugated with a politics of identity” (Covi, 2003: 86). She writes the history of the black and creole women and their respective communities in the making by giving voice to the abjected other, the black woman, whose history has been elliptically represented or even omitted from the history proper of revolution.

The work also and most importantly revises the history of postcoloniality and diaspora from the perspective of a community of minor singularities of different origins formed under but also against oppression, a community whose bonds resist the slave

plantation economy of exploitation, the capitalist economy of profit and the precolonial structure of hierarchy. The history of these communities of minor singularities signifies the various formations of resistance and survival, the rich details of their temporalities and lives, their different strategies of community making and survival, their oppositional and counter-hegemonic discourses. Forgotten by the dominant discourses, this history is the subject matter of *Imoinda* and other similar narratives preceding and following Joan Anim-Addo's text that critically revise the details of these "minority histories" of the past in order to excavate their signification in the present, a present that is global and postnational, yet still trapped in localisms and nationalisms.

How to write the history of these other communities of "signifying minorities" (Anim-Addo) that translate expropriation (the loss of ties, rights and property) into what Jacques Derrida calls "exappropriation" (p. 112) the making of new ties, rights and property out of the traumatic history of deracination and loss that is "open to the absolute future of what is coming [...] that is to say, a necessarily indeterminate, abstract, desert-like experience that is confided, exposed, given up to its waiting for the other and for the event" (p. 11), is the task of a "deconstructive thinking" (p. 112) open to the question of justice and democracy. Anim-Addo's intercultural libretto does not repeat a return to the past in order to complete and amend it but rather deconstructs it to generate the genealogy of what I call a postnational imaginary that attends to the future of these communities of "signifying minorities" (Anim-Addo, 2009: 124) in our globalized, intercultural present.

Summoning the history of pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial times, as the titles of the three acts suggest (first, 'Loves young and old – the old country', followed by 'The nightmare canoe', and finally 'Life and birth under burden') the text begins with a break of historical and epistemological consequences. *Imoinda* bears witness to the death of her father, "the lion of Kromanti" and "a triumph of manhood" (Anim-Addo, 2008: 9), the father of the "fathers and great defenders of the nation" (2008: 9) a father who dies a death of pride and honor defending his nation from his enemies, a death that symbolizes the end of an era, and the beginning of a more violently networked and greatly uneven reality conditioned by the slave market now expanding at the gates of *Imoinda's* community. As her father's death appears to reaffirm the patrilineal heritage of the community whose continuity is secured by Prince Oko who runs to *Imoinda's* side to comfort and console her, *Imoinda*, torn by sorrow, rises against the conventions of her community and "begins to sing a different tune" (p. 26), the tune of a woman who chooses her state of mourning as a state in which she bears witness to the changing times following her father's death unaided and unattended.

It is in this state of mourning that *Imoinda* chooses to love Prince Oko and follow her heart, going against the taboo of her community that does not grant women the right

to choose (p. 66), a state of mourning that writes her/story against that of her community, a story that grows out of her resolution to abide by her love for Oko against the King's wishes. When chosen by Chief Sitiangolu as his bride and given to him as a prize by the King, Imoinda does not fear the risk of remaining faithful to her love, Oko, a faith that they both pay for dearly by being sold at the gates of the community as slaves. Wounded by their act of defiance, the King sells his own son and Imoinda, the witch as he calls her for her unwomanly like demeanor (p. 80), across the gates to the slave trade that has already begun propagating the submarine culture of black bodies in the depths of the Atlantic and growing the seeds of the plantation farms in the Christian lands of the Americas already colonized by the European empires of the 15 and 16th centuries. Punished for breaking the taboo and disobeying the law of the father, Imoinda and Oko cross the Atlantic on a slave ship, a “nightmare canoe, a ship of slaves, of fools of thieves” (p. 88) to meet their faith on the plantations where denied of their human existence, they are used as the chattel of colonial modernity.

Unlike Prince Oko who falls once he begins to resist and then meets his death in captivity, Imoinda begins to grow while resisting and refuses to abide by the law of the community, the “law of the father: this case being the law of the King. Imoinda refuses to obey only to find herself on a slaveship where she becomes “Number one, six, nine” (p. 96). And yet on deck of “the nightmare canoe” where “dreams come cheap” and bodies with “mouths stuffed with rope” are raped, “tossed and dashed and tossed again” (p. 96), Imoinda stands up to remember the forgetting that the whip is trying to enforce and encourage and inspire the chorus of women to resist “flying to the bottom of the sea” to “find the portal back to old Guinea” (p. 96). She holds them back from the leap of death and in the “trap of the hole” of the nightmare canoe, she asks them not only to remember who they are but also to remember that the whip alone cannot make them forget unless they succumb to it and dive into the sea.

Imoinda:

To be sure even a nightmare canoe
Must wash us up some place, some day. Courage!
And should anyone gain the chance, send word
to the children and menfolk, our brothers.

Esteizme:

Yes. Always, there is something we can do.
Remember and this will see us through.

Imoinda:

Can't forget who we are; she speaks true.
What we remember, the whip can't undo. (p. 63)

More than remembering the land they left behind, Imoinda asks them to remember the forgetting that they are being subjected to, numbered as they are as chattel with their humanity painstakingly peeled off their skin through the repetitive acts of torture and pain and rape. Fully aware of being in between life and death, presence and absence, Imoinda inspires and is inspired by the chorus of women to pursue the possibility of life even under these conditions of inhumanity.

Imoinda's act of remembering the forgetting, or to use Toni Morrison's term, her act of engaging a rememory (Morrison, 2005), is an act that founds an impossible and yet present community in the making. As the chorus and Imoinda form a relationship of call and response, shifting the positions of agency and reception, caller and listener, they slowly begin to arise as singularities who, albeit forced to lose their names, work together to retain their sense of being in the world in such a way that their being matters to the world despite and against the inhuman and reifying conditions that deprive them of their humanity. They do so by clinging to each other, by informing each other of the need to hope and dream and envision. This kind of work that these women begin to do together on the deck of the slave ship is of course at the risk of being devoured by the "stranglehold of darkness" that runs "deeper than the heart of the forest" (Anim-Addo, 2008: 88) every time the whiplash scars the body and tries to erase its power to remember and hold on to its humanity by reducing it to silence, the silence that Oko calls "the sting of skin on my skin" (p. 94) when the only memory and language that is left is that of pain and torture. But in the midst of that dehumanizing and real possibility of the "whip scourging our memories lest we remember/teaching the lesson we dare not forget" (p. 122), Imoinda and her chorus are at work to (re)create a vision of a human community at the same time that they are forced into the vicious circle of slave labor.

Expropriated from her community in the Old Guinea and thrust into the slave plantation economy of the Caribbean colonies, Imoinda, Esteizme, initially her aide and then her friend, and a chorus of deracinated women, engender their own community of survival, testimony and perseverance under and against the dehumanizing conditions of colonial modernity. By encouraging Imoinda to survive Oroonoko's heroic death and keep her baby, the offspring of her rape by the white plantation masters, these women seal the future of their community in the Caribbean diaspora formed out of colonial modernity, the Atlantic slave trade, their shared, albeit unevenly, histories of expropriation, slavery, racism and their struggles of resistance and independence. With their support, Imoinda mothers the daughter of this future diaspora by choosing to bear witness to conditions of oppression that aim at dehumanizing and thereby ideologically accounting for the inhuman treatment of the slaves. This act of witnessing that bears her offspring, the daughter of this community of women and mother of the diasporic communities to come, is not only an act of survival and testimony, but also an act of community making against the system of the

slave plantation that aims at depriving the slaves of all acts of bonding and affiliation in order to reduce them to chattel.

Forced to work on the slave plantation as numbered tools and incarcerated in a vicious productive cycle that exhausts their humanity, Imoinda and her community imagine and thus engender another kind of counter-hegemonic work, freed from the teleology of production and its accountable visibility, a work that contributes to a community-in-the-making that does not make itself immediately available for communication and consumption. This counter-hegemonic and imaginative work, which is the work of remembering the forgetting and ultimately envisioning a future without oppression, is the process by which a community will form its new ties, its new names and ultimately its new her/histories, even under this inhuman condition of systematic oppression and exploitation. This imaginative making is always already at risk, threatened not only by the white master and the tightly regulated system of production and power, but also and mainly by the discursive and hegemonic practices of the masters' white and predominantly christian world that lies in the near future that awaits this community that finds its grassroots in Imoinda and the chorus' acts.

In the last act of the play, Imoinda, torn by Prince Oko's death, first grabs the knife to "embrace death" and put an end to the pain that "gnaws at her insides" (Anim-Addo, 2008: 91); right at this moment, Esteizme reminds her of the responsibility that she bears for the baby that is coming into this world:

Esteizme:

You have no choice

Imoinda:

What life is this without choice? Birth here? What life is this?

I will not have a pikin in whose face

I'll see my own humiliation every day. It is the massa's.

Let him scrape it from this blood fed soil. (pp. 91-92)

But the Woman, representing the community of women slaves, reminds her:

In order to cross the river

We must first build the bridge...

Your back, my child is a bridge...

And Bridges come in different size shape and look but are bridges for all that.

(p. 93)

Through this call and response, which signifies the enslaved women's resistance and submission to slavery, Imoinda finally delivers not her desired warrior but a girl that in her mother's amniotic fluid "brings together the waters of five rivers" (pp. 94-95), the five rivers of the African continent here invoked as the time and space of origin not to be forgotten. Counter to the bleak present, the baby girl is the hope for a new

life in the land that she will claim as hers by trans-relating expropriation with exappropriation, dispossession from one's community with the making of a community of expropriated and deracinated constituencies. Seeing her baby as the bridge between life and death, sorrow and hope, Imoinda recognizes the power of her choice to keep her, the empowering act of choosing life in the midst of death, a life of remembering not to forget, a difficult life, "only life of sorts" (p. 95), and yet a life that can still claim the final victory. This final act performed by Imoinda, Esteizme and the community of women epitomizes their counter-hegemonic and imaginative work at hand. It is through this act that the bridge is kept for the forgetting to be undone in the present and the future yet-to-come to arrive, and it is through this bridge that the text of Imoinda intertwines the event and narratives of post and neocoloniality in the present.

In this light, as a voice and text from the discomfort zone of Eurocentric discourses, Imoinda is not a voice only of the past – the Eurocentric order established by the nexus of imperialism and colonialism – but also of the present – global capitalism and exploitation. Imoinda, Esteizme and the women's act of making a community in a world where they are forced to lose their names and be wrenched away from all ties put forth a claim for a different kind of community, the community of the unconstituted, un-representable constituencies, the constituencies who have been violently wrenched from their native communities and have been deprived of the right to any kind of community. These minor, albeit singular and thereby rich in potential, lives signify what the current debates on the global and the local often forget to remember: the question of representation and identity not only for the post-national, post-colonial and post-modern subjects, but also for those unconstituted, un-representable others whose presence is more than just the epidermis of the local. It is the subject matter of living in differentiated and yet affiliated, interculturally intertwined and overlapping temporalities, where the human subject, the story and history of her community, is not one.

It is through this act of choice connecting in a disjunctive and uneven way Imoinda's past with our global present that Imoinda's minor history signifies the specter, a crucial concept-metaphor that Derrida has coined to name and give presence to the residue of transnational capitalism and its official discourses of history and memory, the revenant who always already returns to haunt memory and belonging in a present that has repressed a certain memory and history of the past. The specter is the persistent trace of the life of a constituency, her community and their respective histories and stories, so rich in detail and knowledge, which have been consciously erased by discourse, occluded by law, systematically exploited by capitalism and silenced by history only to be forgotten in the "name of progress"; the forgetting of that which the specter represents necessitates, if we choose to dismiss its address, another forgetting, the forgetting of forgetting. In Freudian terms, the specter

emanates from a “denial” whose entire structure is then haunted by the spectral silhouette put under erasure but never erased. Imoinda’s haunting thus points both to what Mignolo has called the “denial of co-evalness” (2000: 310), which results from a Eurocentric mapping of the world and its consequent “subalternization of knowledges and cultural production throughout the planet” (p. 310) that attempt to misplace and forget the “other”; and a denial of this denial, which suddenly recognizes the world as a possible global design of even interdependencies and exchanges. Out of this world that Imoinda’s haunting invokes, thus critically rewriting the present as well as the past, Imoinda emerges as she who will lose her name only to engender the possibilities for a new one in a future anterior, maybe not just now, but in the yet to come.

Imoinda is a text that stages the work of relation formed under oppression as the work of community-making under inhuman circumstances. The text counterwrites rather than revises Behn’s text by giving voice to a shadowy figure, Imoinda, who comes to represent the black expropriated woman and her ways of resistance and strategies of survival in the colony. This counterwriting is historically and politically significant for it does not restrict itself to telling Behn’s story better; the details of the lives are still elliptical, the silences of what has truly happened are still there, unaccommodated by speech, the loss of memory and the physical and mental suffering of expropriation still leave their indelible marks on the bodies. What changes is the exposition of the work that this expropriated constituency, the black woman, makes, which is the work of community. Thus, Imoinda and the women who surround her, a chorus of supporting and acting agents rather than bystanding commentators, hold Imoinda’s baby daughter, born under slavery, the offspring of rape and torture, as the promise of the future delivered in the present. This baby represents “bridges” to the past and the future, and secures the passage from expropriation to “exappropriation” (Derrida, 1994: 112), that is, to repossessing, reclaiming, reconfiguring the world at hand from within the history of deracination and colonization. Imoinda opens the act of translation on the level of history and epistemology: to tell a different story of what happened means to reconfigure the concepts that lost their meaning. Reconfiguration is a “translational” (Bhabha) act; it examines the transformation of a concept through the work that follows the loss of an origin and its untimely reconstellation in a new context where new meanings, new values, new associations will be forged. This “new”, in the case of Imoinda, is the community that she makes with the other slave women, securing and nurturing the promise for a diasporic community in the future, is not empty of the past, nor is it empty of meaning; but it comes to presence (it is a presence-ing, an open process of community formation) only through the new conditions forcing connections of domination and control, but also affiliations and contact zones between different cultures and traditions.

Written in the form of a libretto and using the structures of the genre of tragedy, *Imoinda* conjures the representational frame of Western narratives and their origins in the Graeco-roman tradition. Indeed, both the Italian opera and the tragic elements are combined to narrate an-other history, the history of the gendered and racialized subject who becomes expropriated from her world to mother the diaspora to come, the history of the gendered subaltern whose story is left unrepresented, an archival detail, in the dominant discourses of the western and the postcolonial nations – after all as a “she,” she is only matter to the nation, a body to be torn, reshaped, violated, conquered – the history of the black woman slave as the agent of history who mothers and enables the growth of the Caribbean diaspora. The reconstellation of these predominantly western genres in what has been represented as the history of the other is not a simple act of appropriation of western aesthetics. The text becomes a site of affiliation and contrapuntality between the oppositional histories it conjures in order to narrate them concurrently rather than only through their binary oppositions. As a tragic subject of coloniality, *Imoinda*’s specter – her history as the specter that haunts Western imperialism, and her body as the specter of the diaspora she founds with her daughter – resists its ontological and political depravity and dares imagine a world of justice and democracy beyond that – the symbolic significance of “building bridges” in the text.

56 In this light, the telling of the story of *Imoinda* does not only contribute to the “palimpsestic narrative” (Spivak) of imperialism; it also translates the story into the history of a “signifying minority” (Anim-Addo, 2009:124)⁴ by reconfiguring the epistemological concepts on which this history centers: expropriation engenders exappropriation, loss engenders survival, deracination engenders community making. Through this process of translation, the history of minority signifies the connected, albeit discrepant, affiliated, albeit uneven, histories of “signifying minorities”. Anim Addo’s term signifies the singular story of the constituency made an exception by the processes of exceptionalism, the history of the past, namely, the history of the community from which this constituency was wrenched and of which she was deprived, and the history of the present, the making of a diasporic, intercultural community. People “do not live on exception” but on “relation” (Glissant, 1997: 8); intercultural translation as a practice that excavates affiliations and reconfigures the concepts to address them is a postnational, creolizing and hybrid act that defies epistemological, cultural and linguistic borders and affirms the contact zones of cultures, languages and narratives without glossing over the gaps, differences, and oppositions. It is an agonistic act that tries to promote intercultural dialogue and

⁴ Anim-Addo’s term is powerfully affiliated with Sylvia Wynter’s 1990 essay, *On disenchanting discourse: ‘minority’ literary criticism and beyond* and her analysis of the responsibility of the “minority” critic to disenchant rather than affirm the West as the authentic, “glittering” source of myth, history and discourse. See Shirley Toland Dix’s analysis of Wynter in *The hills of Hebron: Sylvia Wynter’s disruption of the narrative of the nation* and Anim-Addo’s analysis of Wynter’s thinking in *Touching the body*.

“democratic criticism” (Said, 2004). It can contribute to the questioning of and quest for a democracy that “begins with two” and that, following Luce Irigaray’s poetic analysis, “renounces the desire to possess the other in order to recognize him as other” in order to move in the “history of the relations between the genders but also of that between races, generations, traditions” (2000: 6), cultures and communities.

Anim-Addo’s intertextual, interdiscursive, and intercultural libretto excavates and rewrites those ruins and fragments of history that, occluded by the master narratives of history, persist as they have their own stories to tell. By imagining and performing the affiliations within which the subjects of colonial modernity resist, form communities and survive the present, Anim-Addo’s Imoinda represents the possibilities of these colonized subjects’ community-to-come; these communities founded in the deep waters of the Atlantic, disseminated in the diasporic cultures of the Caribbean Sea, emerge not only as Imoinda’s immediate and bleak community on the slave plantation but also as the shared, albeit disconnected, communities of the diasporic and dispossessed peoples proliferated by the imperialist and capitalist routes across the Atlantic and other slave-trade zones, the communities of a shared fate, as Etienne Balibar has put it, of a global and postnational, and yet still trapped in localisms and nationalisms, present. By opening to this present, Anim-Addo’s libretto challenges our understanding of the present as a present that can no longer be thought in strictly national, religious and/or ethnic terms as it posits the need to rethink the political in terms that require the critical praxis of a postnational imaginary, what I would like to call the praxis of ontopolitical critique.

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LIVING THE ARCHIVE: JOAN ANIM-ADDO AND THE CASE OF *IMOINDA*

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“Memory ... is the activity that fuels the imagining of the past and the remembrance of the future.” (Nourbese Philip, 2002: 4)

This paper is part of a larger project in which I seek to challenge the traditional notion of the archive, replacing it with the paradigm of the creolised black female body as living archive. In considering the notion of ‘archive’ the following questions are of concern: What is an archive? Who creates the archive? Who maintains it and who are the users of it? Jacques Derrida points out that “nothing is less clear today than the word ‘archive’” (Derrida, 1998: 90). This is due, in part, to the cross-disciplinary nature of the term ‘archive’ and the way in which it has expanded. In effect and for the purposes of this paper, I wish to argue that the archive has become creolised. If this hypothesis holds, how does this process of creolisation reconfigure the archive?

From Derrida’s psychoanalytical reading of the concept of the archive to Michel Foucault’s definition of what the archive is not, that is, not “the library of all libraries” and not “that which collects the dust” but rather “the system of utterability” and the “law of what can be said”, the debates surrounding the archive continue to explore it as a physical site and also as an “imaginative site” with the boundaries constantly shifting (Voss & Werner, 1999: i). Antoinette Burton in *Dwelling in the archive* (2003) defined ‘archive’ firstly as a “source of evidence” and secondly, “to indicate that a text can itself be an enduring site of historical evidence and historiographical opportunity in and for the present” (Burton, 2003: 5). It is this notion of the archive that I wish to interrogate.

Much like the term ‘archive’, it is difficult to use the term ‘creolisation’, due to its varied applications, without expanding on the context in which it is to be placed. Kamau Brathwaite’s Creole-society thesis in his seminal work *The development of Creole society in Jamaica* defines ‘creolisation’ as the process of social and cultural change

“based upon the stimulus/response of individuals within the society to their environment and – as white/black, culturally discrete groups – to each other (Brathwaite, 2005: 296).

Édouard Glissant sees ‘creolisation’ as a “‘limitless métissage, its elements diffracted and its consequences unforeseeable’”. He posits ‘métissage’ as the meeting and synthesis of two differences. He states that

“Creolisation carries along then into the adventure of multilingualism and into the incredible explosion of cultures.” (Glissant, 2006: 34)

In addition, Joan Anim-Addo takes the process of ‘creolisation’ one step further articulating that

“African-Caribbean women writers, in negotiating the written text, enter also a syncretic creolised space ... the creolised text which results is a complex product demanding of critical reading sensitized to the social, historical and cultural mix out of which it was forged.” (Covi et al., 2007: 229)

Using Burton’s theoretical frame alongside Brathwaite’s ‘response of individuals within the society to their environment’, Glissant’s ‘explosion of cultures’ and Anim-Addo’s ‘creolised text’ I wish to show how Anim-Addo, an African-Caribbean woman, author, historian and literary critic has used Aphra Behn’s *Oroonoko* (1688) as a ‘source of evidence’ and created a new and contemporary creolised archive in her libretto, *Imoinda*, which was first published as a bilingual translation in 2003. In this re-writing of Behn’s *Oroonoko*, the African princess arrives in the Caribbean and is not yet creolised. That is yet-to-come. History is a story/an account/a lived experience which becomes memory and in turn is history whether written or not. Yet, Glissant describes history as being

“destined to be pleasure or distress on its own terms. After being folktale, story, or speech, after being record, statistic, and verification, after being a universal, systematic, and imposed whole, history insofar as it is the “reflection” of a collective consciousness today is concerned with the obscure areas of lived reality.” (1999: 69)

I argue that in *Imoinda*, Anim-Addo is able to recreate, as defined by Glissant, the ‘pleasure or distress on its own terms’ in the creole-yet-to-come. Drawing on Burton’s notion that ‘family history is a commemorative practice that creates a very specific kind of archive’ and on Anim-Addo’s theoretical work on Creolisation and Carnival, this paper seeks to examine the creole-yet-to-come in Anim-Addo’s *Imoinda* and the ways in which the text helps (re)create some of the missing archive of Eastern Caribbean Creole women’s voices. *Imoinda*, a play for twelve voices divided into three acts is all about memory – a text about remembering without having really had that experience. Act one portrays nobility, love, jealousy and revenge leading up to the

middle passage. Act two sees our protagonists aboard the ‘nightmare canoe’ destined for new lands and Act three ends with the plantation and the birth of the Caribbean nation. Of that tortuous journey on the middle passage Marlene Nourbese Philip writes:

“When the African came to the New World, she brought with her nothing but her body and all the memory and history which that body could contain.” (2002: 4)

Imoinda’s story is the black female body arriving in the new world and this body contains the past, the present and the future. Anim-Addo in rewriting Behn’s *Oroonoko* proclaims that the black woman is not silenced; she writes,

“What Behn does not know in 1688 is that we survived. Imoinda survives. Her descendants will rewrite that shared story.” (2008: 80)

That shared story is both creolised history and ‘family’ history about which Anim-Addo has also written extensively. In *Caribbean-Scottish Relations*, Anim-Addo questions the process of the “oral word becoming historical knowledge” (Covi et al., 2007: 46). In terms of archival traces for Caribbean family history she has argued that our stories are absent from the “growing body of historical words of the region” (p. 47) and describes herself as an archaeologist attempting to find “long-buried fragments ... to place them coherently together” (p. 53).

To contextualise the publication process of *Imoinda*, the unpublished manuscript of *Imoinda* first came into fruition seventeen years ago in 1996. Later on an excerpt from this manuscript was performed in the Conservatory at the Horniman Museum in London. The ‘long-buried fragments’ describe Anim-Addo’s archival search. In an interview given in 2007 she describes the process as it came to fruition:

“During the early nineties I did a great deal of research on Caribbean history. Really, I was searching for the presence of African-Caribbean women. I was really trying to construct a history, a literary history of African-Caribbean women, and in order to do so, I retraced my steps ... back to Aphra Behn as a crucial point. It wasn’t clear to me how crucial it was at the time ... I simply had to write Imoinda’s story.” (p. 213)

Michael Shanks, in a talk delivered at the Media X Conference in the USA in 2008, spoke about archaeology as another kind of ‘memory practice where past is translated into present’, declaring that ‘we are all archaeologists now’. He argued that ‘archives are all about narratives of origin, identity and belonging, and the politics of ownership, organization, access and use’. By excavating Imoinda from Behn’s text, Anim-Addo has claimed ‘ownership, organisation, access and use’ taking Imoinda from the page to the stage and back to the page.

Likewise, Brent Harris in *Refiguring the archive* (2002) writes of the past that is contained within the archive as being “constantly revisited, re-read, reappraised,

reinterpreted, revised and rewritten” (2002: 162). I wish to suggest that in the case of *Imoinda*, Anim-Addo, has succeeded with this revisioning, re-reading, re-appraising, re-interpreting and re-writing. As stated by Nourbese Philip, Anim-Addo has been able to define Imoinda’s character with the “text of the Africans’ history and memory ... inscribed upon and within that body” (2002: 5). This body in turn becomes the archive containing all the tools that are necessary for spiritual and cultural survival resulting in a creolised archive that is important in “balancing the relationships between history and memory” (p. 5).

It is this memory, then, that Beryl Gilroy refers to when she writes of “mothers who learn to pass on to youth traditional or tribal knowledge of what must be remembered” (Gilroy, 2002: 114) and this is what Anim-Addo does with her text. Using the trope of storytelling passed down to her by her own grandmother, Anim-Addo operates within Gay Wilentz’s (1992) framework of ‘generational continuity’ which is seen predominately as a woman’s domain. In her telling of Imoinda’s story Anim-Addo is able to “extend the cultural practices of the communities to the words on a page” (Wilentz, 1992: 117).

Examples of ‘cultural practices of the communities’ can be seen throughout the text with Anim-Addo’s use of the female chorus who act as the foundation for Imoinda’s survival. Aboard the ‘nightmare canoe’ they sing:

Chorus: I am number eighty three
 Best to forget. Raped again yesterday
 Mouth stuffed with rope.
 Tossed and dashed and tossed again.
 Some new terror strikes the nightmare canoe. (2008: 62)

Of the Chorus, Natasha Bonnelame writes, ‘they are the sounds of the drums and the women wailing in Old Guinea, they are the collective and the keepers of the slave’s histories’. Bonnelame argues further that the Chorus becomes the slave songs of the plantation community, safeguarding the ancestral history of Old Guinea which Imoinda is destined to pass down to future generations (2010: 228). This then is the creolised black female body as archive.

Anim-Addo’s use of “repetition and re-enforcement” (Gilroy, 2002: 14) imprints the pathways for cultural survival on the brain. At the same time, her use of Opera as a medium for telling Imoinda’s story, bridges the “oral and the written narrative creating a space which at once speaks of the individual, and the multiple voices of the African presence in the Americas” (Bonnelame, 2010: 229). These strategies alert the reader to the fact that “memory sees more than the eye” (Gilroy, 2002: 114). Gilroy argues that women writers use memory to “grasp consciousness and challenge the

currency of existence” (pp. 114-15). Anim-Addo’s portrayal of Imoinda is in line with Gilroy’s theory that “we use our bodies as store houses of hurt and graveyards of pain, anguish or terror” (p. 115). Imoinda’s body is subject to hurt, pain, anguish and terror – sold to the slave traders, trapped on board the “nightmare canoe, raped by the overseer and finally giving birth to the child of her abuser. Imoinda’s story then is one of multiple memories which reside and remain in the body” (Brown-Hinds, 2002: 99). In 2009 with support from the Arts and Humanities Research Council in England, I was able to organise a one day workshop entitled *Words from other worlds: critical perspectives on Imoinda*. This workshop enabled trans-global conversations to take place among academics and postgraduate students from a range of disciplines including literature, museum studies, design and art. I highlight this workshop for a particular reason which will become transparent further on.

If we think back to the first performance of *Imoinda* in the nineties and interrogate it in terms of performance archive theory there are a number of factors that come into play. On the one hand there is the argument that ‘the only trace of the live performance event can and should be the audience’s memory’. It is suggested that a live performance is

“an event for that moment in time, for that [audience] in that place – and it’s gone. gone without a trace ... the only witnesses were the people present; the only record is what they retained.” (Reason, 2003: 85-86)

In contrast, it has been argued that the performance leaves much more behind than has been captured in the audience’s memory, for example, costumes and sets, musical scores, programmes and reviews, photographs and video recordings. Matthew Reason has argued that “anything that is remotely associated with the performance can belong to an archive” (2003: 83). By this he means that if we take the published editions of *Imoinda* and indeed the one-day workshop mentioned earlier and all of the resulting documentation, web site and publications, what transpires is that additional resources have been created to add to the performance archive that is *Imoinda*.

Concluding with some further deliberation on the question of the archive, I wish to suggest that not only is Anim-Addo living the archive but in the case of *Imoinda*, she has been able to create a ‘double archive’ as well as a ‘creolised archive’. That is to say, not only is Imoinda archived within the text but through the operatic performances that have occurred and are still to come. As this paper is being written I am aware that a large-scale choral piece, composed by Odaline de la Martinez, and developed from Anim-Addo’s libretto, *Imoinda*, is due to be performed by the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra in April 2013 in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. This new performance piece is entitled *The Crossing*. This new performance and everything that has gone before only serves to reiterate Reason’s suggestion that the researcher, in this instance Anim-Addo, has

been able to create this double and creolised archive “constructing, selecting, editing and speaking for the archive” confirming that “as you perform, you must record, and as you create you must document” (2008: 84-85).

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‘JAB JAB IS WE TING’: A SOCIO-POLITICAL ANALYSIS OF JAB JAB MAS IN GRENADA

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Overture

*A man in a coffin playin dead / A nex one wid ah ole pig head / Colouring in he
mouth so red / I never see ah jab so dread / And now de ting so contagious / There is
ah jab in all of us* Tallpree,
Jab all over, 2011

It is five o’ clock in the morning. The cannon on Fort George explodes. At this signal, the Grenadian day bursts open and waiting revelers pour down Market Hill. They have come from numerous communities: St. Paul’s, Belmont, Springs, Happy Hill and River Road, their semi-naked bodies blackened with ‘ole oil’; their heads covered by pòts onto which cow horns have been affixed; their tongues reddened with annatto. The pieces of salt meat that are lodged between clamped teeth create a blood-like dribble which snakes down blackened faces. Cow chains and hemp ropes connect the revelers to each other. Conch shells and make-shift clackers merge with the sounds of chanting voices to create the noisy, catchy syncopation to which these J’Ouvert¹ revelers chip. This is Jab Jab Mas’²! This is the story Grenadians now tell about themselves.

Background

“I had seen the Carnival at Florence, at Syria, in Greece and in Rome.; and was now about to witness a negro masquerade, which from its squalid splendour was not unamusing, cheapness being the grand requisite.” Charles William Day, 1852.

It is generally believed that it was the French planter colonists who brought carnival to the Eastern and Southern Caribbean. Derived from the Italian word *carne vale* or goodbye to meat, carnival was a European festival that ritualized the last permitted

¹ The word J’Ouvert comes from two French words: *jour*, meaning ‘day’, and *ouvert*, meaning ‘open’. In islands where there are carnivals, J’Ouvert – which begins at dawn – marks the opening of the final two days of carnival.

² Mas’ is the shortened form of the word ‘masquerade’ or ‘masque’.

excesses before a period of abstinence in these catholic societies. Prior to emancipation



Figure 1 Jab Jab Nas in Grenada. Photo courtesy of Joshua Yetman, Spicemas, 2010

in islands such as Dominica, Martinique, St. Lucia, Grenada and Trinidad, carnival was a major social event for the white upper-class, creole population³. These Euro-creoles, anxious to prove that in those outposts of empire they were maintaining European civilities, engaged in a round of festivities from Christmas through to Lent, many of which reenacted the more decorous aspects of carnival. Accordingly, in their Caribbean iterations, these carnivals, drawing somewhat on masque traditions (also a feature of English societies), typically comprised masked balls, house-visiting, the street promenading of masked revelers – usually prominent members of society who saw fit to conceal their identities. The masques would be accompanied by small musical bands made up of fifes, violins, guitars, military drums, tambourines and castanets. In his article, *Carnival in Nineteenth century Trinidad*, Andrew Pearce describes these festivities as marking the end of the social season and quoting liberally from F. W. N. Bayley, *The four years in the West Indies*, notes Europeans' reactions to these cultural performances. Bayley seemed overwhelmed by the wondrous spectacle of carnival: "Ovid's metamorphoses was nothing compared to the changes that took place in the persons of the Catholics of Trinidad. High and low, rich and

³ Creole here refers to being born in the Caribbean.

poor, learned and unlearned, all found masking suits for the carnival” (Pearse, 1956: 180).

The generous inclusiveness of this statement notwithstanding, carnival in Eastern and Southern Caribbean slave societies was not an event in which the entire population participated. While free colored and blacks may have held festivities during this period, typically “the free persons of Colour were subjected to very strident Regulations and although not forbidden to mask, were yet compelled to keep to themselves and never presume to join in the amusement of the more privileged class.”⁴ The largest population group – the enslaved Afro-creoles – undoubtedly attracted to the theatricality and music of these masques, were not allowed to freely participate in these activities. Nonetheless as they looked on (not as spectators since they were restricted to their quarters, but as servants assisting their masters), they would have found correspondences between the pageantry being enacted and the cultural traditions they had left behind in Africa.

But in smaller Eastern Caribbean islands, carnival may well have brought different racial groups into socially-sanctioned contact. In 1829, one year before he published his account on Trinidad’s carnival, Bayley had written on carnival in Grenada. In *The island Bagatelle; containing poetical enigmas on the estates of each parish on the Island of Grenada*, Bayley describes his experience of a masque involving masked bandits forcibly entering the drawing room where ladies are attending, and staging a mock hold-up which elicits from the women, first screams of fright then laughter as these bandits are expelled by the gentlemen in the room. In Bayley’s account, the identities of the masked men remain uncertain. However, he goes on to describe the dancing which ensues and then a performance by “a masked group of negro boys and girls, who danced for a while, after the chimney sweepers on the first of May. . .” (p. 480). This account suggests that the enslaved were allowed to perform at these small indoor events, albeit these masques seem rather innocuous and lack the hyperbolic flair with which he later describes Trinidad’s masques. The co-opting of the enslaved African to perform in these masques may be a function of the small population of whites in Grenadian society; the Fedon rebellion in 1798 having seen the exodus of many French planters from the island. In Bayley’s account it is noteworthy that many of the liberties allowed the enslaved at yuletide – the practice of bands of slaves visiting houses and being rewarded with food and drink for their singing and dancing – are permitted at carnival. In Grenada as in Trinidad at Christmastime, when they were permitted to celebrate the yuletide season and when they had relative freedom to move from plantation to plantation, the enslaved population amused themselves with

⁴ Here John Cowley in *Carnival, canboulay and calypso* is quoting from L.M. Fraser who in 1881 is remarking on carnival in the past. Cowley also details that masking became disallowed in 1833, he also mentions instances of arrests being made. These details suggest that in the years immediately preceding the abolition of slavery, perhaps because of the ongoing threat of civil unrest, there was stricter policing of the activities of certain social groups.

reinterpretations or re-enactments of the masques they had seen performed at carnival time.⁵ Christmas and carnival traditions were slowly being fused by the Euro-Creoles as well as the Afro-Creole population, a fusion that was to continue as a creolization process, one which was at the same time contributing to the dynamism of carnival. In *Singing and dancing in a strange land*, Peter Roberts opines that carnival in the colonial West Indies brought together different colonial and religious traditions and attributes the complex development of carnival in the English colonies of the West Indies to this cross-fertilization (p. 120). Complexity notwithstanding, the infectious high spirits, the playfulness and buffoonery remained integral to these festivities.

With the abolition of slavery, the newly-freed were at liberty to publicly promote their modes of entertainment and revelry. Simultaneously freedom-celebrating, imitative and subversive, Carnival was one of the primary festivals where the Afro-Creole exploited to the full the opportunity to express his creative reinterpretations of these European-derived spectacles. West African song, dance and cultural expressions were grafted onto a creolized European masquerade culture. It is no surprise therefore that colonial reports on post emancipation carnivals, rife as they were with descriptors such as 'coarse', 'vulgar' and 'obscene', reflected a deep disquiet at the intense enthusiasm with which these carnivals were now being celebrated by the underclass population. Witnessing what he termed "the squalid splendor" of carnival in 1847 Trinidad, Charles William Day provides a lengthy report which culminates in the following telling lines: "all parties with the assistance of bands of execrable music, made a tremendous uproar; and most of us were glad when the priestly saturnalia was over". As the Trinidadian newspapers at the time made clear, in the opinions of the European visitors, and the Euro-creoles, Afro-Creole carnival had become synonymous with pandemonium.

Devil Mas'

Speaking to the ubiquitous presence of the devil figure in masquerades, Terry Castle in *Masquerade and civilization: the carnivalesque in eighteenth-century English culture and fiction* offers the following commentary: "Satanic costumes seem to be both a vestige of the *grand diablerie* traditions of the European world and a humorous acknowledgement of the Devil's paradigmatic role . . . in the invention of masquerade" (p. 64). The prevalence of the devil figure may well be a function of

⁵ In *Sketches of character, in illustration of the habits, occupation and costume of the Negro population in the island of Jamaica*, Isaac Belisario describes the Jonkonno Christmas street theatre enacted by the enslaved and later emancipated Africans in the island of Jamaica as a tropical carnival "streets were thronged with forms as varied and as hideous, as a mind disturbed by 'blue devils' could well have conjured up, and the scene might not inaptly have been styled as a tropical carnival." In this instance the word 'carnival' is not being applied to a pre-Lenten festival, but rather is being used to describe a festival of merriment. See also Daniel Miller's claim in *Modernity, an ethnographic approach: dualism and mass consumption in Trinidad* that "the elements which are today associated with Carnival arose originally in Trinidad and indeed in the Caribbean more generally, under the auspices of Christmas" (p. 131).

carnival's pre-Lenten location in the religious calendar. Not only did it presage the forty days of Lent wherein there would be the ongoing temptation of Christ by Lucifer, but carnival had historically licensed boundary violations, be they of class, gender or ethnicities. Devils, dragons, beasts were all part of this repertoire of wildness, excesses that would, with the onset of Lent and the mortifying of the flesh, be brought into temporary subjugation. The devil figure appears in the Caribbean carnivals, first in European masques and then in creolized versions of these masques. When the devil figure was co-opted by the emancipated slaves as part of their masquerade or Devil Mas' in the form of the Jab Jab and the Jab Molasi, it gave the Afro-Creole a space wherein to perform transgression. The religious education to which they had been exposed had portrayed devils as outsiders turned out from heaven, rendered homeless. This would have had strong resonance for a race of people who were themselves disposed and unaccommodated because of historical and socio-economic circumstances. Nonetheless, playing the devil did not mean surrendering to defeat especially as Lucifer's expulsion from heaven did not result in servile surrender, but in the accelerating of the deviance that had initially occasioned his exile. This dialectic of rebellion and exclusion was at the heart of this form of masque, and accounts for its prevalence. Improvised and protean, Devil Mas' served as a reminder of the threats to hegemonic rule, of the wildness that could potentially resist containment. History, memory, identity and culture were being performed on and through the body which became both a conduit for artistic expression and a site of resistance.



Figure 2 Melton Prior, *Illustrated London News*, 1888

Depicting carnival in 1888 Trinidad, Melton Prior draws attention to the whiteface masks worn by the revelers. In his tableau different groups of revelers: bands of devils, sailors and prostitutes are dancing together, as was the practice on the last day of carnival. Of note too are the censoring, white spectators aloof in the overhead verandahs and the white clerics making their way on foot through the throngs of people, and exposing themselves to the playful taunts of the masqueraders. The masking that was integral to these performances served as both a demonstration of creativity as well as a self-serving means of disguise lest those in authority should seek to punish revelers for perceived acts of transgression. For even while there was a semblance of freedom, the revelers were well aware that their actions were being policed by those who held social and political power. There was always the knowledge that subversive behavior could be noted and acts of mockery punished.

Speaking specifically to a Grenadian socio-cultural context, the modern day Devil Mas' evolved from Diab Molasi (Jab Molasi), a character who was also part of Trinidad's traditional carnival. The expression *diab molasi* translated from French Creole means a 'molasses devil' and this figure was so named because the body of the reveller was liberally covered with molasses.⁶ The Diab Molasi in Grenada, as in Trinidad, wore a costume that consisted of swimming trunks or shorts to which was attached a long tail made of wire, and a vest or shirt with sleeves cut off. The headdress comprised a hood with stuffed cloth horns. The Jab Molasi was usually accompanied by a group of small boys, one boy carrying an extra bucket of grease with which to replenish the costume, the other boys carrying old pots or biscuit tins on which they drummed music. The Jab Molasi would threaten bystanders, first with their whips, later by dirtying them and were thus able to extract small sums of money from the spectators.⁷ In Grenada, this figure has in time come to be called Jab Jab. However it is important to point out that in nineteenth century Trinidad, the Jab Jab was known as a pretty devil and traditionally resembled a mediaeval jester. The costume worn by the Jab Jab consisted of satin pants which ended at the knees and shirt on to which were sewn different colored satin panels. Small bells were attached

⁶ In *Rituals of power and rebellion: the carnival tradition in Trinidad and Tobago 1763-1962*, Hollis 'Chalkdust' Liverpool makes the point that the newly-freed deliberately used molasses so as to remind their former enslavers that molasses, formerly produced through their unpaid labor, was now theirs to use and waste and they pleased (p. 239).

⁷ This Jab Jab figure also appears in St. Lucia's Christmas festivals as Papa Jab. As part of a street masquerade, Papa Jab wears a crocus-bag suit that is liberally bedaubed with a tar-mixture. He has a long wire tail, wears a long, false beard and carries a wooden trident in his hands. He is accompanied by *ti-Jabs* (little devils) who like the Grenada and Trinidad Jab Molasi wear nothing but ragged shorts and a generous coating of tar. These devil figures frighten children and threaten adults into handing over money. According to June Frederick in *Piti Kon Nou Piti*, Papa Djab chants the following in St. Lucian kweyol: "*Bay djab-la manjé en timanmay*." [Give the devil a child to eat] and his ti-djabs reply "*Yon, dé, twa timanmay*" [One two, three little children]. Daniel Crowley In "Festivals in the calendar of St. Lucia" describes these jabs as clapping their hands and singing different refrains, one of which is "*piti kô nu pit, a lâfè nu ka-alé*" [small as we are, to hell we are going.]. . . then they put on a kind of play . . . all of which is heartily enjoyed by the crowd" (p. 111). The Jabs are also accompanied by the masqueraded men wearing long dresses and carrying elaborate head pieces on which are sewn colourful pieces of cloth.

at the end of these satin pieces. The chest area of the shirt was adorned with a heart-shaped cloth panel decorated with swansdown, rhinestones and mirrors. This ensemble was completed by a headdress consisting of a hood with stuffed cloth horns. The Jab Jab carried a thick whip of plaited hemp which he swung threateningly at bystanders. In his article *The traditional masques of Carnival* the American anthropologist and folklorist, Daniel J. Crowley explains that this form of masque was also called ‘coolie devils’ because of the preponderance of East Indians participating in this pretty devil band.⁸ The Jab Jabs, according to Crowley’s designation, would have become popular in Trinidad’s carnival after the importation of indentured East Indians, that is, from 1845 through the beginning of the twentieth century. What remains common to both the Jab Molasi and the Jab Jab is the long whip used to terrorize spectators, a whip that can be read as the iconographic representation of the colonial terror under which both the East Indian and the freed slave still lived, a terror which was enforced through desperate economic circumstances, restricted legal recourse and great social disparity.

If, as earlier stated, the devil was seen as a counterdiscursive figure, then the continued presence of the devil figure in such carnivals is not surprising. There was however another masque tradition – the *negre jardin* – also at play. The *negre jardin* (field negro) performance, as described by John Cowley in *Carnival, canboulay and calypso*, was a popular masque performed by Euro-Creole planters. Donning the ragged dress of their enslaved field laborers and sooting their faces, arms and legs, these revelers paraded the streets, singing rude refrains to the beat of small African drums. They also reenacted the tableau of the harvesting of the cane, (*cannes brulées*) which marked the end of the plantation work cycle. This street dramatization, enacted with buffoonery and hilarity by European planters in blackface was very much in the spirit of symbolic inversion that carnival invites. While Euro-creoles were playing the enslaved, when the Afro-Creole played Mas’, he would take the liberty of playing planter/master/king. At the same time, satire was integral to these masques. They provided an opportunity for the freed to speak out against his former enslavement, the racism that had legitimized it, and those who transformed his misery into an occasion for play and laughter. I am suggesting that the devil masque and the *negre jardin* masque blended together, each softening itself into a Jab Molasi performance: the full red suit of the devil gives way to ragged shorts and make-shift vests, devil horns now adorn sooted foreheads and the whip remains – a symbol of power that is made more pronounced by the chanting music. The blackened body remained a site of discourse, although now the story being told was complicated by emotions darker than hilarity and conviviality.

⁸ In Grenada, this figure closely resembles the *Pierrot Grenade*. The cross-over of these traditional Mas’ figure is an indication of the cross-fertilization taking place because of migration between these two islands

Jab Jab is a Grenadian ‘Ting’

“The artistic development of a society cannot be understood outside of its social context”

Oliver Benoit (2011: 566)

The Jab figure has disappeared in traditional carnivals and festivals in most of the Caribbean but Grenada has managed to preserve and develop this aspect of its carnival festivities. It has been argued that urbanization is in part responsible for the demise of this traditional carnival character elsewhere. In Trinidad for example, with the disappearance of the Jab Jab and Jab Molasi also came the demise of other carnival figures such as the Dame Lorraine and the Midnight Robber. However, in the historical accounts of carnival in nineteenth century Trinidad society, the recording of the violence and social disruption that quickly came to characterize this festival and the establishment of laws restricting certain forms of behaviour and expressly forbidding masking may well account for the gradual reduction in popularity of this type of masque and its displacement by ‘Pretty Mas’.⁹ On the other hand, Grenadian society during this period was not marked by the same forms of overt mockery and criticism of the status quo or questioning of dominant discourses of power and authority. Although a peasant class was emerging and while as Beverly Steele posits in *Grenada: A History of its People*, this peasantry “would grow to become a new and important dimension in the economic and social history of Grenada” (p. 177), that time had not yet come. Power belonged unquestionably to the white Grenadian elite. Moreover, as Trinidadian society became more educated and by extension adoptive of Victorian modes of behaviour, it was the underclass aspiring to middle class values who were drawn to ‘Pretty Mas’ with its depictions of fancy sailors, wild Indians, pirates, dragons and the like. In his article *Traditional figures in Carnival: their preservation, development and interpretation* Errol Hill laments the demise of traditional masques in Trinidad’s carnival and argues for the creation of “the conditions in which traditional masquerades could be encouraged to bring their mas’ each year in the knowledge that they will be appreciated and appropriately rewarded for their efforts” (p. 18).

Devil Mas’ flourished in Grenada, not only because this society is largely conservative in its retention of traditional forms of community activities, but also because the low cost and simplicity of costume required to play Devil Mas’ has allowed for the perpetuation of this tradition. At the same time, it was a tradition that has gone largely undocumented. The fact that it was a form of masque played by poor blacks made it easy to overlook, unworthy of serious attention scholarly or otherwise. In 1917, Frederic Fenger in his travelogue essay *Black Mardi Gras* makes passing

⁹ Pretty Mas’ typically refers to costumed bands. These bands, depicting themes ranging from historical to the mythological and fantastical, appear in the streets on Carnival Monday and Tuesday and take part in State-sponsored competitions.

mention of the blackening of the Grenadian natives on Shrove Tuesday and provides an explanation of this Shrovetide activity as a British cultural inheritance. He reports that a resident British cocoa planter explains this covering of the body in soot and pitch as equivalent to the sackcloth and ashes donned for the Lenten season, but is careful to point out the ways in which the natives recalibrate this narrative of penance into a drama of vengeance, where they take revenge on those who have formerly offended them, by “running amuck and soiling the spectators’ clothes” (p. 725). Fenger’s interest however was on the “war that is waged between different Short Knee factions in the north of Grenada”, an indirect indication of the aspects of Grenada’s carnival that, at the turn of the century, garnered public and touristic note. Similarly, in his pictorial account of life in Grenada from the nineteenth century through to the end of the twentieth century, George Brizan does not devote much attention to the Jab Jab Mas’ tradition. He includes one sole picture captioned ‘Diab Molasi’.

This picture (Figure 3) corroborates the description of Jab Molasi as provided by Daniel Crowley. We can discern the similarity in clothing even while it is not easy to ascertain the nature of the head gear. Brizan unfortunately does not provide a date for the picture, nor does he indicate its source. Below the caption is a comment on the Diab Molasi as an awful figure of fear – one who frightened little children. However, in this rather grainy



Figure 3: Diab Molasi in *Fortitude and The Human Spirit* (41)

photograph, the two Diab Molasi are flanked by three boys of varying ages who seem to have no fear of them. That the author of the comment is Freda Scott, daughter of a colonial planter, is significant for it reflected the prevailing attitudes of ruling class to the Jab Jab.

Additionally, the absence of printed material on this aspect of Grenada’s culture is hardly surprising. Not only is Grenada still a largely oral society, but Jab Jab Mas’, initially played by lower class people, was not the kind of activity that would have been recorded in newspapers or commented on in the early stages of documentation of Grenada’s social history. Nellie Payne in *Grenada Mas 1929-1988* provides one of the earliest detailed descriptions of the Jab Jab¹⁰:

“an adult male dressed in crocus bag, tarred, a cow chain around his waist and cow horns on his forehead. The cow chain was held by a little boy, tattered and blackened. Two other boys attended, tarred too, one beating a kerosene pan and the other a 5 lb butter pan. The Jab Jab had

¹⁰ It is noteworthy that she refers to these figures as Jab Jab rather than as Jab Molasi. The year when this name change occurred remains unknown. This aspect of Devil Mas’ is in need of further research.

six inch fingernails made of tin which he clicked as he rolled his eyes from side to side in frightening fashion. . .”

In Payne’s account of Jab Jab Mas’, she establishes it as part of Monday morning carnival although not part of J’Ouvert. Moreover, she goes on to establish that the Jab Jabs reappear on Tuesday during the Pretty Mas’ celebration. She describes them as going from house to house, displaying themselves and being rewarded for their performances. According to Payne, there would be rivalry between competing Jab Jabs as to who was the most spectacular figure of fear. She goes on to trace the changes in Grenada’s carnival: its decline during and immediately after World War II, and its suspension during the year that the island became independent. Payne links the change in the date of Grenada’s carnival from February to August to the popularity of Trinidad’s carnival and the large number of Grenadian revellers who forsook their carnival for Trinidad’s. Payne also laments the change in Jab Jab Mas’ that was wrought through time. She contrasts the restrained behaviour of the Jab Jabs of yesteryear with the disorderly conduct of contemporary ones. Payne argues that whereas before these Jab Jab masqueraders entertained their patrons with civility and were always mindful of social boundaries, Jab Jab Mas’ in the eighties had transformed itself into:

“ . . . huge bands of blackened, greased men and women, their chief aim being to behave indecently, and to blacken with their oil all those who were not playing. This is reputedly great fun for the Jab Jabs but unless this smearing of oil ceases, there will be less and less spectators at any future opening of carnival.” (p. 62)

With time, based on the account provided by Payne, Jab Jab seems to have become a part of J’Ouvert celebrations – albeit one she fears will change the tenor of carnival and reduce its public appeal. Implicit in her chronicle is the sense that these Jab Jabs are figures of fear – if only because the spectators fear the consequences of the Jab Jabs’ malicious behaviour.

What has remained constant through time is the fear factor that Jab Jab Mas’ creates. The features that produce terror may have changed over time. It is likely that throughout the ages, the unrelentingly black body was viewed as a spectre of terror. However, there were additional props used in the Jab Jab’s theatre of fear. Where once it was the music that accompanied the Jab Jabs, the grate of long chains and the high pitched noises of makeshift tin fingernails, it shifted then to fear of what was in the coffins that the masqueraders dragged behind them. The intrepid spectator had to pay a coin to peer into the coffin only to discover that in it was a dead snake or a dead lizard, or even a reveller playing dead.¹¹ In some communities, Jab Jab masqueraders

¹¹ Interestingly, in many of the islands (Jonkonnu in Jamaica, Christmas Masquerade in St. Lucia and Jab Jab in Grenada) the performers found means of coercing spectators into paying for their viewing pleasure. Perhaps it was felt that the artistry on display deserved remuneration or that the investment in costume required some recompense.

wore *papier maché* masks wrought into devilish faces and these frightful visages also contributed to spectator fear – fear which the masqueraders exploited in order to extract money from their victims. The chant which the masqueraders used was significant in reinforcing the Jab Jab as a figure from hell, an emissary of the devil. Payne records that, as these Jab Jab revellers paraded the streets, they would sing:

Eau tee lee, Eau tee lambé
Eau tee lee, eau tee la
Gi' Jab a coppa
To pay 'e passage
To go back to Hell
Eau tee lee, Eau tee lambé
Eau tee lee, eau tee la. (p. 56)

The devil figure took on a host of differing significances: it was simultaneously a symbol of rebellion as well as a representation of marginality and unacceptability. It was both in and outside of society – asking to be acknowledged yet requesting assistance in return to Hell. The French Creole language used in these chants confirms that the Jab Jab figure was an amalgam of both French and British cultural traditions.

In some communities, the Jab Jabs also carried whips. The whip as an instrument of authority harkened back to slavery and the means used to keep the enslaved in check. It also became an iconographic representation of the rod, used by school masters to keep their pupils under control and in early Jab Jab performances in Grenada, the Jab Jab also carried with him a bible or book from which he read or spelled words. This literary performance was either rewarded with coins from onlookers, or punished by fellow Jab Jabs who, assuming the



Figure 4 The chains still remain a feature of Jab Jab Mas. Photo courtesy of Joshua Yetman

authority of the school master flogging the less-than-apt pupil, would whip the Jab Jab for his less than sterling rendition.¹²

Improvisation remains a key feature of Jab Jab Mas' in Grenada. This improvisation relates to both the *ex tempore* music and songs created on the spot as the revelers make their way through the street. Drawing on topical issues, these revelers create chants that reference village gossip, local politics and national issues. Musical accompaniment is similarly creative. Whatever is at hand be it discarded household objects such as glass bottles or biscuit tin pans, old car horns, cooking utensils, the inner rims of tires, or conch shells become percussion instruments. With time (Figure 4) too, there has been some costume modification as more people have begun to participate in Jab Jab Mas'. The cloth hood stuffed with horns has been replaced by a chamber pot¹³, on which are stuck cow horns collected from local abattoirs. Male revellers have discarded the vest and sleeveless shirts and go bareback. As women have gradually joined this form of revelry they have tended to opt for sleeveless shirts and short pants.

The chains still remain a feature of Jab Jab Mas', but the substance used to blacken the body has changed over time. Initially, charcoal soot mixed with lard replaced molasses as the blackening agent. Then, in the 1950s, with the popularity of mechanized transportation, discarded engine oil (referred to in Grenada as 'ole oil') became the material used to blacken the body. Since the act of blackening is itself one that requires careful ministration given that this substance can be harmful to the skin, revellers first liberally coat their bodies with a protective body oil before applying the 'ole oil'. But the smell of oil on the body is one that may linger long after carnival is over and it was for this reason that black paint is gradually replacing ole oil, although the die-hard Jab Jab player would eschew the forsaking of ole oil since in many ways as Tallpre, Grenada Jab Jab calypsonian has made clear, ole oil is synonymous with Jab Jab Mas'.

In the twenty-first century, Jab Jab masqueraders, following the 'sequined bra and panty' skimpiness of Pretty Mas', have taken to wearing bathing suits and more of the naked body is covered with oil. The painted body in carnival is not unique to Jab Jab Mas'. J'Ouvert now comprises other devil bands, Blue Devils, yellow devils, and green devils. But the largest bands still are the Jab Jab bands. And on J'Ouvert morning although revelers start out in many colors, at the end of the morning the dominant J'Ouvert color is black, for the Jab Jabs have not only managed to blacken all the other devils, but as a group they are the most committed to constantly

¹² This is similar to what happens in Shakespeare Mas in Carriacou when performers beat each other for being unable to correctly recite Shakespearean verses.

¹³ Chamber pots are not typically used in twenty-first century Grenada and this limited availability has led to another kind of improvisation. The plastic hard hats used on construction sites have now replaced the chamber pot. Widely available, relatively cheap and therefore easily replaced, these hats do not have to be so carefully stored after carnival.

redaubing themselves, and typically part of their accompanying paraphernalia is a container wherein more oil or paint is stored. In order to 'protect the costume', that is to ensure that the black oil or paint stays on, Jab Jab revelers tend to dance alone, in marked contrast to the 'wine and jam' of Pretty Mas' where the revelers are often in groups gyrating on each other. Moreover the makeshift music accompanying Jab Jab bands tends to have a slower beat – one that facilitates chipping – in contrast to the fast-paced soca music of Pretty Mas'. The Jab Jab has also taken on features typically belonging to the Halloween traditions of the Western world. Grinning skulls, werewolf masks, and vampire teeth have now become part of Jab Jab paraphernalia. Tongues are now coated with red food colouring instead of the annatto of days gone by, and plastic rats and snakes can sometimes be seen hanging from the mouth of revellers. As the Jab Jabs have acquired a more satanic character, and as their tendency to dirty onlookers has become more marked, there has been first a religious and then a political backlash.

Milla Cozart Riggio in her essay, *Time out or time in?: the urban dialectic of Carnival*, makes a case for carnival as a "a stabilizing vehicle for critiquing social authority and civic pretension" (p. 15). Riggio goes on to show how this festival, carrying with it the values of the neighborhood and the community, claims and deregulates urban spaces. This can readily be applied to Jab Jab bands which begin in small communities and as they move towards St. George's gather into a mass of revelers who claim the streets and their right to perform, and whose sheer numbers threaten order. Whereas outside of carnival players may well be denied access, business houses whose doors are customarily barred against them are now blackened by Jab Jab revelers. Significantly, the revelers also willfully blur the line between participants of Mas' and observers of Mas'. Those standing on the sidelines watching the revelers are slowly painted by these passing Jab Jabs, first a shirt, then a handprint across a face, so that by the time the sun comes up it is hard to distinguish between those participating in this J'Ouvert celebration and those who are watching.

In 1972, Eric Gairy, the premier of Grenada, banned Jab Jab Mas' on the grounds that the business houses had the additional expense of having to repaint after carnival, and revellers were permitted to play Mud Mas' instead. Ironically, in reaction to the ban, the number of people playing Jab Jab that year was larger than ever. The police were unable to contain the crowd, even though it is alleged that many revellers were beaten by Gairy's personal security – the Mongoose gang. The licence of carnival to deride authority and to satirise those in power as well as the growing civil unrest in Grenada, and the militancy of the intelligentsia would have made Jab Jab Mas', in its visible affirmation of blackness, very attractive to those interested in disrupting the status quo.

Moreover the social composition of the Jab Jab bands was slowly changing. The improvised chants to which the revellers chipped were now directed at those in

political power who were being criticized for mismanagement of the public purse, misappropriation of funds and for misrule. Jab Jab Mas' then could be interpreted by the authorities as a cover for seditious activity. The buildings receiving the most blackening by revellers were those publicly aligned to a Government that was growing in unpopularity. Although Ole Mas', through word play and costuming, provides an opportunity for the dramatization of the corruption of local political figures, these were individualized protest performances and accordingly lacked the punch of a large chanting band of people. That social and political criticism could be so integrally bound up with the ludic, is central to what Mikhail Bahktin was positing in his theory of the carnivalesque. According to Bahktin "The serious aspects of class culture are official and authoritarian; they are combined with violence, prohibitions, limitations, and always contain an element of fear and of intimidation Laughter, on the other hand, overcomes fear, for it knows no inhibitions, no limitations" (p. 90). Thus, carnival simultaneously destroys and renews society. What the large turnout in 1972 confirmed was that carnival provides an outlet for the voicing of dissent allowing society to purge and restore itself to order. At the same time Jab Jab Mas' was providing a space for the articulation of an alternative to the existing order, a new story that Grenadians were fashioning about themselves –one which was to later be articulated through the deposing of Prime Minister Eric Gairy in 1979.

Jab Jab Mas' has become a staple of Grenada's carnival and in 2011, the following tag line was chosen to promote Spicemas 2011: *Uniquely rooted in our rich ancestral traditions. Spicemas: Home of 100,000 Jab Jabs*. Committed to branding their carnival – the last one in the Caribbean 's yearly calendar of festivals – in a way that would secure them a niche in a region dominated by Trinidad's carnival, Spicemas Corporation chose to create a particular signature for Grenada's carnival by emphasizing the strong traditional forms that have remained integral to their carnival. Jab Jab was the most obvious choice, given its increasing popularity in the region. Already there were yearly contingents from the Eastern Caribbean visiting Grenada to participate in J'Ouvert and in Monday Night Mas', another signature activity of Grenada's carnival. According to this statutory body responsible for the promotion and development of Grenada's carnival, the focus was to be wider than Jab Jab Mas'. The primary objective was to showcase a suite of traditional cultural forms particular to Grenada's carnival. Specifically, Shortknee and Vieux Corps bands were being revived and carnival was being decentralized to include communities where these traditional carnival forms remained vibrant. But the tagline generated much opprobrium because many saw it as focusing too specifically on the Jab Jab aspect of Spicemas; an aspect that had always received the censure of conservative Grenadians who reacted negatively to the half naked bodies, the unapologetic and for some frightening blackness and to the embedded suggestion that Jab Jab was a reification of

Lucifer and all his satanic mischief. As such The Alliance of Evangelical churches issued the following statement:

In our estimation it is distasteful and disrespectful of the sensibilities of Grenadians who subscribe to Biblical Christianity... The theme pre-supposes that all Grenadians have a love affair with Jab Jab. The Committee's propaganda (goal) of 100,000 Jab Jab clearly postulates a mission to promote the worst element in the carnival celebrations. Jab is short for Diablo which, of course, refers to the Devil.

The final sting was the call to the Spicemas Corporation to rethink its choice of a tagline and to choose a theme "from the culture of a highly intelligent and creative people" rather than one which promoted "degenerate and degrading human behavior". Paradoxically, the statement from the Alliance helped create even more publicity for this tagline. Controversy made for excellent press. There was a flurry of responses: call-in radio programs were inundated by callers weighing in on this classification of Grenada as the land of Jab Jabs; television talk show programs held panel discussions on the issue; the internet was abuzz with postings that promoted national pride and the reification of blackness, or lamented the tragedy of self-hate. Reacting to the criticism of Jab Jab as non Christian and its implied classification as devil worship, Grenadian historian Nicole Phillip, had this to say:

"They also displayed their interpretation of their former slave masters in the form of Jab Jab. The cruelty they had undergone during slavery was aptly expressed in their representations of their masters as evil, and dressed in black. In their minds anyone who has made them suffer such unspeakable atrocities could only be portrayed as being evil. The Jab Jab is a representation therefore of our history. It is a representation of what our African forefathers thought of their European masters."

But where Phillip saw Jab Jab as a representation of a condition of historical oppression, others read it as a reaction to the hegemonic, a way of portraying Lucifer's rebellion against the authority of God. The fluidity of interpretation that this traditional masque invites correlates to the variety of accessories now being incorporated into the Jab Jab costume and to the diverse social groups now participating in Jab Jab Mas'. While it once had its roots in underclass modes of celebrating, Jab Jab Mas' has, with its increasing popularity, included new classes of participants: middle class revelers who are attracted to its 'challenge to authority' factor. In a society where race sometimes matters, mixed-race Grenadians eager to establish their right to belong, are drawn to Jab Jab Mas' because the act of blackening is metonymically the way of becoming one with the masses. Here the mask being donned is one that reminds us of the symbolic inversion of the *negre jardin* masques. At the same time Jab Jab Mas' resists easy dichotomies. Some revelers who play this

form of masque do it simply because it is something they grew up doing. It is not mediated by an external mandate, nor is it undergirded by any radical philosophy. For them, it is just something Grenadians do.

Grenada: Home of a 100,000 Jab Jabs

But what happens to the radicalism of a cultural folk form when it gets co-opted as part of the marking machinery of national tourist boards? Similar to the year when



Figure 5. 2011 saw the largest participation in Jab Jab Mas Courtesy Joshua Yetman

Premier Gairy banned Jab Jab Mas', 2011 witnessed record-breaking participation in Jab Jab Mas', and the largest number of Caribbean visitors. The following years have seen the increase of Shortknee and *vieux crops* bands. Traditional Mas', to the delight of both the Spicemas Corporation and the Grenada Board of Tourism, has proved to be an excellent revenue stream. What is the relationship between promotion and preservation? In *Afro-Creole* Richard Burton argued that culture loses its potency when it goes mainstream:

“The dominant order first represses the cultural challenge by force and then neutralizes it by absorbing it into the structures of power . . . by making token concessions to it and taking over and diffusing its language, music and style, by transmitting it into exotic spectacle and commodity . . . by making it a symbol of national unity and consensus. . . thereby divesting them of the radicalism they possessed and embodied in the eyes of their followers.” (p. 264)

But in the instance of Grenada, the promoting of Jab Jab Mas' as an integral part of Spicemas, albeit to bring in the tourism dollar to an island that is currently experiencing negative growth, has caused there to be more interest in and conversation about Jab Jab Mas'. What new cultural and economic affiliations are being created because of the permeability of boundaries wrought by globalization? Grenada, by virtue of its success in keeping traditional Mas', be it Jab Jab, Vieux Corps or Shortknee alive, is generating wide-ranging interest in Jab Jab Mas'. This despite the fact that there is currently a serious paucity of research on Grenada's social and cultural history, and despite the fact that carnivals in small islands societies are typically analyzed through scholarship written on Trinidad's carnival. Significantly, Trinidad, having set up its carnival institute which has as its mission the intention to be the Caribbean reservoir on all research on carnival, has, for the past four years or so, been documenting Grenada's carnival. The video recording of Grenada's carnival by this institute is an act of translating culture, one that provides archival proof of other enduring carnival traditions existing alongside the larger, more publicized, internationalized 'Trini Mas'. There have been conversations about a Devil Mas' conference slated to be held in Trinidad in 2013. Grenada has been invited to bring a troupe of traditional Mas' players to participate and perform at that conference. In accepting this invitation, Grenada will move its Jab Jab Mas' tradition into the centre of academic inquiry – a location that may be both useful in affiliating it to other Caribbean cultural practices and problematic in the withering of the dynamism and playfulness of Jab Jab Mas' beneath the lens of stultifying academic voyeurism. Nonetheless, the wheel of history continues to turn and return, and the movement/migrations of people between Trinidad and Grenada continues to be transformative. Cultural translation is occurring once again as centre and periphery become interchangeable.

Is there a danger that the regional and international promotion of this carnival tradition will cause a loss of authenticity? When asked this question, Colin Dowe, Chairman of Spicemas Corporation was confident that Jab Jab Mas' has helped energise other traditional forms of Mas' in Grenada and that it has allowed Grenada to emerge from the shadows of Trinidad's carnival. For an island that had long believed that its contribution to Trinidad's carnival had gone largely unappreciated, the prominence of Jab Jab Mas' has been acknowledged by one of the world's leading calypsonians – Iwer George – who says that he is “planning to stop singing soca and go an live in Grenada, [and] start to sing some Jab Jab songs.” Even while this unpaid-for advertising of Grenada's Jab Jab serves as a historic rebalancing, there is a fear – expressed largely through the social media, that Trinidadians will “steal” Jab Jab Mas'. Dowe however does not see this as a possibility. Instead he believes that in “Come to Meh” Iwer George has just told the whole world that Jab Jab is a Grenadian thing – a point that is further reinforced when George's song gets co-opted into the

advertisement of Spicemas 2011. Moreover, George's use of the Jab Jab rhythm already popularized by Grenadian soca artiste Tallpree helps to further promote Jab Jab musical tradition and to internationalize it. In 2012 George returned to the Jab Jab theme in his song: "Jab no pain." Again, he emphasizes the power of Jab Jab music "When Jab Jab music inside your brain, you go feel no pain", but now we have the mention of Jab Molasi, a reminder of the Jab Molasi tradition that Trinidad once shared with Grenada. The crossover of Jab Jab music into Trinidad's carnival speaks to the ongoing cultural cross-fertilization that has occurred between these two islands. At the same time it attests to the fact that Grenadian culture has, because of the history of inter-island migration, always been present, though not always visible in Trinidad's carnival culture.

Jab Jab, once Jab Molasi is now seen as a Grenadian thing. It is a living tradition, one that has changed through time, absorbing elements of modernity while maintaining aspects of the traditional. Jab Jab Mas' remains popular because of the efficacy with which it engages the topical while always being mindful of the historical circumstances which allowed it to thrive in the first place. It offers the opportunity for mass activity and the power of resistance to coalesce in carnival moments that accommodate persons regardless of class, race, color, intellect, and income. And as John Nunley et al. so cogently establish:

"despite restrictions placed on festivals by governments, participants have held fast to the belief that public festivals are the right of the people and they have shared their artistic and aesthetic foundations, developing a new iconography. . . The aesthetics of acculturation so integral to festival arts provide the basis for longevity and dynamic expansion."

The Jab Jab contingent in carnival 2012 was again the largest J'Ouvert band. No longer pouring down Market Hill, this band now slowly snakes its way from along Lagoon Road on to the Careenage. Masqueraders do not dirty spectators, instead spectators reach out to touch, to be blackened, to participate. Even the street seems to want to be included and when the sun is finally up and the revelers have made their way home, the blackened streets remind us that Jab Jab is indeed 'ah Grenada ting'.

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TRANSLATION, RESISTANCE AND THE TRANSFORMATIONAL POETICS OF DOROTHEA SMARTT AND AMRYL JOHNSON

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In this paper I focus on a selection of poetry by two British Caribbean poets: Amryl Johnson's *Spheres of resistance; Learning; Gorgons rising*; and *Qu'est-ce qu'elle dit* and Dorothea Smartt's *Medusa* and *Samboo* cycles of poems. I am using the concept of 'translation' to structure my analysis of poetic language and its contexts, and as a metaphor for the meanings produced through the transactions that shape poetic production and reception: 'translation' is used here to define the engagements, the human activities that produce meaning. There has been a growing interest in the use and application of translation studies theory as a means by which the transcultural processes and exchanges that characterise postcolonial diasporic writing and the work of the postcolonial critic, can be rearticulated. It is a term that dramatises the forms of intercultural transfer between the cultures of the colonized, the coloniser and the imperial metropolis, allowing for a focus on relations between power, language and culture; on the potential fluidity of cultural transmission; on the dialogic character of language production and on collaboration as creative method. It draws our attention to the cultures that Caribbean diasporic writers straddle, the geographical spaces that their work traverses and the variety of cultural forms on which their work draws. Poetic meaning then is produced from all the languages available not only to the Caribbean poet, but to the teacher and critic as translator.

Work on translation in the postcolonial context centralises ideas of mobility and of the productivity of liminal spaces occupied by writers whose articulations transgress historical, cultural and epistemological borders. In addition, as Daniel Sibony has argued, the multiple crossings that are the product of translated work "prevent[ing] a language from clinging to its origin, to its claim to be *the* language origin. It involves freeing ourselves from that which makes the language in which we are immersed set itself up as the origin...." (cited and translated by Cronin, 2000: 45). Translated language, for Sibony, is thus a necessary and creative betrayal, a distortion that enables the so-called 'originary' to "live" (Cronin: 46) and to live is to mutate. The

mobility of the translating poet has been compared to the figure of the trader as nomad – a stranger on the move; and the trader figure serves to expose the power dynamics that underlie all cultural transactions. A significant motivation for translation in the colonial and contemporary period has been trade in one form or another. In plying her trade, the translating poet, or reader, or critic can challenge “the power relationships that exist between languages, cultures and human beings” (Gouanvic: 103). The Caribbean poet’s creolized betrayal of the very notion of an originary – mythic, cultural or linguistic – makes a space for endless and creative transformation. Their work challenges all claims to linguistic or cultural authenticity. It endlessly crosses pages and stages, is re-worked, re-imagined and recreated.

Dorothea Smartt situates her own work within the context of earlier black and feminist translations of the Medusa myth, producing a complex repositioning of Medusa herself. Smartt’s focus is the body of the woman as a site of cultural inscription and of agency and transformation. She is also concerned with how the body is “othered” by a hostile gaze and with how that gaze can be returned as a gesture of re-empowerment. The figure of Medusa then, provides the perfect site from which these preoccupations with looking, being looked at, being defined by that look and opposing both the gaze and its potential to disempower, can be articulated. Smartt has explained, in an unpublished interview with Lizbeth Goodman, that the *Medusa? Medusa Black!* cycle of poems was inspired by the comments of children in her neighbourhood who, when seeing her with her dreadlocks, would call out “Medusa”, marking her as ‘other’ as dread – as dreadful. She says, “I realized that when I changed my hair, people looked at me differently, got angry, mad, even scared. I would go home and look in the mirror and ask myself what had vexed them” (Goodman: 274). These remarks, in their constant repetition and reuse, have come to serve as a myth of origin for this performance poem. Smartt uses the response of the children and their own appropriation and humanising of Medusa as the basis for her own mythic translation, which she introduces through a series of playful poetic sketches centred around Brixton market, its foodstalls and its proliferation of hairshops and stalls selling religious paraphernalia, “accessorizing hallelujahs in the service of the Lord” (Smartt, 2001: 53). She interweaves throughout these ‘Medusa’ poems references to West African, Ancient Egyptian and Christian deities, and through these interconnections reflects the cultural passages undertaken by the buyers and sellers in this South London market. Smartt suggests that their ancient and African deities were not stolen and destroyed, but merely suppressed: they reappear in other guises and, re-encoded, perform their original function of healing and consolation.

These short poems are evidence of Smartt’s interest in the commodification of myth and tradition, the interconnection of diverse pasts and the production of overlapping identities in the present. The bodies of the individuals identified in the poems are

adorned with an assortment of mythic paraphernalia that has seeped into popular culture but which attest to the enduring power of myth to transform and to be transformed. In *haiku to electric avenue* the decorated body in the present merges with a mythic past: “thought creates magic/tattooed on a bare breast bone/the eye of Horus” (p. 51). The Pakistani “linen baba” plies “Aurora towels” (p. 52) and in “the holy shop” the stall selling religious icons provides “a place of peaceful communion, for unburdening/under the ears of Yemoja, as the Virgin”. Yemoja, the goddess of water, is also the goddess whose spirit was said to accompany West African slaves to the Americas. Her element, water, is the medium that connects all the people who have arrived in South London but it also provides the poet with a figure that connects ancient cultures of Africa and Europe. As Smartt suggests in her aligning of Horus, Aurora and Yemoja, present day journeys that combine and juxtapose mythic traditions, merely continue and reflect the ancient traffic in myth and religion. Origin in these poems is process and the appearance of bounded identities a mask for continuities and interconnections.

These cultural interconnections pave Medusa’s route to explosive consciousness past the sacred, the material and the profane. Smartt’s Medusa figure turns her attention not only to male mythmakers. Her gaze alights on the purveyors of false hair and consciousness, those trading whiteness through *Sleek Wigs*; *Pride of USA* and *L.A. Trend*. The mobility of cultural and gendered identities that Smartt elaborates upon further in her later collection is explored in these poems alongside the more dramatic, oppositional force of the popular *Medusa? Medusa Black!*

Smartt’s use of a Barbadian Creole in the poem *Medusa? Medusa Black!* situates her mythic figure in intimate relations with those she sees and who see her: “runnin from she own/ in case the worse thing happen/ an’ she see she self like them see she” (p. 57). That white gaze, through black eyes to which these lines refer, would “Banish the snake woman/ the wild woman/ the all-seeing eye woman”, and erase all traces of Africa in her skin and hair. Most critical responses to this poem, in an extension of Goodman’s analysis have read Smartt’s use of hair – dread locks – metonymically, as a sign of Medusa’s blackness as difference. These critics have cited Roman versions of the Medusa myth, that place Medusa’s origins in Libya: her snake hair, resembling ‘dreadlocks’ is said to signify “Medusa’s connection to her African origins” (Nisco: 144). Goodman, reviewing the performance of the Medusa cycle in London in 1993 writes: “So the focus on Medusa’s hair in her performance symbolizes not only a deliberate choice of black-identified representation but also a range of associated symbols, for – to Smartt – Medusa’s hair (and her own hair) has real power: mythical, symbolic, sensual and sexual” (Goodman: 274).

Smartt's use of her own hair in the 1993 performance to which Goodman refers, enacts a powerful connection between herself and Medusa. The black Medusa is terrifying in her difference, and protected from the gaze that would drive the black woman to the self-hating practices described in the poem. However, an insistence on its metonymic function might produce reductive meanings of the poems themselves and of the cultural mapping, rerouting and transformations that Smartt's poems present. As Ama Ata Aidoo, among other writers, has illustrated in her short story *Everything counts*, this would be to fix racial identity in relation to a culturally marked, essentialised body. In contrast, it is important to maintain a recognition of the body's fluidity while at the same time attending to its potential to be marked/adorned with equally fluid signs of resistance.

While critics have connected Medusa's 'blackness' to her origins in Libya, citing extracts from later translations of of Lucan's *Pharsalia*, which describe Medusa's territory as "parched ... fields" in the "extreme parts of Libya"(Lucan translated by Robert Graves in Garber & Vickers:144), older translations describe Medusa as having lived in the "far west of Africa, at the point where the Ocean laps against the hot earth, in a wide, untilled, treeless region which she had turned entirely to stone" (Lucan translated by James Frazier in Garber & Vickers: 40). In other translations of this text Medusa is located in Ethiopia, where "entire tribes of Ethiopians turned to statues upon beholding Medusa" (Dexter: 40). Smartt herself draws on the spirit of all these translations and produces her own Medusa myth: she, suggests that the myth of Medusa's terrifying presence emerged from the coloniser's response to her sheer alterity: "I thought to myself: Medusa was probably some black woman with nappy hair and some white man saw her and cried: a monster!, and feared her, and so told stories about her dangerous potential" (Goodman: 274). In a recent interview with the author, however, Smartt has pointed to the way in which her poetry has been influenced by the work of the linguist and intellectual historian Martin Bernal, who argues that:

"[t]he names of nearly all the gods [now associated with Ancient Greek literature and culture] came to Greece from Egypt; specifically in relation to the goddess Athena, his research demonstrates that she was consistently identified with the Egyptian goddess of the same name: both were virgin divinities of warfare, weaving and wisdom" (Bernal: 51).

The Egyptian cult of Neit/Athena was centred on the city of Sais, on the frontier of Egypt and Libya which, Bernal argues "explains Herodotus' detailed description of Athena's association with Libya; it is also clear that this first great Greek historian [writing in 450 BC] thought the Egyptians and some Libyans were black" (p. 53).

The intention here is not to excavate an essentialised definition of black and align it with representations of a mythic Medusa, but to make Bernal's point, that the roots of Greek mythology lie in North Africa. As he has also argued, many of the most powerful and influential Egyptian pharaohs and dynasties originated in Ethiopia as well as in regions to the South of Egypt. Thus in Bernal's interpretation, the targets of Medusa's petrifying powers are black figures such as herself. Smartt's fascination with maps, journeys and cultural crossings and a more multi-dimensional representation of identity than her use of Medusa's oppositional blackness in this poem would suggest, is evident in some of her early poems, and in her more recent installation and film sequences produced to accompany her latest collection, *Ship Shape*. This preoccupation with identity-crossing is also evident in the last of the Medusa cycle of poems which returns Medusa to her mythic form: the poem *let me land ...* (Smartt, 2008: 69) is on one hand an intimate, erotic expression of lesbian sexual desire.

“Waves spring from the sea-green
becoming high-riding watershaking locks
Herself and Medusa re-membered,
leaping and falling in ordered confusion,
soft and violent, slow and sudden,
and always the roaring spread of the wide overriding main.” (p. 68)

The erotic charge of the poem and its representation of sexual fulfilment is evident in the closing lines “Inside the mist their tide laps in/ and these two, Herself and Medusa,/ are coming ashore” (p. 63). It is significant that Smartt relocates Medusa to the sea, linking her to Yemoja and moving her away from the petrified desert and from her monstrous significance. Here the life-giving potential that was evident in the earliest myths (Dexter: 29) is restored. She is the life-in-death journey of the Middle Passage: the arid stones are transformed into “lithic jewel eyes, reincarnating powers” (Smartt, 2008: 68). The sea and the volcanic islands' constant, unpredictable movements reflect what Caribbean theorist Edouard Glissant has termed an “economy of disorder” (p. 126). It is an economy that reflects the instability and cultural collisions that characterise the region. The Caribbean is for Glissant “explosive”, it is a “place of encounter and connivance” and in an echo of Kamau Brathwaite's ‘Island’ poem, “the Caribbean is... a sea that explodes the scattered lands into an arc. A sea that diffracts” (p. 33).

The transformative, myth-making Medusa poems represent the possibility of cultural reimagining both in the public, historical domain and the private domain. As Alicia Ostriker has argued, myth has a “double power. It exists or appears to exist objectively, outside the self. Because it is in the public domain, it confers on the writer ... authority....At the same time, myth is quintessentially intimate material, the stuff of dream life, forbidden desire, inexplicable motivation – everything in the psyche that to rational consciousness is unreal, crazed or abominable” (p. 212). Its counter-discursive function is both sexual, intimate, public and historical. The opening lines of the poem speak of the cruelty of the white, European man-made histories that perpetuate the original acts of horror: the Middle Passage, plantation slavery, migration, the patterns of racism and oppression, “rattling...recurring...rippling through the diaspora” (Smartt, 2008: 68). In the lines “conjuring stones,/incantations rumble; rocks groan, rocks quake.../ stones swell humming their birth”, Smartt echoes lines from the Barbadian poet Kamau Brathwaite’s early poems of a mythic Caribbean to construct a re-gendered myth of Caribbean origin.

The interconnection of North East and West African myth, Caribbean canonical male authored texts of a region’s becoming as well as a Cixous-like articulation can be interpreted through Glissant’s concept of ‘Relation’. He writes: “the Poetics of Relation remains forever conjectural and presupposes no ideological stability”. Relation is a poetics that is “open, multilingual in intention, directly in contact with everything possible” (p. 32). Medusa herself emerges as the volcanic island ‘rocks’, “Herself in stone/ Medusa in stone” (Smartt, 2008: 69). The figure of Medusa, like the Caribbean itself, is used to signify a long and complex journey: her journey is from Africa to Mediterranean Europe, to Northern and Western Europe where she is whitened and then restored to her African origins, still bearing the traces of her translations and appropriations. As Liedeke Plate points out, if as Barthes argues, myth is “speech stolen and restored”, the restored speech of the counter discursive myth “is no longer that which was stolen” (Plate: 169). Smartt’s use of water in this last poem also emphasises the fluidity of her own mythic representation. Medusa is a dread-locked black woman (Smartt: 59) in Brixton market trying on a wig, confounding those who attempt to fix her, to classify and regulate her body. She is petrifying her detractors, she is the original jewelled Caribbean; she is the journeys made by transported and migrating peoples from Africa, to Europe, to the Caribbean and back to Africa.

Amryl Johnson’s *Gorgons* (1992), a work that also centres around the figure of Medusa, performs a very different aesthetic. Although her poems were performed – though less frequently than Smartt’s – in performance they reveal a creative, though uneasy relationship between written and spoken forms. They move between Creole linguistic forms and Standard English and reflect on that movement. They are less

comfortable with the fluidity, disruption and disorder that for Glissant characterises a Caribbean poetics. Many of the poems express an anxiety about voice and experience. Which language (Standard or Trinidad Creole) best expresses experience? And what experience best defines the poet? Voice is connected to place in quite specific ways, and Medusa's gaze both silences and disempowers before it can transform. Her poems in this collection work *with* received interpretations of the Medusa figure, expressing women's entrapment, but also signifying the possibility of resistance to the gender relations and cultural values encoded in patriarchal mythologies that perpetuate women's subjugation and silence. The first poem in the collection figures the poet in the role of translator, struggling to resist voicelessness, and to give words to the felt, physical power of her imagination. The abstract forms of the words, like boulders on the page emphasise their immovability. They resist meaning; they produce distortions that the poet cannot shape and reform. Words remain 'hunched', 'bent', 'crippled', 'deformed'. Her fear, expressed as the absence of a voice to authorise a felt experience, is evident in the lines:

"They crept in from the margin/forcing a retreat

space shrank in the presence of such onslaught

If this is an army/for sure

I am no general..." (Johnson, 1992: 7-8, *Spheres of resistance*).

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In the tradition of many women poets and writers, it is her gender identity in this poem that produces silence:

"My role remains unclear

Perhaps

I am a servant

If need be I will serve

Interpret their demands

Translating

Interpreting their mute code" (pp. 7-8)

A similar fear of silence is expressed in the poem *Qu'est-ce qu'elle Dit?*, recorded for the British Library Sound Archive. In her introduction to the sound recording of the poem, Johnson explains that she changes the figure of the *keskidee* bird's song – translated by the French colonists as *Qu'est-ce qu'il dit?* [What does he say?] – to

Qu'est-ce qu'elle dit? [What does she say?]. The poem begins, not with *keskidee* but with her gendered revision of the colonial translation of its song, an acknowledgement of the untranslatability, or the resistance to being known, of the culture that the bird represents. At the same time, even as she acknowledges this resistance, in the use of the French translation of the song, Johnson recognises the lasting effects of a colonial desire for appropriation and control.

As in Smartt's 'Samboo' poems, Johnson's use of the *keskidee* bird and its song addresses issues of colonial appropriation and transformation. Unlike Samboo, however, Johnson cannot reclaim the bird's song. As the title suggests, the bird in this poem refuses to reveal itself not only to the coloniser but to her, a nomad wandering within and without the bird's Caribbean 'home'. The bird insists:

"The answer as always, *je n'ai rien dit*

I told you nothing

I did not say anything."

The poem is punctuated by the *keskidee*'s cries which, as the poem develops, seem to be excluding the poem's speaker : the birds become 'unseen tormentors', flying beyond her imprisonment 'unseen' like other aspects of the island's topography:

"High above the window

plastic coated meshing

obscures my view of the avocado tree."

Several poems in the collection *Gorgons* also express women's entrapment but more explicitly than *Qu'est-ce qu'elle dit?* signify the possibility of resistance to the gender relations and cultural values encoded in the patriarchal mythologies that perpetuate women's subjugation and silence. Those mythologies, imposed by educational systems that inculcate what seem to be alien cultural values, raise questions about literary form and literary language: These concerns are expressed in the poem *Learnin*, where the speaker exclaims in the closing lines:

"uh all de years yuh spen' in Englan'

you would hah know much more 'bout life

if yuh had kept yuh tail at home!" (Johnson, 1992: 10)

Here she subverts assumptions about discredited (creole) knowledge. At the same time, however, her subject has not in fact kept her 'tail at home': as the poems themselves demonstrate, their subjects' restless, nomadic travel results in the

production of a poetic voice that is not simply recovered from its origins but is used to express a new self, produced out of more than one speaking position.

The conversational piece *Granny in de market place* is a celebration of a creole voice and the knowledge that it articulates. In contrast to the bird's resistance, the figure of the granny speaks to be heard and understood. She speaks both within the community of the Caribbean market and outside to listeners to the poem. The lively, alliterative opening, with its echoes of elementary school rote learning pits the wits of the vendor against the canny 'granny':

"Yuh fish fresh?

Woman – why yuh holding de fish up to yuh nose?

The fish fresh! I seh de fish fresh!

I ain' goin seh it anymo.

MMM... well if dis fish fresh, den is I who ded and gon.

De ting smell like it take a bat in a lavatory in town.

It here so long, it happy.

Look how de mout laughin at we!"

Although this poem naturalises its creole articulation, both poets have reflected on their choice of poetic form and language: Amryl Johnson has indicated in interviews and essays that the choice of which border to cross – Creole to Standard/Standard to Creole – is fraught, complex, and ideologically charged. It is a choice that raises questions of authenticity, legitimacy and cultural belonging. Johnson has said that her decision to write some poems in Trinidadian Creole was an act of 'courage' that paradoxically produced for her a 'Creole that sounded false', prompting her to ask: "Where did I belong? Who was I?" a questioning that is repeated but also resolved in various ways, in the poems I have selected (Narain, 2002: 134).

Smartt too has said that although her use of a Barbadian Creole, that is the voice of her parents and their generation, has played a significant part in her development as a poet. In her performance of Bajan, she does not/cannot reflect contemporary inflections, even when her poetic characters are contemporary. Thus it is a voice translated from the past into the present, producing in its travel, a new articulation that has sometimes attracted accusations of mimicry or of reproducing nostalgic folk-memory (Scafe, 2011).

Smartt continues her project of returning the gaze of the other in her second collection, *Ship Shape*, in particular in the Samboo cycle of poems, the source of which can be found in the poem *Hagar's children*, in which Hagar is re-named Hajar. Beyond a literal re-naming – the use of the Islamic version of Hagar – Smartt reimagines and in so doing challenges and transforms popular and narrowly conceived notions of black diasporic identities. Her Samboo cycle of poems were produced as an alternative way of commemorating an African slave boy, who was brought with his master to Lancaster and died on landing in Sunderland, a small windswept town on the Northwest coast of England. The grave itself which commemorated ‘Samboo’ – with the extra ‘O’ – has acquired mythic status: it has a permanent display of flowers and the modern version of the myth has its origins in an account written for the Lonsdale Magazine in 1821 which describes his death in the following way:

96 “... supposing himself to be deserted by the master, without being able, probably from his ignorance of the language, to ascertain the cause, he fell into a complete state of stupefaction, even to such a degree that he secreted himself in the loft on the brewhouses and stretching himself out at full length on the bare boards refused all sustenance. He continued in this state only a few days, when death terminated the sufferings of poor Samboo.” (Smartt 2008, 16)

Hajar does not appear in Smartt’s re-vision of this myth, but her presence is felt in the renaming of Sambo as Bilal. Smartt returns to the trope of the gaze, of seeing and being seen, that was central to her Medusa cycle: in the poem ‘untitled’ she writes

“...Lancaster can name
him for its past, not his people’s
bury him under its myths.
If he’s there at all,
could Lancaster say his names?” (p. 19)

The ‘99 names of the Samboo’ encompass the history that the people of Lancaster could not imagine when they saw this young black boy whose identity, for them, was inextricably bound to the captain’s. She remythologizes Samboo, using religious mythology, naming him after Bilal [ibn Rabah] al-Habashi, an Ethiopian and freed slave who, according to religious myth, Mohamed chose as his muezzin because of his beautiful voice. He is in effect the first muezzin of the Islamic faith and is usually represented as a figure close to the prophet Mohamed.

For Smartt, the connection between Islam, Africa and the Caribbean is a missing dimension of our understanding of ourselves. She has said that having being raised as a Christian within a Barbadian culture that is strongly Anglican, it came as a huge surprise that many of the Africans brought to the Caribbean would have been Muslims and would have brought names and aspects of their culture with them. She imagined Bilal as a Fulani Gambian because the Fulanis were the earliest West Africans to convert to Islam and because they are regarded in the Senegambia region as gypsies, outcasts, and thus likely to have been sold into slavery. Gambia is used because as one of the earliest British West African colonies, it would have been likely that a ship would have come from Gambia to Sunderland in the 1700s having deposited its cargo of bodies first in Barbados, one of the earliest West Indian colonies (Scafe, 2011). In the journey to Sunderland, described in the poem, ‘eclipse over Barbados’, Smartt uses a Barbadian voice to reinforce the connection between Africa and the Caribbean through the metaphor of travel, producing, to repeat Sibony, ‘something that is other than the self, but where the self can be recognised’ (Cronin: 51). Despite the longing he articulates in the poem, there is no possibility of return at the poem’s end, either to Barbados or to Africa.

Bilal’s Barbadian voice and the poems themselves demonstrate a multivocality that is not as evident in the earlier poems, reflecting Smartt’s continued preoccupation with the prismatic quality of black identity. In other poems Bilal’s is the voice of jazz and blues, with its flat rhymes and syncopated rhythms:

“his heart’s a ton of lead
his eyes are playing dead.
The moon’s the eye of the sky
seeing him blue.”

The conflicts that the slave trade generated among the slave-owning communities are most powerfully reimagined in the poems that voice the captain's wife's story. In the following example, a sequence of closing images constructs a series of contradictory juxtapositions. The wife protests: "His hands and eyes hold me with love,/ the same hands that strip the Negro of his flesh/prise open, dig the enslaved's wounds/stroking them with briny waters/discipline". In the lines that follow, the 'briny waters' are used to undermine the mineral waters' potential for healing: the millions of lives, lost in briny waters exact their own revenge. The wife, disintegrating, cannot bear her own child: "On our pilgrimage to curative mineral waters/ to heal me of my breach, I only bubble/with blood, keeping nothing down." Her body in these lines, mirrors the disembodiment effects of the Middle Passage.

In conclusion, I would suggest that the concept of the Caribbean woman writer as translator, with its associations of emancipatory border and linguistic crossings, might conceal the more materially defined – in the Bakhtinian sense – context of struggle and contestation that produce languages and meaning. However, as I have demonstrated, a focus on the work of translation and transaction and on the poet as a nomadic 'trader' moving between cultures and exchanging insights and knowledge, allows for an engagement with the production of meaning – from both 'within' and 'outside' the poems' languages and cultures. Moreover, this process of making meaning serves to expose the power relations that define all acts of translation and all transcultural exchanges. The comments made by both Smartt and Johnson raise questions too for readers, teachers and critics. If we accept that these writers are performing a work of translation, one that transfers knowledge and cultural processes from one context to another, then we must of course abandon notions of legitimacy and accept the provisional character of the cultural utterance. As Narain argues, it is important to read writers' work "permissively... and to recognize the diverse voices of, and voicings by Caribbean poets as examples of a productive commitment to hybridity and ventriloquy" (p. 137). The nomadic context of these women's Caribbean poetic production dramatises the unfinished openness of linguistic and cultural transformation and the challenge for teachers and critics is to accept, as Homi Bhabha has argued, that the original is never finished or complete in itself "...it can never be said to have a totalised prior moment of being or meaning – an essence" (Rutherford, 1998: 137). The instability that translations produce is both a threat and an invitation to our own and other versions of the poets' work and its further displacements.

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PIRACY AND CREOLISATION: ISSUES ARISING FROM APPROPRIATION AND ADAPTATION

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Many modern works and even some older ones have pointed out and commented on plagiarism in the early colonial accounts of Africa and the New World. For example, Labat at the end of the 17th century accused De Rochefort of fraudently adapting the work of Du Tertre:

“Le Ministre Rochefort, qui n’a jamais vu les isles de l’Amerique que par les yeux d’autrui ... puisqu’il a copié le P. du Tertre; mais il a entierement gâté sa narration par ses descriptions tout-à-fait éloignées de la verité, dans la vue de rendre les choses plus agréables, & de mieux cacher son larcin ...” (Labat, 1724: 11)

[Minister Rochefort, who never saw the islands of America except through the eyes of others ... since he copied Father Du Tertre, but he completely spoilt his narrative by descriptions totally removed from the truth, in attempting to make things more pleasant and to hide his thievery ...] (All translations by the author)

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The fact is, however, that producing variants and copies of the work of predecessors was normal. The most common form of this in the 17th and 18th centuries was collections of voyages, which were reproduced in many different editions and in several languages. It did not seem as if any permission was needed to do this. Also, paraphrasing or verbatim citing of predecessors was normal practice. Indeed, adaptation of earlier works has been a normal part of European literary tradition, as in the case of Shakespeare, for example, some of whose plays are adaptations of classical works.

What was dubious was reproducing the work of others as if it were one’s own eyewitness account or reproducing the work of obscure authors unknown to the public. Examples of this kind of plagiarism in the English Caribbean are to be found in the accounts of Wentworth (1834) and Phillippo (1843). So, even though the kinds of conventions and laws that define plagiarism today were not part of 17th, 18th and 19th century ethics and practice, there still seemed to be some notion of what was permissible.

Beside appropriation of the work of previous writers without acknowledgement, another practice that is problematic is generalisation, that is, extension of use beyond the original area of reference. For instance, early eyewitness writers on West Africa, after visiting only one region along the coast, would make statements to the effect that the culture of that area was the same all along the coast. The same kinds of statements were made about a group of or all of the Caribbean islands. The overall result of this practice is that a lot of history has been reified simply through the repetition of a single early account as if it were witnessed in various places or by several different people.

This paper seeks to examine such dubious practices by first looking specifically at the re-use, adaptation and misuse of pictorial illustrations and their descriptions in early texts on the Caribbean, specifically those featuring ‘buccaneers’ or ‘pirates’. This paper then compares that with the use and extension of ‘creole’ beyond its early use and meaning in an attempt to assess the effectiveness of appropriation and adaptation of images and concepts in academic writing.

The idea of adaptation is a critical element in the early definition of the term ‘creole’ in that ‘Creoles’ were defined as New World adaptations of the progeny of Old World people. In other words, ‘Creoles’ were different from their parents in their identity because they were shaped by the place where they were born and raised (i.e. the Americas). So, whereas in the literary tradition, it was a matter of writers and artists appropriating someone else’s work and adapting it, in the case of creolisation, it was a matter of the environment appropriating someone else’s children and adapting them to the culture of the New World.

From the beginning, ‘creole’ (< Sp. *criollo*) was defined by Old World people and, in addition, from early on it was expanded beyond its reference to people to refer to animals, food and other articles of culture. It was extended beyond the Americas to refer to other colonial situations and today the derived noun ‘creolisation’ has been appropriated to serve so many purposes that its meaning seems to have no bounds. In short, appropriation and adaptation have always been a part of the reality of the term ‘creole’ and its derivatives, but this has resulted in diffuseness and imprecision. Thus, the term ‘creole language’ is used today to refer to languages all over the world and there is no universal agreement among linguists whether all those languages called ‘creole languages’ have any one or set of linguistic features in common. Beyond language, the term ‘creolisation’ is used to refer to so many social and developmental processes that it is difficult to see any commonality in all these uses.

Piracy is topical in today’s business world because of the widespread problem of people acquiring material (for resale) without duly paying the rightful owner for it. It is most prominently associated with music and films and other material that can be electronically copied. Note, however, that articles of culture which were removed

from colonies and defenceless countries and are now lodged in European museums are not always seen as having been ill-gotten or stolen. In fact, it seems as if a statute of limitations can make these museum artefacts legally European no matter how they were acquired.

But can one speak of the piracy of a word (e.g. creole) in the same way that one can speak of the piracy of a group of words (i.e. someone's book or article) or of music or of a pictorial image? Probably not, and this is primarily because single words are not anyone's intellectual property. In terms of usage, it is simply that some words remain more attractive than others and as a result undergo semantic diffusion until more attractive words come to replace them.

In the case of the word 'creole', no doubt popularity and diffusion have been aided not only by contemporary fashionable attempts to promote the previously downtrodden but also by varying nationalistic claims to the word, not the least of which is the speculative and largely undocumented 20th century claim for a Portuguese origin. This claim disregards the fact that it arose as an integral part of a Portuguese Pidgin theory, which has been generally discredited, and that the first documentation of the use of the word came from Spanish America, not Portuguese America.

In considering the relationship between piracy and creolisation, one can look at the following comparison. Initially the concept of a certain type of person operating in the Americas was depicted graphically and (came to be) labelled 'pirate'. About a hundred years before that the concept of another type of person in the Americas was depicted culturally and labelled 'creole'. In the former case a pictorial image of the type was created and propagated and in the latter case a conceptual image of the type was created and propagated. In the former case, one can argue for focus (i.e. maintenance of the image) and in the latter case for diffusion. Since it is quite unlikely that all 'pirates' looked and dressed alike, one can argue that the early pictorial representation of a 'pirate' in Hispaniola created and maintained uniformity in perception over the years whereas the absence of a pictorial image of a Creole allowed for diffusion and this was not because in the early definition of 'Creoles' there was an absence of visual characteristics relating to their colour, dress and behaviour.

But does this mean that pictorial representation is more powerful and that indeed 'a picture is worth a thousand words'? Certainly not. It is simply that the visual does not allow for historical diffusion to the extent that the verbal does. In fact, a single repeated image may distort reality, if reality is variety. Yet, is it proper to adapt the single extant pictorial image of a person or an article of culture to render variety? It does not seem so. The real problem in the adaptation of the pictorial is that whereas one can adapt fiction, fact (i.e. historical representation) is not supposed to be an adaptation of some other reality or, worse still, some other imagined reality.

Ecological determinism has been used as a powerful explanatory argument to account for variation and change in plants and animals, but it is treated as a force beyond

conscious manipulation, where the entity undergoes an imperceptible process, as in creolisation. The same is not true of adaptation of pictorial illustrations. In the world today, one can use sophisticated technology to alter ‘factual’ images (e.g. to remove blemishes; to enhance beauty) and there is no loud outcry about the immorality of this. Yet, while it would seem as if adaptation for enhancement is permissible in the world of entertainment, adaptation, especially in the world of scientists, academics and journalists, is not.

One of the fundamental flaws in the images of people and things in early European colonies was caused by the disjunct between the reality and the artist. European artists, who in most cases were commissioned to produce illustrations for books, had no eyewitness knowledge of the subjects and objects they were illustrating and depended on their own fanciful or European traditions to produce pictorial illustrations. Adam Jones, who in 1987 edited Pieter de Marees’ book on West Africa, made the following comment on an earlier editor’s decision to leave out certain illustrations:

“... Naber decided not to republish the two engravings at the top of this map [Map of West Africa 1602], on the grounds that they were of no historical value: he pointed out that one engraving included a European harp and the other showed a Benin nobleman riding naked on a horse – neither of which had much to do with African reality. These objections are valid; but similar criticisms could be made of several engravings in the book.” (1987: xxiii)

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Early pictorial representations of Africans by Europeans were done by artists who depended on the accounts in written texts; they had little idea of what various Africans looked like in their dress and physical characteristics and, in the case of Marees’ book, none of what the specific people they were supposed to be depicting looked like. Illustrations were imagined or transposed images from their own representations of Europeans. Unfortunately, such images which were adapted according to the visions of Europeans, unless they were subsequently seen to be ludicrous, were propagated throughout the years and came to be accepted by most people as accurate or factual representations having wide or universal application. Moreover, fraudulent authentication or consolidation of such images was unwittingly helped along by later writers of other books adopting these early images, without saying where they got them from, and adapting them to their own situation, thereby giving credence to them as true original images.

Images of pirates and piracy go back to the 17th century and are immortalised in the historical literature in a partially autobiographical work highlighting the exploits of ‘sea rovers’ in the Caribbean. The book *De Amerikaanse Zeerovers* (The American Sea Rovers) by Alexandre Olivier Oexmelin (first published in 1678) virtually shaped the now familiar image of pirates that has been reproduced across the years. In

addition, as a result of this book, piracy came to be closely associated with the Caribbean, as the recent series of films *Pirates of the Caribbean* attests, although it is really because piracy was an integral part of the earliest English and French colonial exploits in the New World that it retained a high profile. An important point in our present discussion of piracy is that in English today, the two words ‘pirate’ and ‘buccaneer’ are synonymous, but it is only in the early literature that one sees the relationship between the two, that is, that in the Caribbean the latter was in a sense a starting-point for the former.

The early colonial history of Haiti involves French and other European adventurers, some of whom had been forced out of St. Kitts going to northwest Hispaniola and Tortuga (an island to its north), establishing themselves there and from there eventually gaining control of a wider and wider area of Hispaniola. It is the way in which some of these early adventurers survived and prospered that is associated with ‘buccaneering’, a word which derives from an indigenous word referring to a way in which meat was roasted.

In other words, the early ‘buccaneers’ on the northwest coast of Hispaniola were involved with hunting on land. As Oexmelin described it: “*Les Boucaniers ne font point d’autre métier que de chasser. Il y en a de deux sortes: Les uns ne chassent qu’aux boeufs pour en avoir les cuirs: les autres aux Sangliers pour en avoir la viande, qu’ils salent & vendent aux habitants*” (1699, vol. 1: 103). [Buccaneers did no other job but hunting. There were two sets: one hunted only cows for their skins and the other hunted wild boars for meat, which they salted and sold to the farmers.] They got the name *boucaniers* because, as Charlevoix explained:

“... ils se réunissoient après leur Chasse, pour y Boucaner à la maniere des Sauvages la chair des Boeufs, qu’ils avoient tués; car on usoit dès-lors de ce terme, qui signifie la même chose, que cuire, où plutôt sécher à la fumée; & l’endroit, où cela se faisoit, se nommoit **Boucan**.” (1731: 6)

[They gathered after their hunt to *boucaner* like the indigenous people the flesh of the cows they had killed. So, from then the term was used; it meant the same as cook or rather smoke dry; and the place where this was done was called *boucan*.]

This was essentially a cultural extension of the word (from indigenous to European) as well as a linguistic expansion from place to activity to person (*boucan*>*boucaner*>*boucanier*).

Oexmelin himself had earlier made a finer distinction in reference between the two sets of *boucaniers*: “*Les Boucaniers qui chassent aux Boeufs, sont ceux qu’on nomme veritablement Boucaniers, car il se veulent distinguer des autres qu’ils appellent Chasseurs*” (1699, vol. 1: 103). [The buccaneers who hunt cows are really the ones that are called buccaneers, because they prefer to distinguish themselves from the

others whom they call hunters.] This was essentially a narrowing of the meaning of the word ‘buccaneer’.

In time the image of hunters on land with the name *boucaniers* was transferred to hunting at sea. One version of this transfer was given in the 18th century account (referring back to the year 1630) of the emergence of buccaneers and ‘freebooters’ by Charlevoix in 1731. This account was based on the manuscript of the missionary Jean Baptiste Le Pers who went to Hispaniola in 1704:

*“C’étoit pourtant une grande incommodité pour la nouvelle Colonie, que de ne recevoir bien des choses, dont elle ne pouvoit se passer, que par des mains des étrangers: les Boucaniers se tirèrent bientôt de cet embarras. Une partie d’entre eux, qui n’avoient jamais trop goûté la Chasse des Bêtes Fauves, ou qui s’en dégoutèrent d’abord, se firent Corsaires, & tout ce qui tomba sous leurs mains, Amis ou Ennemis, devint leur proie. L’Isle de Saint Domingue étoit toujours leur retraite, aussi bien que la petite Isle de la Tortue, dont une Troupe d’Anglois mêlée de quelques François, s’étoient emparée. Ils commencèrent à se rendre célèbres sous le nom de **Flibustiers**, ou, comme on disoit alors, **Friboutiers**, de l’Anglois **Free Booter**, qui se prononce **Fri-Bouter**, & qui signifie proprement un Forban, un Corsaire, & en général, tout Homme, qui fait la Guerre uniquement pour piller”* (1731: 6-7)

[It was a great inconvenience for the new colony not to get many things which it could not do without except through strangers. The buccaneers soon got themselves out of this embarrassment. A group of them, who had never liked hunting wild animals or who at first disliked it, became corsairs and whatever fell into their hands, friend or enemy, became their prey. The island of Saint Domingue was always their retreat as well as the little island of Tortuga, which a troop of Englishmen mixed with a few Frenchmen had taken possession of. They began to make themselves famous under the name *flibustiers*, from the English word ‘freebooter’, which is pronounced *fri-bouter*, and which properly means a sea-rover, a corsair, and in general, any man who makes war solely to plunder.]

Buccaneers are therefore described as initially hunters on land, availing themselves of free game, and later, initially by force of necessity, becoming hunters at sea, who were essentially thieves.

Because buccaneer and freebooter activities were reported within a nationalistic colonialist framework, they were often regarded as noble. They were seen as integral to the breaking of the Spanish monopoly. For the French and the English, taking what was Spanish was not stealing: it was part and parcel of a war for survival and dominance. It is not surprising then that the English pirate, Henry Morgan, did not like the negative version of buccaneering in Oexmelin’s book and got the King of England to stop the publication of two English editions of it and thus to stop the spread of

‘Oexmelin’s lies’. Drake, Hawkins and Morgan were all knighted by the English government for their exploits, which were seen as heroic endeavours. Stealing therefore was good or bad according to the purpose it served.

The earliest, generic image of a ‘boucanier’ appears, not in Oexmelin’s 1678 original Dutch work, but in a 1699 French edition of it. This pictorial version was presumably based on Oexmelin’s verbal description:

“Leur équipement est une Meute de vingt-cinq à trente chiens (1699, vol. 1: 103)

Ils ont avec cette Meute de bons fusils, qu’ils font faire exprés en France. ... ces fusils sont de quatre pieds & demi de long, c’est-à-dire le canon. La monture est autrement faite que celle des fusils ordinaires, dont on se sert en France. C’est pourquoy on nomme ces armes fusils de Boucanier”. (1699, vol. 1: 104-105)

“Leurs habillemens, sont deux chemises, un haut de chausse, une casaque, le tout de grosse toile, & un bonnet d’un cul de chapeau ou de drap, où il y a un bord seulement devant le visage, comme celui d’un Carapoux. Ils font leurs souliers de peau de porc & de boeuf, ou de vache. Ils ont avec cela une petite tente de toile fine, afin qu’ils la puissent tordre facilement, & la porter avec eux en bandoliere ...” (1699, vol. 1: 105-6)



[Their equipment is a pack of 25 to 30 dogs ...]

[With this pack they have good rifles, which they have made to order in France. ... these rifles, that is the barrels, are four and a half feet long. The stock is made differently from ordinary rifles used in France. That’s why these are called ‘buccaneer rifles’]

[For clothing they wear two shirts, breeches, a coat, all of coarse cloth and a cap the back of which is like a hat or of cloth and there is a rim only in front of the face, like that of a *carapoux*. They make their shoes from the skin of pigs, bulls or cows. They also have a tent made of fine cloth so that they can wrap it up easily and carry it slung across their back ...]

The illustrator who created the image above clearly chose to represent some details, disregard others and add some of his own. Notice that the man is not wearing shoes even though the text describes shoes; he has his calves enclosed even though there is

no such description in the text; and the cap is not really consistent with the verbal description. Notice also that the man is smoking a pipe even though there is no reference to a pipe in the text. Thus, one does not know in this case, as in many others, whether the illustration was a good or poor rendition of the 17th century reality in Hispaniola. Yet, this image has been reproduced in innumerable books and so has come to be accepted as what a *boucanier* looked like in the 17th century.

More important to note is that in the John Carter Brown (JCB) Library classification of this image it is referred to as ‘a pirate smoking a pipe’. In other words, even though the historical record clearly identifies the image as a *boucanier*, modern scholars, and it is not the JCB alone, discarded *boucanier* in favour of the easier or more popular word ‘pirate’. Since it would be misleading today to equate the English word ‘pirate’ and even ‘buccaneer’ with *boucanier*, it means that most readers would assume that the illustration refers to a corsair operating at sea, as in ‘Pirates of the Caribbean’. So, if a *boucanier* (a normal person) can be called a pirate, a pirate had become a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

There is a slightly different illustration of a *boucanier*, one which seems to be based on Charlevoix’s 1730 description, which in itself partially repeats Oexmelin’s description even though it adds details of its own. This illustration appears in volume 23 (appearing in 1777) of the twenty five volume version of Prevost d’Exiles’ *Voyages*. It has a principal figure and two in the background and is clearly titled: *Boucaniers de l’Isle St. Domingue*. Previous editions of the same *Voyages* do

not contain the illustration. Charlevoix could have acquired additional details from Le Pers and added those to the ones he selected from Oexmelin’s description:

“Leur habillement consistoit dans une Chemise, toute imbuë du sang des animaux, qu’ils tuoient, un Caleçon encore plus crasseux, & fait comme un Tablier de Brasseur, c’est-à-dire, ouvert par en bas, en maniere de Candale; une Courroye, qui leur servoit de Ceinture, & d’où pendoit une large gaine, dans laquelle étoient quelques Coûteaux Flamands, avec une espece de Sabre fort court, appelé Manchette, un Chapeau sans bord, excepté sur le devant, où ils en laissoient un bout pour le prendre, comme aux Carapoux, point de bas, & des Souliers faits de peaux de Cochons.



Leurs Fusils avoient un canon de quatre pieds & demi de long ... Et c'est de leur nom, comme je l'ai déjà observé, qu'on a depuis appelé Boucaniers les Fusils de ce calibre. Chacun avoit à sa suite plus ou moins d'Engagés, suivant ses facultés, & une meute de vingt ou trente Chiens (1731: 44)

[Their clothing consists of a shirt all stained with the blood of the animals they kill, an even filthier pair of underpants made like a brewer's apron, that is, open at the bottom like a *candale*; a leather strap for a belt, from which hangs a large sheath in which are some Flemish knives with a kind of very short sabre called a *manchette*; a hat without a rim except in the front which has an end to hold it by, like a *carapoux*; no stockings, and shoes made of pig skin.

Their guns have a barrel four and a half feet long ... And it is in their name, as I have said before, that rifles of this calibre are called buccaneers. Each one has a retinue more or less of servants according to one's ability as well as a pack of 20 or 30 dogs ...]

In this illustration the *boucanier* is not smoking a pipe, is wearing shoes and a cap more consistent with Oexmelin's and Charlevoix's written descriptions. The text that accompanies it in the 1777 volume reads:

*"Ces hommes, qui pour toute occupation faisoient la guerre aux boeufs sauvages, n'avoient d'autre ambition que de posséder une meute de vingt cinq ou trente chiens & un bon fusil. Ces armes avoient un canon de quatre piés & demi de long ... C'est d'eux, qu'on a donné le nom de **Boucaniers** aux fusils de ce calibre. Chacun avoit à sa suite un certain nombre d'Engagés, & une meute de vingt ou trente chiens ..* ". (Prévost d'Exiles et al., 1777, vol. 23: 13)

[These men, whose only occupation is to wage war on wild bulls, have no other ambition but to possess a pack of 25 to 30 dogs and a good rifle. These arms have a barrel four and a half feet long ... It is from them that the name buccaneer has



been given to rifles of this calibre. Each one has a retinue of a certain number of servants and a pack of 20 to 30 dogs ...]

A variation of the same image was reproduced by the artist Migliavacca in Giulio Ferrario's work *Il costume antico e moderno, o, stori della milizia, della religione, delle arti, scienze ed usanze di tutti i popoli antichi e moderni* and is dated about 1828. The images in this work are taken from older works and coloured, but there is no specific or detailed acknowledgement of the source works. Probably the colourising required cleaner lines and resulted in a sharper adaptation of the original, but it cannot explain the change in the caption. The caption of Migliavacca's version has been changed to 'Filibustieri' (= freebooters), which is incorrect, for, according to Charlevoix, a freebooter operated at sea. It is as if, for such exotic images, the artist or editor believed that one caption was just as good as another and there was no need to make fine distinctions.

Furthermore, not only is Migliavacca's version given the incorrect caption 'Filibustieri' but it is also amalgamated within a bigger view to give a different overall image. In other words, by slightly changing the hairstyle of the image that first appeared in volume 23 of Prevost d'Exile's *Voyages* and by adding two figures which are more female-looking, the image is transformed. What is significant is that Ferrario's account of early French and English exploits in Saint



Domingue makes absolutely no mention of female buccaneers or female pirates.

Yet, again in a modern book – *Insight Guides: Jamaica* – the name *boucanier* gives way to the more fanciful word 'pirate', for the same adapted image produced by Migliavacca is reproduced in this book and referred to as 'Calico Jack's "Pirate Princesses"', Anne Bonny and Mary Read, take a break from the drudgery of pillaging' (Zach, 1988: 40).

As to the earlier illustration first appearing in 1699, 19th and early 20th century illustrators continued to make adaptations. The illustration in Hazard (1873) has the

image facing the opposite direction, as if it were produced back to front. There are no smaller scenes at the bottom but a modified version of one of them has been transposed to the bottom of the picture. Samuel Hazard's English version of the earlier description reads:



“Their clothing consisted usually of a cotton shirt, and a pair of drawers or pants, made loose and baggy like a frock, while for shoes they used the skin of the pigs or cattle they killed. A close-fitting cap, with a small visor, completed this costume. On their expeditions they carried with them into the woods a small linen tent, which they used for purposes of shelter from the sun, and the attacks of the flies, which abounded in the island.” (1873: 72-73)

In spite of the fact that Hazard is fairly free in his translation of the original text, it is significant that he calls his figure ‘A Buccaneer’, which suggests that, as a writer giving an account of the island of Hispaniola, he needed to be more accurate in his details.

In John Masefield's book, *On the Spanish Main*, the illustration is labelled: ‘A buccaneer's slave with his master's gun’ (1906: 117). Though the label seems to be a serious distortion of the original, it is not without substance because in the original descriptions of *boucanier* it is said that “Each one had following him a certain number of indentured servants” (*Chacun avoit à sa suite un certain nombre d'Engagés* (Prévost d'Exiles et al., 1777, vol. 23: 13)). Presumably then, for Masefield, this meant that the slave/servant would carry the *boucanier's* gun and accordingly the man's features seem to have been modified to make him look more like an African slave.

This brief look at appropriation and adaptation of the illustrations and descriptions of *boucaniers* not only shows the conversion of *boucaniers* into pirates but also other kinds of idiosyncratic changes that were made and the serious consequences that such changes have for accurate interpretation of words, texts and cultural history generally.

The first appearance in print of the word



'criollo' is in many works identified as that in Jose de Acosta's *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*, which was first published in Seville in 1590: '*Esta fruta, dezian algunos Criollos (como allá llaman a los nacidos de Espanoles en Indias) que excedia a todas las frutas de Espana*' [This fruit, said some *Criollos* (that is what children born of the Spaniards in the Indies are called) exceeds all the fruits of Spain] (1591, Lib. 4, cap. 25: 167). However, Alvarez Nazario (1992: 19 [note 11]) points out an earlier reference from the previous year from Juan de Castellanos (1589), in an elegy written in honour of Juan Ponce de Leon, a white Puerto Rican involved in an expedition to seize the island of Trinidad:

"Criollo de San Joan que conocemos,
De parte principal ilustre abuelo." (Juan de Castellanos, 1589: 203)

[Creole of San Juan we know, with an illustrious grandfather].

In spite of the continued accreditation of the first citation of *criollo* to Acosta, it is clear that Acosta himself got the word from an earlier work, that by Juan López de Velasco (1571-1574). The heading of the section in which the word occurs in López de Velasco is '*De Los Españoles Nacidos en Las Indias*'. This is clearly repeated in Acosta's '*coma allá llaman a los nacidos de Españoles*', as well as Lopez de Velasco's words '*los que nacen dellos, que llaman criollos*'. Acosta obviously came upon the word in his early years in the New World, since he went to Peru in 1570, spent 17 years there, and taught there and elsewhere in the New World for some time before he returned to Spain where he wrote his *Historia*. Lopez de Velasco gave no information about the origin of the word.

In the 16th century *criollo* was not used to mean a mixed race person, but the idea of physical (in addition to cultural) adaptation (i.e. modified in colour by the sun) was present. This was in relation to Whites. Of course increasingly Creoles across the Americas were racially mixed in various ways because miscegenation was an integral part of colonisation. As a result, adaptation and mixture became virtually inseparable in many people's conception of 'creole'.

According to Garcilaso de la Vega, the Inca (1609), it was Africans who coined the word *criollo* and used it in a derogatory way to refer to their children because they were born outside of their fatherland and so were not proper Africans. However, from early on the word was used to refer to all ethnic groups except the indigenous people and did not really have any derogatory connotations. It was an especially useful and much used word in classifications of the inhabitants of countries across the Americas. In other words, people born in the Americas were divided into two – indigenous Americans (generally called 'Indians') and non-indigenous Americans (called 'Creoles'). In time, there were both restrictions and extensions in the meaning and reference of the word 'creole'.

In the West Indies a specific and significant variant of the word developed. The word ‘creolizing’ became well-known toward the end of the 18th century, meaning ‘to behave like a Creole’ and it was defined in the literature as follows:

“Creolizing is an easy and elegant mode of lounging in a warm climate; so called, because much in fashion among the ladies of the West Indies: that is, reclining back in one arm-chair, with their feet upon another, and sometimes upon the table.” (John McLeod, 1817).

The fact that there were many pictorial illustrations of ‘creolizing’ meant that it was seen by some as a defining characteristic of Creoles. Of course, this was not a Creole view but a European one and it was connected to a historically older and more widespread view of Creoles as ‘indolent’. Even if ‘creolizing’ referred principally to white behaviour and the idea that whites were induced into this behaviour because slaves did everything for them, the image of indolence was not so restricted – it was seen to be general among Creoles of all colours mainly because of the warmth of the climate and the bounty of the land. This view of ‘Creoles’ is still current today and is expressed in words such as ‘laid-back’ and ‘easy-going’.

While in the academic world there is a tendency to select classification terms from the natural sciences and extend them to the humanities in order to create an image of precision, objectivity and rigour, the extension of ‘creole’ into the academic world was certainly not such a case. Indeed, it was probably because it already had negative connotations for some in relation to what was European that it was introduced into Linguistics as a term of classification. In 1933 the American linguist, Leonard Bloomfield, wrote in his influential textbook *Language*:

*“... a jargon ... is nobody’s native language but only a compromise between a foreign speaker’s version of a language and a native speaker’s version of the foreign speaker’s version ... In some cases ... a subject group gives up its native language in favor of a jargon. This happens especially when the subject group is made up of persons from different speech-communities, who can communicate among themselves only by means of the jargon. This was the case, presumably, among Negro slaves in many parts of America. When the jargon has become the only language of the subject group, it is a **creolized language**. The creolized language has the status of an inferior dialect of the master’s speech.”* (1933: 473-474)

Since there were elements in what Bloomfield said that smacked of racism, his formulation did not gain favour generally. Yet, in fairness to Bloomfield, seeing that he deliberately used the term ‘creolized language’, what he intended was that a European language was modified by Creoles, not that these Creoles had created a creole (language).

In the 1960s Robert Hall’s sanitized version of Bloomfield’s definition came to be accepted by many as a good working definition of a ‘creole’ language even though it

basically accepted what Bloomfield said. A critical difference in Hall's formulation was that the entity 'creole' was the result of a process, but even so it still had the original, crucial idea of 'native' in it. In 1983 Pauline Christie wrote: "*Robert Hall Jr. formulated the now widely used definition of a creole, i.e. a native language which resulted from the expansion of a pidgin, the latter being nobody's mother-tongue and restricted in grammar and vocabulary. Despite its general adoption, this definition may have outlived its usefulness*" (Christie, 1983: 13).

However, even before that, in 1971, in the influential book *Pidginization and creolization of languages* Dell Hymes, trying to get away from some elements in Hall's definition, summarized his editorial discussion on the definition of creole language by saying: "*Creolization is that complex process of sociolinguistic change comprising expansion in inner form, with convergence, in the context of extension of use. A creole is the result of such a process that has achieved autonomy as a norm.*" (Hymes, 1971: 84) What Hymes did was to remove the idea of 'native' from the definition and put the emphasis squarely on the notion that the entity was the result of a process.

What had become clear is not only that the lay word 'creole' was not very amenable to an easily understood and generally acceptable (scientific) definition but also that if the element of native-born, native-created or innateness was removed from it as well as the element 'American', then it would be left with veneer and no substance. Yet, it was probably because it was contentious in a world of turbulent social change and was symbolic of the uplifting of the downtrodden that it generated widespread discussion that moved beyond Linguistics. Another consequence of the introduction of 'creole' into academic discussion is that it turned the focus from entity ('creole') to process ('creolization') and this in itself caused a shift away from promoting African-ness and refuting claims that the Africans brought nothing with them to the Americas (positions argued for in the work of Melville Herskovits). The focus was now on the dynamic process of adaptation which affected all those involved in culture contact.

This focus meant that one could say that a creole culture became dominant in the West Indies, for example, and that it developed through a network of communication. It varied according to different areas within the network. Some of the major features in this developmental network would have been as follows:

1. The newly arrived African adult learnt local ways from seasoned slaves.
2. Young slave children were put with old women and learnt from them.
3. Wet nurses affected white children culturally in one way or another.
4. Young white children were also put with old slave women, through whom they developed elements of their native culture.
5. White children played with slave children, who provided fun and amusement for them. Influence was reciprocal.

6. Slave children learnt sayings, songs, stories and other areas of folklore from adult slaves.
7. Slave children played games among themselves, the younger ones learning children's lore and language from the older ones.
8. Adult slaves interacted in the fields, in and around the house and in the marketplace, contexts which provided for the major varieties in their cultural repertoire.
9. At night house slaves, artisans and field slaves all interacted among themselves within their own home environment.
10. In the marketplace plantation slaves and town slaves interacted, thereby influencing each other culturally.
11. Adult house slaves interacted with their mistresses on a consistent daily basis, thereby acquiring ways that would have been considered more sophisticated than those of other slaves.
12. Adult field slaves and artisan slaves interacted directly but inconsistently with their masters, overseers and drivers, thereby producing more idiosyncratic cultural varieties.
13. Slaves provided music and entertainment at white dances and parties which would have resulted in a dynamic and extensive repertoire.
14. Christian holidays provided the framework for 'saturnalian' or cultural inversion (e.g. slaves dressed up and masters dressed down).

It should be clear from this skeletal view of the experiences that determined a creole culture that there would have been both commonality and variation across all native born people in every community. Variation would be so great within and across communities that it would be virtually impossible to isolate any one or set of features that would define 'creole', unless one supported an argument like Derek Bickerton's that posited a human 'bioprogram' that would determine central features in certain situations of culture contact. In other words, for there to be common defining characteristics the element of 'native', in the sense of innateness, would have to be central.

Richard Burton, in his book *Afro-Creole*, summarizes his position on the process of creolization and its result at the end of the slavery period in Jamaica by saying:

"By 1838, the year of final emancipation, both Jamaica's Whites and its Blacks had been significantly transformed by the experience of slavery, which had brought them together even as it held them radically and necessarily apart. The Whites had ceased to be "European" and the Blacks "African" in any "pure" or unequivocal sense, and both had been, to a significant though unequal degree, creolized; furthermore, a third "colored" group, with no "home" other than Jamaica, occupied an

ambivalent intermediate zone between them. All three groups were creole ... It was, in short, a case not of two Jamaicas ... but of three – the Euro-, the Meso-, and the Afro-Creole, each “shading” racially, culturally, and linguistically into its neighbor—with a fourth entity, the hegemonic imperialist culture of Britain, capping and ultimately controlling the rest.” (1997: 42)

This formulation of creolization is misleading because it suggests that it took most of the slavery period for whites and blacks and others to become Creoles. According to the original concept of *criollo*, one is born a creole: one does not become a creole through a historical process of adaptation. It would have been better to say that where once in 1655, for example, the percentage of Creoles in Jamaica (i.e. native-born Jamaicans) was minimal, by 1838 Creoles had become the majority of the population. And even this one has to say guardedly because the demographic statistics show that because of the heavy importation of Africans into Jamaica in the last quarter of the 18th century through to the end of the first decade of the 19th century there were a considerable number of Africans on the island at the eve of Emancipation. Moreover, unless for Burton ‘creole’ always implies a context of New World slavery, creolization would simply mean cultural adaptation in colonial situations and would apply to most countries since most countries have adapted and have been adapted by migrants in a colonial context.

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So, seeing that ‘creole’ has become a kaleidoscope with no inner substance and a ‘pirate’ is a wolf in sheep’s clothing, we can now return to the analogy between these two concepts that rose to prominence through the colonial encounter in the early Caribbean and ask: Who or what should one call a pirate? Who or what should one call a Creole? When and how does a person or language become a creole? What do they have to have before they can be called creoles?

The image we see is not what a pirate is – that is just a false image resulting from an uninformed or distant external gaze. A pirate is not what the original image shows. A creole is not what the original definition identifies. A pirate is not a *boucanier* and a creole is not a *criollo*. The diverse concepts people across the Americas and beyond have of a creole make nonsense of the belief that all entities referred to as creole have common identifiable characteristics and suggest that such a belief is just a fanciful illusion. It may be better for academics to stick with piracy and creolization, that is, the processes.

Literate and academic sleight of hand should make us more aware that in translating cultures we should not be led by illusory terminology relating to entities or by the belief that there is always a straightforward relationship between entity and process. It is much better to proceed by using as our guide basic relationships like the following:

Dominance/subservience
Innateness/learning
Identity/difference
Morality/immorality

Feature analyses using these basic relationships should help us see the dynamism and complexity of cultures better and, notwithstanding the fact that academic viewpoints are to a large extent determined by territorialism, this method of proceeding should help to limit the excesses of such territorial tendencies.

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**THE RHIZOMATIC LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES OF
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS**

NARRATIVIZING AND PERSPECTIVIZING THE VIRGIN ISLANDER UNDERCLASS IN TIPHANIE YANIQUE'S *STREET MAN*

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Tiphanie Yanique was shortlisted for and then awarded the Fiction Prize at the inaugural Bocas Lit Fest: The Trinidad and Tobago Literary Festival in 2011. In a podcast interview with the present researcher, *The spaces between words: conversation with writers*, Yanique admitted that although she had received much critical attention and accolades in the United States she was also yearning for the same recognition in the Caribbean. She noted: [...] “we don’t have a lot of literary history as yet and I think having a Virgin Islander, one of the first Virgin Islanders, to get national exposure in the US – to also be getting exposure in the region – is really wonderful for the Virgin Islands itself.” Yet, Yanique said she was also “hungry to get attention back home because this is where I write from and this is primarily who I write for.” In the short story *Street man*, originally published in *The London Magazine* and later in her collection *How to escape from a leper colony: a novella and stories* (pp. 31-39), Yanique focuses on a fictional character who is – like her – a Virgin Islander. Anton Colter is from the island of St. Croix in which the story is set, and is the autodiegetic narrator – that is, he is the narrator-protagonist – whose voice and perspective the reader is offered on matters of sex, love, commitment; the business and ethics of drug dealing and drug taking; and on scattered issues incidentally revealed about a tourism-dependent, post-hurricane affected St. Croix. Anton would seem to be a typical anti-hero, but in this narrative his morals and values about love and drugs are revealed to be set within a paradoxical mindscape and alternative viewpoint, evoking a sympathetic reader response.

Yanique completed the collection during hiatuses while writing her novel *Land of love and drowning*. She explains in the podcast interview: “I needed to have moments of quiet in my own process, so I started writing short stories to give myself breath between the writing of this huge novel and also to give myself opportunities to learn craftings [sic] like how to create structure, how to perfect character, how to present realistic dialogue....” Yanique successfully achieves these three elements in the crafting of *Street man*.

In this story we see how St. Croix and Anton are on the periphery. The island is geographically, politically and metaphorically peripheral to the United States; Anton's status as drug dealer places him on the periphery of respectable society; and he ultimately comes to realize that he has peripheral knowledge and understanding of the woman he loves.

Dion E. Phillips has identified natural disasters, as well as drugs and crime as two of four selected challenges facing the Caribbean. Indeed, these realities are mirrored in Yanique's short narrative: Anton deals and smokes marijuana, and previously sold heroin until his then-girlfriend became addicted; complains to his drug-dealing partner and cousin, Fish, about how the weed they get from Jamaica is below par and sickens those who smoke it; Fish threatens him with a gun and Anton too carries one around with him; he [Anton] insists on keeping the trade local when his former Texan clients return home, but request that they continue being supplied by him; and he is against marijuana being legitimized. For example, he says:

"They had want to set up some long-distance thing but Fish and me can't be doing that. We small time and I plan on keeping it so [...] The spot is a Rasta restaurant. Ital smelling up the place [...] I never sell in this part of the island. These cats grow their own ganga. They say it religious and the cops leave them alone. I think that's bullshit. So, if I just grow some locks then I'd be legit? I don't want weed to be legal, anyhow. Then the feds would control it and the profits wouldn't be made on the streets. You don't change a good thing, you keep it so." (pp. 34, 38)

The selling and buying of drugs among children's playground furniture in the park by lower-order drug peddlers like Anton and wealthier drug users, respectively, holds symbolic signification. Borrowing from William L. Leap's distinction between *place* and *space* (p. 7) in his discussion of another taboo, gay sex in public spaces – from just a *place* which is a location that is naturally formed this venue is a *space* in which there is meaning-potential derived from the various forms of human activity – children playing, drug peddling, etcetera – which have imposed meanings upon it, making it no longer a neutral terrain but a landscape because it has been transformed into a 'way of seeing' relevant to its locale. For surreptitious activities, the park is a means of concealment, masking the drug activity with an ironic veneer of innocence and providing the paradox of hiding in plain sight. The reader can infer that clients who purchase their drugs there would not be afraid of being caught, would not want to go to the dealers' homes, or would not want them to come to theirs (unlike the aforementioned Texan "white folks [who] didn't like to come around the park" so Anton would deliver the drugs to their home during his lunch break) (p. 34). Hence, for 'small time' drug dealers like Anton the park is seen as a convenient space for their illegal trade.

Anton's relationship with his cousin and drug-dealing partner Fish involves elements of loyalty, obligation and hierarchy as they relate to spoken and unspoken codes within the family and the underworld. These codes define how members negotiate their relationships with each other, and for Anton this involves matters of life and death as well. The gun and car, for example, are indexical and symbolic signs in this narrative in the ways they implicitly signify how Anton and Fish's partnership is unequal. Fish can wield power by threatening Anton's life, sticking a gun in his mouth when suspects him of betrayal (p. 34), but Anton can on a later occasion bolster his spoken defiance by revealing his own gun (p. 36). That Anton drives his mother's car – "I don't have a drug-dealer's pimped-out ride. I just have a regular four-runner" (p. 37) – unlike Fish, who it is suggested owns more than one, indicates not only that it is a façade of a law-abiding existence much like his job at the Sun Shack and his selling of drugs at a public playground, but also that he is on the lower strata of the drug world unable to make a living solely from dealing. Hence, when he dreams of being a businessman with his own autonomy it is not surprising that Fish, too, is one of his considerations because he would no longer be in the position of a subordinate: "I think even Fish will come to my place with respect and I going give him a deal" (p. 34).

As for his present circumstances, Anton and Fish's negotiation of their drug-dealing business partnership is hinged upon, if not entirely defined by, their familial connection. Therefore, Anton remarks how "I hate that Fish nigger, but he my cousin on my mom's side – so I suppose to know that he won't really kill me. And he's suppose to know that I won't really sell him out" (p. 37). The phrasal and syntactic repetition, while foregrounding the suggestion that Fish is the more powerful of the pair and of the uneasy trust within the duo's dynamics of power, also exemplifies how their blood relationship affects the codes of conduct and responsibility in their drug business and so the imperatives "I suppose to know" and "he's suppose to know" convey those particular obligations, requirements and expectations.

In terms of the characterization of her narrator-protagonist, like the identity of the nation in which he lives (one that is liminal and of a double nature, since it is part of both America and the Caribbean), Anton, ironically, harbours what appears to be double standards regarding drug use because of his traditional morals and values about women and romantic relationships. In this regard, he seems to be a paradoxical figure whose attitudinal or ideological positioning is at times contradictory. His contrastive selves are revealed throughout the story, and in keeping with being a round character he is variously sentimental, tough, crass, uncertain, confused, assertive, confident, etcetera, in response to the different aspects and situations of his life. In narrativizing these using a first-person – yet, limited – perspective, Yanique is able to effectively provide his intimate views and feelings in such a way that his overall presentation as a man, lover, son and cousin, is one that, because he is more than one-dimensional (that is, he is more than just a drug dealer or street man and he is not simply demonized) the

reader can variously and simultaneously disapprove of him, admire him, and then at the story's close sympathize with him. It is not that Yanique's depiction of Anton suggests the reader should excuse the drug dealer, whether he is of the fictional or non-fictional world, but rather in portraying him with both negative and positive qualities she imbues this character with particular realism.

Although he can more accurately be considered an Everyman, the label of anti-hero can be applied to Anton because he is a drug dealer. Yet he *does* embody the idealism and courage of the typical hero in terms of, for instance, his romantic ideals. He is willing to take the chance of loving Yolanda, who is ten years younger than he is and who every so often spends relatively long periods away from him when she goes off to university. Anton rationalizes and justifies the fact that he has sexual relations with other women when Yolanda is away and ponders her own fidelity, but for the most part she effects particular changes in him no other woman had previously accomplished. He has hopes of marrying her and making her the mother of his children, and has him, as he says, "acting like a schoolboy" (p. 32).

Bal, in teasing out what she calls 'the problem of the hero', observes that one criterion put forth for defining the term is "the amount of moral approbation that the hero receives from the reader" (p. 131) and she later goes on to make the point that the word "'hero' implies more positive semantics than is warranted [...] [and that the] problem of the hero has ideological relevance, if only because of the connotations of the concept itself" (p. 132).

Anton is a member of the underclass in society because he is among those who are socio-economically its least advantaged members. As a 'street man' he is a dropout, a store assistant who sells sunglasses to tourists, and a drug dealer who totes a gun at his waist. Yet, it can be said that he also consciously makes the intellectual and moral decision to engage in the underworld of drug dealing. He derives additional income selling drugs, it is implied, to the less wealthy in the park as well as to the upper echelons of St. Croix society, that is, particularly White Americans who have the option of fleeing to their homeland when natural disaster strikes the island. However, it is noteworthy that via the use of rhetorical anaphora which emphasizes his deep resolve of achieving his ambition to be the owner, manager and accountant of his own sunglasses store, it is seen that Anton's goals are of ultimately being a legitimate businessman. Being a street man who indulges in illegal activities may be an indicator of moral, but not intellectual, laxity. Like his young lover, Yolanda, who attends university on the mainland in the United States, Anton is intelligent, a reader who is also aware of happenings in the world beyond his street dealings and St. Croix, and so is knowledgeable and confident enough to engage her in intellectual discourse.

Yanique represents authentic code mixing patterns between Creole and Standard English of the Virgin Islander who has been educated but is also of the 'street'. Within and between sentences Anton – like Yolanda – mixes and switches codes, typical of

the linguistic competence and linguistic performance of many Caribbean speakers. With the authenticity of Anton's speech, as with the effect of his first-person perspective, the reader is drawn ever more into that illusion of truth which fiction can provide and into the depths of Anton's character. This aspect of Yanique's technique in and effects of characterization epitomizes what Merle Hodge says about writers' crafting of speech representation:

“By accurately locating a character's speech patterns within the spectrum of varieties, a writer may suggest that person's social class, level of education, age, self-concept and other particularities...The writer's ability to hear and convincingly render the voices of individual characters may also play an important role in constructing narrative perspective. For example, in first person fiction the personality and worldview of the narrator may play a major role in the action or color its interpretation. In such pieces it may serve the writer's purpose to present the narration entirely in the idiolect of the narrator, which may be a Creole or a code-switching/mixing voice.” (p. 476)

Besides referring to himself as a ‘street man’ there are other epithets that Anton assigns to himself such as ‘sweet man’, ‘punk’, ‘thug’, and ‘black sheep’. In contrast, he refers to Yolanda as an ‘angel’ and makes a conscious effort not to put her at risk, get her involved with his drugs or his gun, or reveal to her too much of his underworld activities. This is not only for his own personal safety and hers, but because he also has a level of respect for her – for example, he does not deal drugs in her presence. Nonetheless, his reasons are also gender-based. Stephen Whitehead in *Men and masculinities* lists some of the gender stereotypes that “form a significant part of our everyday language and understanding” as being “rooted in dualisms such as passive / assertive, strong / weak, irrational / rational, gentle / forceful, emotional / distant” (p. 10). While not wishing to “discount the importance of class, ethnicity, race and cultural capital [Whitehead stresses that] our sex / gender identity is probably most central to how we see ourselves and how others see us...” (p. 10). In Yanique's narrative, the “almost thirty” year old Anton clearly sees his age and manhood as being significant to how he defines his role in the relationship with Yolanda. His masculinity is circumscribed, too, by his membership in the drug underworld. Therefore, he declares that “I is a street man. And a street man is the sweetest man” as opposed to inexperienced, self-centred “goody schoolboys” (p. 33). His view of Yolanda's role in the relationship arises not only out of his protective feelings for her and to safeguard himself from any deliberate or inadvertent betrayal she might commit against him that could lead to his arrest, but also out of specific parameters he sets that are connected to the gender scripts to which he adheres. For instance, he asserts that “She's not going hold my gun for me. And I don't want her to. I is the thug in this” (p. 35) and admits that “I don't like ladies smoking. It is a bad habit and it looks even worse on them” (p. 34). Hence, to reiterate, while he refers to himself using negative

epithets in contrast for him Yolanda is a “good girl” and “a good sweet thing” that he needs; “It’s a balance” (p. 35) he professes.

Susan Sniader Lanser notes how “Point of view is also determined and conditioned by the kinds and modes of *contact* which the narrator establishes with the textual readership, and by the *stance* the narrator takes toward the fictional persons and events” and also how the use of the first-person narrative voice makes for direct and overt contact with the narratee (original emphasis, p. 174). In the opening sentence of the story, the literary trope of the apostrophe is employed as Anton directly addresses a ‘you’ who can serve blurred roles as both narratee and implied reader: “Let me tell you how I meet this sweet thing” (p. 31). Hence, from the very beginning the contiguity of the story’s title and orientation sets up the juxtaposition of the class and attitudinal positioning of the narrator-protagonist, with the incongruously yoked ideas of the underworld and love that pervade the story. At the outset, therefore, the internal focalization and subjective viewpoint of this underworld character assists in drawing in the reader into his internal world of feelings and emotions, providing insight and evoking sympathy. Anton’s categorical assertions, evaluative judgements, and strongly modalized statements, as he relates the story, leave the reader no doubt as to the consistency and assuredness of his outlook on his drug dealing and his romance.

His limited, first-person viewpoint, however, is also reflective of or analogous to his vulnerabilities and the limitations of his relationship with Yolanda. It is important, therefore, that we are given insight into his feelings and thoughts alone and not hers. He is the focalizer or reflector of the narrative, and whatever dialogue takes place between them is therefore conveyed via his narrative report. Because it is his perspective that dominates the story, it is of symbolic significance that it is Yolanda’s voice – her direct speech – that we are left with at the end of the story. That the story’s title “Street man” is what we first see and her words “Change, nigger, change” (p. 39) is what we last ‘hear’ must not be overlooked. It is as though this directive she screams during her poetry reading at the open mic session in Fredericksted is targeted directly at him, although she is unaware he has spied upon and followed her to the restaurant. Anton’s unmodalized declarations of love during the course of the narrative prove to be ironic at this juncture in the story because he is revealed, in spite of his street-smart instincts and masculinist views about women and romance, as also being vulnerable and deluded with regard to particular aspects of his relationship with Yolanda.

One of the ironies of the story is that both Anton and Yolanda lead double lives; but, while she is aware of his dealings in the marijuana trade, he was oblivious to hers as a spoken word poet who dresses in Rastafarian style. He had observed how “She the kind of girl don’t want to know everything that goes on in my life” (p. 36), but the ironic twist of this statement is only revealed to the reader and to him at the story’s close when he realizes that he did not know everything that goes on in hers. It is

significant that Yolanda has more knowledge about the “street” than Anton realized, and she is not at all “a damn softy” or the “goody-goody college girl that don’t know nothing about the street” that he thought she was but can indeed embody qualities of “a ride or die chick” (p. 33) that he thought she was not.

Oswald Ducrot and Tzvetan Todorov explain that among the ways characters can be manifested in a text is by their names. A name can announce “in advance the properties that will be attributed to a character ... may entertain purely paradigmatic relationships with the character’s personality ... or else may be implicated in the syntagmatic causality of the narrative” (p. 225). When Anton decides Yolanda would be his woman and the mother of his children he instructs her that she cannot be calling him by his street name, Slick, but instead should be addressing him by his real name, Anton. This signifies another way in which he displays his serious commitment to her and how he makes an effort to separate and compartmentalize his life with her and his other life he has with his cousin Fish and the others in the drug world. She wants him to refer to her by her whole name, syllable by syllable: “Yo-lan-da” (p. 39), because he feels it is “sexy” and she professes that it means that he loves all of her. Yet, here in the world she occupies of which he was previously unaware, her stage name is an abbreviation, “Landi” (p. 39). He confesses: “And I cringe cause I never know she go by this name” (p. 39). He comes to realize he does not really know her; and like him she inhabits a double existence, and passes back and forth between identities and worlds.

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Cuddon observes that: “Irony has many functions. It is often the witting or unwitting instrument of truth. It chides, purifies, refines, deflates, scorns and ‘sends up’” (p. 461). It is therefore a tool that can be used as well for satirical purposes (Cuddon, 461; Wales, 224). Cuddon explains that the satirist is:

“[...] a kind of self-appointed guardian of standards, ideals and truth; of moral as well as aesthetic values [...] who takes it upon himself to correct, censure and ridicule the follies and vices of society and thus to bring contempt and derision upon aberrations from a desirable civilized norm. Thus satire is a kind of protest, a sublimation and refinement of anger and indignation.” (p. 828)

As a textual construct Yolanda, although knowingly the lover of a drug dealer and gun-toter, is to the reader’s surprise the story’s satirist at the surface level of the narrative, whereas the writer Yanique serves that function at a deeper level.

Burroway notes that:

“In the compact short story form, the falling action is likely to be very brief or nonexistent, and often the crisis action itself implies the resolution, which is not necessarily stated but exists as an idea established in the reader’s mind.

So for our purposes it is probably more useful to think of story shape not as a pyramid with sides of equal length but as an inverted check mark.” (p. 40)

The narrative structure of Yanique's "Street Man" is such that the story's peak is its resolution. In locative and proxemic terms, therefore, it is significant that Anton after this revelation about his lover is "driving away" (p. 39) from the scene with her words in his ears and mind when the story ends. It is also significant that he describes those words as being "messed up". Hence, the reader is left wondering whether he will heed Yolanda's unintended message as he negotiates the streets of his own life.

In her skilful handling of characterization; the ironic disclosures as the plot develops; and the reader's ability to link the story's title to the story's final words, Yanique (as implied author) makes implicit statements on and comparisons among apparent and hidden identities, the instability of certainties, the vulnerability of contradictory and paradoxical positionings, and the underside of the obvious.

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THE LANGUAGE OF RESISTANCE: THE USE OF NATION LANGUAGE IN MARVIN WILLIAMS' "MANJACK IN THE HALL"

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Language has long been a key tool in the colonization process, and it has been used by the oppressed as a tool for resistance. The history of most of the African descended peoples of the Caribbean began with kidnapping in Africa, being sold to European slave traders, and then being sold to plantation owners. Once on the plantation, slaves were stripped of their names, religion, and finally their languages. The slaves were forbidden to speak their native languages, so they created their own language. This process involved European languages influencing the slaves' African languages and African grammatical structures influencing European languages. These new languages, created by Africans and African descended people, are what Kamul Braithwaite refers to as Nation Language.

Braithwaite, in his *History of the voice: the development of nation language in Anglophone Caribbean poetry* refers to Creole as "the language of the slaves and laborers, the servants who were brought in by the conquistadors" (p. 6). He states that the languages of the master were French, Spanish, English, and Dutch, and the slaves were forced to learn at least one of these new languages based on location, but that the slaves used a "stylistic form" when speaking the European language, thus creating what Braithwaite refers to as Nation Language (p. 7). In other words, Anglophone and Francophone Creoles are Europeanized African languages, languages that have the grammar of African languages but have a lexical base from a European language.

The real clash between European and non-European languages occurred after slavery though, when former slave children and descendents of slave children attended, and still do attend, schools where the medium of instruction in Standard English as opposed to Nation Language – their mother tongue. These educational systems teach about the culture of the colonizers, not the culture of the colonized. Even today, the students learn more about the British royalty and George Washington, than they do of Nanny of the Maroons or the Ashanti Empire and their role in the enslavement of their fellow Africans (Appiah). This has led to a trend that Franz Fanon discusses in *Black skin, white masks* where some African descended people of the Caribbean have

developed an aversion to their own language and culture. Fanon writes, “One avoids Creolisms. Some families completely forbid Creole and mothers ridicule their children for speaking it.” (p. 49).

Many writers, including Crucian poet Marvin E. Williams and Patrick Chamoiseau, insist on writing in Creole, even though it means that they will have a limited market for their work. One of the driving forces behind their choice of languages is resistance – resistance to colonization, resistance to total cultural assimilation, and resistance to neocolonialism. Even though slavery, for most people, has ended in the Caribbean, the effects of colonization linger on in the colonial and post-colonial Caribbean. Nation Language, according to Braithwaite, is one of the last forms, perhaps the last form on some islands, of resistance to the death of a culture. The Secretary General of the Caribbean Community, Irwin LaRocque, describes Patrick Chamoiseau’s writing as an attempt “to free himself from the French language which he regards as the very embodiment of colonialism and the freedom he exploits to subvert it by the use of creole expressions” (LaRocque).

Marvin E. Williams was born and raised on St. Croix, before attending college at Cornell in the US where he obtained both his B.A. and M.A degrees. After graduation, he taught at Cornell for a number of years before returning to St. Croix to give back to the island that gave him so much. Upon returning to St. Croix, he began teaching at UVI, and shortly thereafter, he assumed the role of editor of *The Caribbean Writer*. He was a voracious reader and writer and he published several volumes of poetry and fiction, including *Overture to kin* (2007), *Echo of a circle closing* (2007), *Dialogue at the hearth* (1993), and *Ebony fields* (1976). He also edited two anthologies of Virgin Islands writers covering almost 100 years of Virgin Island writing: *Yellow cedars blooming: an anthology of Virgin Islands poetry* (1998) and *Seasoning for the mortar* (2004).

Williams passed away in March 2010 and his widow is currently in the process of publishing three volumes of his previously unpublished poetry. He was well loved by both his peers and students and was known for his seemingly easy ability to write a poem for any occasion, as well as his commitment to his community. Edgar Lake, the author of *The devil’s bridge*, describes Williams as an incredible human being who was always there for his students and friends. Lake compares Williams’ dedication to his fellow islanders to that of Martinican novelist Patrick Chamoiseau.

In addition to his community mindedness, another forte of Williams was the way he used language. Williams writes about St. Croix, its people, its land, and its history in almost all of his poems and many of his poems are written in either Standard English or Standard English and Crucian Creole. Ursula K. Le Guin (1986) refers to Standard English as the language of power and success. Le Guin states, “if you want to succeed, you have to be fluent in the language in which ‘success’ is a meaningful word” (p. 2). Williams, while proficient in Standard English, writes in Crucian or Nation Language,

not as a means of lending authenticity to his work, but as a form of announcing to the world that he is Crucian first and American second. This article will explore how Williams uses Nation Language in the poem “Manjack in the Hall” to reveal and renounce St. Croix’s history of slavery, colonialism, neocolonialism, and a Crucian society that elevates Eurocentric culture and poetry above Crucian culture and poetry. At the same time though, Williams highlights a history of rebellion and resistance to oppression that is not yet included in the compulsory formal education of Crucian children.

Manjack is a native tree to St. Croix and it is used to make fences and anything requiring wood. It is used in St. Croix as a masculine nickname and it is very general, but at the same time specific. The meaning listed in the glossary of *Dialogue at the hearth* is “everyman”, but it is not just everyman, it means a native son of St. Croix, in other words – a true Crucian. Hence, by naming his main character Manjack, Williams is letting the reader know that this is a poem about St. Croix and its people. Stanzas 1, 2, and 3 highlight some of the bigger celebrations in St. Croix, including both Jou’veert during Bacchanal and New Years Eve. Also mentioned are some of the many foods that are native to the Virgin Islands, including johnny cakes and callaloo, as well as the herb based drink sorrel. Mervyn Alleyne, one of the pioneers in the field of creole linguistics, has stated that what separates a Creole from a pidgin, and makes a Creole a complete language, is that Creoles convey a culture (personal communication, September 20, 2010). Therefore, it is clear just within the first three stanzas that Crucian Creole is a language in its own right.

Stanza 4 is very critical of the colonial status of the Virgin Islands, laying blame with the US, but Williams also takes the time to criticize a Crucian society that celebrates a Danish history of enslavement and violation of human rights. For example, Williams mentions the Whim House, because it is the great house of the master of a former sugar plantation that now serves as a museum. As a part of their compulsory education, Crucian schoolchildren are bused to the Whim House so they can learn about their history through the eyes of the Danes. Williams challenges the Danish history of oppression while writing in Crucian, and additionally challenges those who still remember movements for liberation of the past to “build on tradition”. Williams also refers to what is left of “these unvirgin island” after hundreds of years of colonization by the Spanish, English, Dutch, French, Knights of Malta, Denmark, and the United States of America as “crumbs”.

Stanza 5 includes reference to elements of resistance in the musical traditions of St. Croix, which include Quelbe (which became the official music of the US Virgin Islands in 2004) and Scratch Band Music. Scratch Band Music got its name from the musical instruments utilized to play this genre, most of which were created by band members themselves from miscellaneous items commonly found in and around their houses and yards. For example, dried empty hard-shell gourds and old biscuit tins

were and still are converted into instruments. This music emerged in St. Croix during slavery as the West Africans that were transported to St. Croix arrived with a history of storytelling accompanied by drums. When the slave owners banned the use of drums, the slaves adapted in the same fashion that they adapted their languages, and created new percussion instruments out of accessible discarded items. They also maintained the accompanying storytelling, which developed over time into lyrics that had a political or social message.

In Stanza 5 Williams mentions “LaBega carousel” from the lyrics of traditional songs promoting a boycott of an amusement ride owner named LaBega, because he refused wage increases for carnival workers. References to this boycott are still included in modern day Crucian music (Soule & Lieth-Phillip). The original lyrics from the early 1900’s are as follows:

I rather walk and drink rum whole night
Before me go ride on LaBega Carousel
You no hear what LaBega say,
“The people no worth more than fifteen cent a day”
I am walking, I am looking, I am begging
Before me go ride on LaBega Carousel.

Williams begins stanza 6 by criticizing Crucians who reject Crucian folk music and dancing, while embracing foreign trends because they are new. He then delves into some of the more important events in Crucian history as he describes the rebellion that emancipated the slaves and another rebellion that ended a shameful apprenticeship program. Historical accounts state that the slaves were planning a rebellion for more than a year and finally on July 2 1847 General Moses “Buddhoe” Gottlieb led a slave rebellion that would result in the emancipation of all non-free men and women in the Virgin Islands. The rebellion began with several hundred, but grew to more than 8000 outside of Fort Frederik by the next day. The fort Commander sent a message pleading for help from Governor Peter von Scholten, and when the Governor arrived, thousands of slaves demanding their freedom quickly surrounded him. The story that is most widely believed is that Buddhoe demanded their freedom and the Governor, fearing that there could be widespread killing and destruction of plantation property, agreed and declared the slaves free. Buddhoe and the other leaders of the rebellion were jailed for 6 months and then exiled to Trinidad under the threat of death if they ever returned to the Danish West Indies (Henighan-Potter). Incidentally, Buddhoe is thought to have lived on La Grange Estate, the same plantation where Marvin Williams’ mother was later raised as a child (Williams, n.d.).

Although slavery was officially over, the Danes required former slaves to work for their former owners under an *apprenticeship program*, under which they were bound to contracts that paid 10-15 cents a day. The Danes also restricted the issuance of

passports, leaving the former slaves virtually in the same subservient position as before. This system of slavlike labor went on for 30 years until the “Fireburn” of 1878 when Queen Mary and her rebel group marched down the main road of St. Croix burning down plantations as they gained members and momentum on their way to Fort Frederik (Henighan-Potter). Once standing in the same spot where Buddhoe stood in 1847, they ripped the gates off the fort and forced the repeal of a labor law that was nothing more than slavery under a different name. Williams then makes the connection between slavery and colonialism in the past and the neocolonialism that dominates life in present day St. Croix when he writes:

What Queen Mary fire burn
it didn't burn to the ground
and
No local family
control the economy
In this land of plenty
plenty pocket empty

In Stanza 6 Williams decries hundreds of years of oppression and the promises of change that never seem to materialize for the working poor. When Williams writes “No local family, control the economy. In this land of plenty, plenty pocket empty” he acknowledges a Crucian society whose relations of power have not changed fundamentally, even though the Danish West Indies has ceased to exist, the slaves have become free people, and the slave ships have become cruise ships.

Williams writes “Manjack in the Hall” in both his mother language (Crucian) and his father language (American Standard English). Mother language, in this case Crucian, is the language you learn at home, the language of love, the language that lies within your heart. Father language, as Le Guin describes it, is the language of “man ascending, man the conqueror, civilized man. It is not your native tongue. It is not anybody's native tongue” (p. 2). This is the language that most Caribbean children never hear until the television is turned on or until they are old enough to go to school. When schooling begins, these children sit in their colonial classrooms where they are compelled to read poems and short stories that have Eurocentric perspectives on beauty, love, time, and conflict when they should be reading Caribbean-centric poems and stories about slavery, resistance, rebellion, and survival.

Williams uses “Manjack in the Hall” as a vehicle to use Nation Language to speak out not only against past issues such as slavery and colonialism, but also against the present day problems of neocolonialism and the lack of recognition that Crucian artists receive. Williams engages these issues in both Standard English and in Crucian, and he does so in a way that demonstrates high levels of artistry in both languages while acknowledging, valorizing, and celebrating the language of his heart.

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THE DIASPORA OF PUERTO RICANS IN ST. CROIX: A SOCIO-CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL LOOK AT ETHNICITY, LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY IN A MIGRATORY GROUP WITHIN A PLURICULTURAL CONTEXT

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Introduction

As a result of the research that I have conducted on the Puerto Rican community of St. Croix in the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) over the past thirty years, I have become more and more intrigued by the complex interaction of language, ethnicity, and ethnic identity. Although my work has focused on sociolinguistic analyses in various situational contexts and their implications for educational policy, I could never fully evade the issue of ethnic identity. For the first time in my long history of inquiry into Puerto Rican migratory movements, in St. Croix I encountered a case in which a significant number of the people born in the diaspora did not refer to themselves as Puerto Ricans from the diasporic locale but, rather categorically, as members of their adopted locale itself, that is, Cruzans. In one study in particular of St. Croix-born Puerto Ricans (Simounet, 1999), 51% identified themselves as Cruzan, 35% as both Puerto Rican and Cruzan (Porto-Cruzan is the term used), and only 14% as Puerto Rican. This intrigued me and led me to probe more deeply into what constitutes ethnic identity .

My first studies in St. Croix were conducted in the 1980s and 1990s (Simounet de Geigel, 1990; Simounet, 1993a, 1993b, 1999). An interest in ethnicity and the results of the data collection carried out then led to a publication (Simounet, 1994) based on a paper presented at the 1994 Conference in Studies in the English Language and Modern Literature in English at the University of Timișoara, Romania. The first phase of a second study was conducted twenty years later, in the early part of 2013, as part of a joint pilot research project with the Institute of Caribbean Studies at the University of Puerto Rico, led by Prof. Annie Fabián. It consisted of 26 oral history interviews of individuals, all of whom were descendants of people from the island of Vieques who had migrated to St. Croix on various occasions in the 20th century. The analysis of language and of aspects of

ethnic identity presented here combine the results of both studies, thus bringing up to date the information originally collected.

In 1999, Fishman stated the following about ethnicity: “The literature on ethnicity is already huge and is constantly being added to. It is also international... Finally, it is interdisciplinary and, therefore, highly diversified as to its underlying theories and assumptions” (p 3). I would also like to add that the notion of ethnicity is a very elusive one (Banks, 1988; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1990; Alleyne, 2002; Roberts, 2008; Lustig & Koester, 2013). Scholars in disciplines such as history, sociology, social psychology, sociolinguistics, ethnolinguistics, anthropology, ethnomethodology and communication theory have attempted to explain the notion from each of their vantage points, intellectual formations, and frameworks. For example, Fishman (1977) discusses this concept from the optics of the sociology of language, pointing out the mistake of viewing ethnicity through the lens of minority groups. Cohen (1978), an anthropologist, posits that ethnicity must be viewed as interaction between cultural groups in a common social context. Ethnolinguists such as Hymes (1974) and Saviile-Troike (2003) view ethnic identity from a multi-faceted perspective that focuses on the communicative repertoire available to a plurilingual speech community. Communication scholars prefer either a social psychological axis (Giles, 1977) that allows the self to experience a permeability that permits movement from one ethnic identity to the other (Tanno, 1994) or a psychological and cultural orientation that recognizes the self’s sense of belonging to a group (Lustig & Koester, 2013). Banks (1988) focuses on an ethnomethodological approach that prefers to view ethnicity as a quality that concerns an individual’s social circumstances. Rather than seeing this diversity of perspectives as a problem, I feel that taking on board an array of approaches can result in greater clarity and explicatory capacity.

In the discussion that follows, I will first provide a description of the linguistic patterns and ethnic identification of the Puerto Rican migratory group in St. Croix. This will be followed by a discussion of some of the theoretical stances on ethnicity which were briefly mentioned above, with the goal of explaining the various factors which may help to answer the question as to why the majority of these migrants’ offspring have chosen to identify with St. Croix rather than Puerto Rico, in contrast to so many other diasporic groups of Puerto Ricans on the U.S. mainland.

St. Croix and its migrant Puerto Rican population

The islands of Puerto Rico and St. Croix are both unincorporated territories of the U.S. and are, geographically speaking, very close to each other. St. Croix, a former colony of Denmark, was purchased by the United States in 1917. The composition of the

population of the island is an accurate reflection of the history of diverse ethnic influences. The Cruzan inhabitants are divided among descendants of African slaves and European settlers, U.S. continentals, immigrants from other Caribbean islands and arrivals from other countries. Officially, Puerto Ricans represent around 19% of the total population (Simounet, 1990). However, island educators and government officials believe that the census reports understate the Puerto Rican presence on the island. Lewis (1972: 22) believes that 35% is a more realistic number. The USVI Planning Office employs a formula which assumes that 40% is a more accurate figure. Due to the continuous 'back and forth' movement of Puerto Ricans between both islands (also referred to as the *vaivén* or 'go and come back') the numbers vary on a yearly basis. Although Duany's (2002: 32-35) notion of "circular migration" focuses on the migration of Puerto Ricans to and from the United States. I believe that this notion also applies to the migration of Puerto Ricans to and from Saint Croix.

Although much has been written about the migratory waves of Puerto Ricans to a number of cities in the U.S., knowledge about the wave to St. Croix from Vieques in particular is the result of more recent published works (Simounet, 1999; 2010; 2013; Ríos Villarini & González Vélez, 2010; Hernández Durán, 2010), notwithstanding the previous work of Senior (1947) about the Puerto Rican migrant to St. Croix. The first migratory wave from Vieques to St. Croix took place in the 1920s in order to help provide a labor force for the Cruzan sugar cane industry (Dookhan, 1974). Later waves followed in the 1930s attracted by the higher salaries offered by the St. Croix government. Geographical proximity and possession of U.S. citizenship added other incentives for these Viequenses to seek economic prosperity in St. Croix (Boyer, 2010).

The 1940s is a salient but tragic decade for the people of Vieques, because in 1941 the U.S. Navy began to expropriate land on the island (eventually 72% of its territory) in order to build a firing range as part of an amphibious expeditionary forces exercise base (Simounet, 1990). This event, approved by the Government of Puerto Rico, together with a harsh economic situation on the island, was triggered the exodus of hundreds of people from Vieques to find refuge with family and friends who had already moved to St. Croix. "Upon arrival in St. Croix, the label of 'otherness' already branded on the first Puerto Ricans who had migrated there in the 1920s and 1930s was extended to this new diaspora" (Simounet, 2013: 41).

It goes without saying that the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Education was not ready for this 'invasion' of Spanish-speaking students into its schools. At first, the children were placed in the alienating "sink or swim", monolingual English system that has traditionally prevailed in the formal educational context in St. Croix. Needless to say, this antipedagogical language policy created much suffering and eventually led to the

total abandonment of school by many Puerto Rican descended students (Hernández Durán, 2010). Interviewees in the 2013 cohort spoke openly about these early experiences and mentioned how local Cruzan children used the term ‘hookworm’ to refer to them. Later on, and as a result of the influx of larger numbers from later migratory waves, the USVI Office of Education established a bilingual program in 1971 to improve English language ability and to maintain a parallel course of study in English and Spanish (Simounet, 1990).

At present, Puerto Ricans live in both working and middle class communities composed of individuals from mixed ethnic backgrounds (Simounet, 1993b; 2013). Having an early exposure to education and a reputation of being hard workers made it possible for many to improve their economic situation. St. Thomas writer, J. Antonio Jarvis, describes the first migrants from Puerto Rico as people “...who can exist on less, work harder, save better and gain competence quicker than he [the local] has yet been able to do.” Moreover, he adds: “These Puerto Ricans migrate to the Virgin Islands, acquire land, establish shops, enter politics, take advantage of the slack living of the Negroes, and dominate them” (p. 57).

Linguistically speaking, early on, Puerto Rican children are exposed to the local variety of English, Cruzan English (CE) and to the customs of the different ethnic groups, even though at home Spanish is spoken and Puerto Rican cultural traditions are usually followed. These children attend public schools where exposure to CE and a variety of West Indian cultural patterns is even stronger. In the families observed in both sets of studies, language use according to generation is as follows: migrant parents spoke only Spanish; second generation individuals spoke both Spanish and English and utilized code-switching as a means of interaction among themselves; and third generation individuals used mostly English and some Spanish, together with code-switching (Simounet, 2005). The variety of Spanish heard most frequently is the working class sociolect of Puerto Rico. It is spoken by both younger and older adults. In their code-switching they also insert CE.

CE itself can be alternatively analyzed in terms of two relatively separate varieties (Crucian English lexifier Creole and Crucian Standard English) or in terms of a continuum from a non-standard creolized variety to the standard variety (Highfield, 1986) and (Faraclas, 2012). . According to both Highfield and Faraclas, throughout the years, Crucian English lexifier Creole and non-standard CE appear to have moved in the direction of the standard. This is due to gradually increasing access to Standard American English (SAE) through the electronic media and to educational policies in the Public School System and on the local campus of the University of the Virgin Islands which require students to use SAE. All students graduating from the university must pass a

language test that measures their written command of SAE, which is at present the prestige variety in formal settings in the USVI (Faraclas). At any particular time and in any particular context, speakers may be performing all along this continuum, with many (if not most) speakers displaying a masterful command of a number of different varieties. These plurilingual abilities involving a number of English lexified varieties are also evident among people of Puerto Rican descent residing in St. Croix. Since they also have a command of Puerto Rican Spanish (PRS), they may be characterized as bilinguals with a capacity for continuous use of both languages. Peñalosa (1980) refers to this capacity as a polyglossic ability which allows the speaker a choice of language varieties to fit different social contexts while Grosjean (2010) considers such a capacity to be a normal outcome of bilingualism in a bilingual setting.

However, in the presence of other bilingual speakers, the most characteristic feature of the speech of many Puerto Rican children, adolescents, and adults is Spanish-English code-switching (Simounet, 2005). This speech mode is an integral part of the communicative repertoire of the speakers, and it functions as a mode of interaction. This code-switching pattern matches the one found by Poplack (1988) in the Puerto Rican community of East Harlem in New York. A twelve-year-old girl of Puerto Rican parents summed up her use of these three speech modes:

“With my friends at church I use Spanish and English. With the Cruzans, I use English. Those who are born here and speak Cruzan English are the real people from here. If I speak broken English, I’m a Cruzan. It’s important to be Cruzan to fit in. I was born here. I’m Cruzan.”

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Ethnicity and ethnic identity

“Ethnicity is a slippery concept. There is little consensus among scholars across or within disciplines on how to define ethnicity” (Ross, 1979, in Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1990: 310; Alleyne, 2002). Rather than attempt to reconcile the differences in the various interpretations of ethnicity, I will limit my discussion in this section to an overview of different perspectives with the goal of utilizing those which best explain the case of the Puerto Ricans in St. Croix. As I mentioned earlier, I believe that looking at the phenomenon of ethnicity through a variety of optics helps bring into focus and explain what appears to be a difficult notion.

First of all, I would like to clarify the following: it seems that to a good number of individuals, scholars included, ethnicity pertains strictly to people who find themselves in minority groups within a major dominant culture. Fishman (1977) believes this has been a hindrance in the consideration of ethnicity in modern social theory because it “...fosters

the view that ethnicity is pertinent to minority groups alone, ...rather than as an aspect of all traditioned, large-scale, self-identifying behavior” (p. 44).

It is important to point out that an individual’s identity should be viewed as a dynamic state liable to change in response to the surrounding socio-cultural environment. It seems that when a group of people of one’s own ethnic background exists as an in-group in a particular context, one’s ethnicity as a significant construct emerges. In reference to this, Cohen (1978) posits that “The term ethnicity will be of little use if it is extended to denote cultural differences between isolated societies, autonomous regions, or independent stocks of populations such as nations with their own national boundaries.” However, he adds, “Ethnicity is essentially a form of interaction between culture groups operating within common social contexts.” It should be noted that in this view, ethnicity indeed becomes a gamut of ethnicities in an individual’s response to different social circumstances and varieties of interactions.

However, these ethnicities do not necessarily entail a change in the physical context, for an individual’s ethnicities may also be a result of variation in time and experience rather than space. This situation is clearly explained by Tanno (1994) in her essay on the evolution of her own ethnic identity within the U.S. from Spanish to Mexican American, to Latina, to Chicana, all in response to “...circumstance, time, and place and motivated by a need to belong...[These names]...communicate part of a life story.” Moreover, she affirms, “Together they weave a rhetorically powerful narrative of ethnic identity that combines biographical, historical, cultural, and political experiences” (pp. 32-33).

For Tanno, these ethnic moves are as simple as stating that at one moment she is a mother, at another a sister, and yet at some other instance a daughter. Thus a quality of permeability in the person can be sensed which makes it possible for the inner self to execute moves from one identity to the other. The self opens itself to the passage to other realities, to the penetration of an ‘otherness’ which is an expression of a “cultural identity...that includes simultaneous themes of separation and desire for inclusion” (González, 1990: 276). Viewed from another angle, this differentiation into various ethnicities may also lead members of the same ethnic minority group to split into distinct factions based on distinct identity choices. Rather than varying in ethnic identity according to time, place, or other variables, one faction may completely identify with the ethnicity of their marginalized minority in-group, another faction with that of the out-group majority culture, and the third with both, but in relatively fixed patterns (see Mercer, Mercer & Mears, 1980 and Simounet, 1999). Thus while in some cases the individual’s ethnic identity is best understood as his or her response to a set of social, historical, cultural or strategic circumstances, in other cases, the “social circumstances...are conducive to the development of different ethnic self-identities

which reflect different degrees of attachment..." (Mercer et al.: 24) to a particular or another tradition in the cultural repertoire.

Tanno's view of a changing ethnicity (1990) is shared by ethnomethodologists who believe in "changes in perceptions of a member's ethnicity situationally and over time, both as perceived by self and by others" (Banks, 1988: 17). They do not see ethnicity as a representational term that signals an individual's abstract personal quality but as an indication concerning the person's social circumstance. In Banks' perspective, language as discourse is a component of ethnolinguistic identity which takes account of contextual factors and focuses on social meaning as it emerges within interaction (p. 18). He argues for a permeability in the boundary between marked and unmarked ethnic discourse so that members of minority groups can cross this boundary, an acceptable occurrence for both in-group and out-group, but one which must take place before any attempt is made to cross the boundary between low and high power positions, a boundary which is rigid and less permeable. Extending this proposition from different varieties to different languages, it could be argued that this view would also not only permit but require the change from one language to another and thus the change from the projection of one ethnolinguistic identity to the projection of another. This approach allows ethnicity to 'float' without necessarily negating remembrances of past interaction nor the self-concept. On the contrary, it focuses on the analysis of identity at the moment of its occurrence in discourse.

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The perspectives presented above on ethnicity differ in part from those of anthropology which debates which features, 'objective' (race, nationality, linguistic group, religion) or 'subjective' (members' perception of belonging to a group), determine a person's ethnicity. Both sides of the issue, however, conceive of ethnicity as an enduring quality that a person has without any possibility of change. In 1969, Barth defined ethnicity as the subjective process by which individuals use labels to define themselves and insisted that ethnic boundaries persist in spite of the regular movement of persons across them and in spite of regular and institutionalized intergroup communication. He believed firmly in the social processes of exclusion which lead to the maintenance of those boundaries, which are symbolic demarcations resulting from the process by which individuals define their identity in opposition to that of others (1972).

However, the notion of ethnic boundaries must be further clarified. In her article on ethnic style and ethnic boundaries, anthropologist Stahl states that "the content of ethnic identity, the symbols and value that are a focal point for group cohesiveness may vary significantly through time" (1991: 251). In her study of Nafana society in Africa, she learned that the Nafana have successfully absorbed immigrants into the core of their group and that the impact on Nafana culture has been significant. She states that this

finding “underscores the need to view ethnic style in historical perspective... [for as a] historical fact... Nafana boundaries were both permeable and flexible” (p. 266).

It is evident from this discussion that permeability of boundaries is an intrinsic characteristic not only of the group but also the self and the communicative interaction. This permeability and flexibility permit ethnic shifting in the self, changes in the ethnic content of in-groups and out-groups (Khleif, 1979), and variation in interethnic discourse as a result of changes in the socio-cultural environment. The dynamic nature of ethnicity is thus made evident.

Studies that look at the construction of race, ethnicity and identity in the Caribbean (Alleyne, 2002; Roberts, 2008) utilize historical, linguistic, sociolinguistic and ethnolinguistic theoretical frameworks for their analysis. For Alleyne, “Race and ethnicity constitute a major focus for identification among Caribbean people” (p. 242). For Roberts, language, race and ecology are at the root of Caribbean identity. Duany (2002), analyzing the case of Puerto Ricans in general, argues that the Puerto Rican nation must be understood as a new entity with deep cultural continuities. It is important to keep in mind his view of ethnic identity among the Puerto Ricans in the diaspora to the U.S. because it resembles what is observed in St. Croix at present; that there is a sharing of culture between the place of origin and the receiving country in that diaspora communities are linked to island life by the ‘migratory circuit’ mentioned earlier. Duany believes that national identities across borders are characterized by “a sense of ‘fluidity and tenacity’” (p.285). Thus the notion of ethnicity as an elusive term seems to permeate the scholarly work on the subject.

The few in St. Croix who still consider themselves to be Puerto Rican

In order to understand the mentality of the few in St. Croix who still consider themselves to be Puerto Rican, it is important to remember the following points: the geographical proximity of and the high frequency of flights between the two islands; the accessibility of the main Spanish-language newspaper from Puerto Rico in St. Croix; the local service of two Puerto Rican TV stations through cable; the existence of local Spanish-language radio stations; the establishment of many churches of various denominations which employ Spanish as the only language of communication with members; the requirement of Spanish as a subject in both public and private schools; the continuous migratory circle mentioned above; the view of Puerto Rico as the metropolis for other Caribbean islanders to do their shopping, receive medical care, and attend musical and art festivals.

Maintenance of the Spanish language is not at all surprising under these circumstances. Spoken Spanish is, moreover, heard all over the island and even more so at this moment when we are witnessing an impressive migratory movement from the Dominican

Republic (personal communication from Dr. Moorhead on March 24, 2013). Although language is not necessarily a sign of ethnic identity, the few who still consider themselves Puerto Rican are characterized by an excellent command of Spanish and CE. They also express a strong attachment to the value and traditions of Puerto Rican culture and they stress the importance of speaking Spanish but also recognize the imperative of knowing English in order to be successful in St. Croix and of possessing a good command of CE so “we fit in...” The ethnicity of the few, then, is an index to the individuals’ attachment to their cultural and linguistic ancestry. Although there is permeability to the extent that these individuals can live within this other culture, the permeability and flexibility is limited to those areas which do not present a conflict to their sense of identity, that is, work and social interaction.

The Porto Cruzans

This group, in any study, is a fascinating one to the researcher, because the members stand for a split ethnicity that is almost impossible to decipher. The following points are relevant to an understanding of this group’s behavior: Cruzans expect Puerto Ricans to speak in CE, although they accept Puerto Ricans’ use of Spanish; both groups share an African element in their ethnicity; Cruzan culture has also been branded with elements of Puerto Rican culture via contact and an impressive number of interethnic marriages; St. Croix celebrates Puerto Rico-Virgin Islands Friendship Day in October and Three Kings’ Day is observed as an island holiday; food and music are important cultural markers of the Puerto Rican people in St. Croix; both islands are unincorporated territories of the U.S., thus both cultural groups share in a search for distinctiveness from the same out-group (the people of the U.S.).

I must also point out that Giles (1973), in his theory of communication accommodation argues that socio-structural factors such as status, demography, and institutional support influence an ethnolinguistic minority to establish its own in-group language as a viable means of communication. This, of course, is made possible by the permeability in linguistic discourse and communicative interaction mentioned earlier. In this sense, the English-Spanish code-switching characteristic of the children, adolescent, and young adults, is the in-group language “emblematic of their dual identity” (Poplack, 1988: 237). In addition, such permeability allows the Puerto Ricans to converge linguistically with Cruzans, that is, to speak CE, as a reflection of their social and psychological sharing in situations common to both groups. Through the use of CE, Puerto Ricans and Cruzans accentuate the difference between themselves and the out-group represented by SAE. Permeability and flexibility in the boundaries of the self, the in-group, the Cruzan out-group, and the interaction between all of these facilitates the understanding of this

group's dual self-identity. Instead of alternating ethnicities in response to the social circumstance, what we encounter here is a duality of ethnicity, one co-existing with the other. To some individuals this might have schizophrenic connotations, but the individuals seem to manage the situation successfully (Grosjean, 2010). Some add: "We have the best of two worlds. They only have one."

Those who consider themselves to be Cruzans

The respondents in this group show pride in their Puerto Rican ancestry, including the Spanish language which some speak well, but many with great hesitation and marked code-switching. I would characterize them with a "here and now" cultural stance, an attitude which explains their desire to look at what they can count on at this very moment. The explanation of the behavior of this group finds logic in demographic and social factors, the significant rates of interethnic marriage notwithstanding.

Because of the number of immigrants to St. Croix from different ethnic backgrounds, some important issues are at stake regarding political rights. Although there is a clear majority of blacks on the island, there is no clear majority of any ethnic group. Individuals from other Caribbean islands, taken together do make up a majority, but they belong to a variety of different ethnic and political backgrounds. Only those individuals born in St. Croix can call themselves Cruzan. This newly-acquired ethnicity may not be associated with the typical sources of social or economic power, but it certainly stands for political and community power. Permeability and flexibility of boundaries, once more, make this possible.

Conclusion

The majority of the individuals interviewed in 2013 fell under the rubric of Cruzan ethnicity. As a group, the Puerto Ricans of St. Croix are not the alienated Puerto Ricans of New York City, Chicago or Philadelphia. Despite their initial marginalization, the 'othering' practices they endured on the part of some of the local children at school, and the discrimination reported by a number of them in the work place, they do not project a low self-esteem image as some from the Northeastern States do, nor do they report being rejected by Puerto Ricans from what they call 'La Isla Grande' or the 'Big Island' a phenomenon amply discussed in the literature (Duany, 2002). These descendants of Puerto Ricans are Cruzan and whether this ethnic identity is proper, correct, accurate or morally good is totally inconsequential.

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SUSAN BOUGH: NEGOTIATING THROUGH A MAN'S WORLD OF BUSINESS IN THE DANISH WEST INDIES 1905-1920

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As was the case with all the other islands of the Caribbean, during the time of enslavement St. Croix had a strong market system that was centered in the towns of Christiansted and Frederiksted. In Christiansted there was a vegetable market on Queen Street, which was run by the free colored women of the town. There was also the fish market which was located behind Fort Christiansvaern. While men were the fishermen, women from the free colored areas of Free Gut and Gallows Bay were the fish sellers at this market. There was a third market in which enslaved Africans were allowed to bring their surplus fruits, vegetables, and crafts, such as home-made brooms for sale. The money they earned from their buying and selling was the product of their own labor and therefore belonged to them. This tradition of buying and selling, which women learned from their ancestors, increased as time went on, as women of color expanded their participation in the business network which was dominated by males of European descent. Around 1900, Edwin Taylor, St. Thomas businessman and author wrote:

“St. Thomas businesses have considerable capital invested in enterprises both here and in Christiansted, and the retail stores are quite numerous and evidently prosperous. What will strike a close observer will be how many of them are superintended by females. They are, all of them native by birth and some of them remarkable for their industry and capacity.” (p. 17)

This article will examine how Susan Bough, a female dry-goods shop owner from St. Croix, became a successful participant in the Christiansted retail business network. Bough ran several businesses in Christiansted from approximately 1905 to 1930, including a dry goods store and a grocery, and traded European-imported cloth and St. Thomas-produced bay rum.

Christiansted is the larger of the two towns on St. Croix. The town is located on the northern side of the island and is ringed with a series of coral reefs. While these reefs protect the town and harbor during storms, they prevent large cargo ships from entering without dredging. Frederiksted, the smaller town, therefore became the shipping center for the island. During the early twentieth century, numbers of merchants set up their shops along King Street, the main street of the town, including Robert L. Merwin, Arnold M. Golden and his son Luis M. Golden. They received the bulk of their goods from New York via the frequent calls of Quebec Steamship Company Ltd. ships. To obtain their European trade goods, however, they made many trips to St. Thomas, as indicated in the records for passenger ships during those years (DVD Passenger Records).

At the same time, there were a number of merchants who set up their businesses in Christiansted, as this town was the center of colonial administration and had been the capital of the Danish West Indies until 1864. J.C. Canegata, A.C. Bough, M.A. Pretto, and William Clendinen had both wholesale and retail businesses there. Joseph Emanuel Bough, brother of Susan Bough, was a retailer, and Susan may have started her career working in his business. At the age of 29, he was listed in the 1901 census as a provisions dealer. He was also listed in the *Official Commercial Directory of Cuba, Puerto Rico and the West Indies* in the category of "Groceries and Provisions", along with A.C. Bough, J. C. Canegata, and M.A. Pretto. At the time, he was living in the Bough family home at 32 Queen Cross Street, which Susan Bough once owned.

Susan Bough was born in 1864, the daughter of Christiansted clerk and 'free mustice' David Welbrun Bough (1840-1906) and free colored woman Elizabeth Prince. She was baptized in the Lord God of Sabaoth Lutheran Church on Oct. 1, 1865 and her parents are listed in the *Ministerial Bog*. Elizabeth Prince (Jackson) was listed in the *Reorganization of the Free Colored in Christiansted, Register of Women*, the free colored census of 1831-1832. In 1860, before her relationship with Bough, her relationship with a man whose surname was Jackson produced a son, Osbourne C. Jackson who later changed his surname to Hewitt (De Wese: Bough Genealogical Chart, 2012).

On her paternal side, Susan Bough is descended from Sarah Beaudhuy, born 1778, an enslaved African on Estate Betsy's Jewel on St. Croix, owned by Anthony Beaudhuy (Will of Anthony Beaudhuy). When Sarah and her two brothers Johannes and Adam Beaudhuy were freed in 1797, all three moved to Christiansted. As a free mulatto, Sarah had a relationship with George Bough, born in 1775, which produced David Waldberg Bough in 1803. In 1846 Sarah

lived with her son at 14 Fisher Street (vifamilies.org). David Waldberg Bough had a relationship with Susanna Crow, a free colored woman (1801-1856), listed in the Free Colored Census of 1831-1832, which produced Susan's father, David Welbrun Bough, born in 1840 (De Wese). Susan therefore was descended from three colored women who were free before 1831 (and before the general emancipation of the enslaved in the Danish West Indies in 1848): Sarah Beaudhuy, her paternal great grandmother, Susanna Crow, her paternal grandmother and Elizabeth Prince (Jackson), her mother. Her father, David Welbrun Bough was free born in 1840 as well, and of 'mustice' complexion.

In the 1870 census, Elizabeth Prince (Jackson) rented and lived with her first three children by Bough (Susan 5, Elfera (Elveria) 4, and Joseph 1) at 3 B West Street, while David Welbrun Bough resided with his mother Susanna Crow Bough at the family home of 13 and 14 Fisher Street. In the 1880 census, Elizabeth Prince (Jackson), 48, resided with David Welbrun Bough, 49, at 16 B Queen Cross Street. Also living there are Elfera (Elveria) 13; Joseph 11; and Abraham 9. Susan Bough is conspicuously absent from the family and cannot be found residing either in Christiansted or Frederiksted. One wonders if she is in St. Thomas (VISHA Censuses 1870, 1880).

In 1898, an auction announcement in the newspaper shows that the property of David Waldberg Bough at 32 Queen Cross Street was to be sold for the failure of the owner to pay the mortgage on the property (*St. Croix Avis*, Apr, 10, 1898). The property had the distinction of being located in the Free Gut neighborhood of Christiansted. Since 1747, the Free Gut was the residential area relegated to the free colored inhabitants of Christiansted (Rezende, 1998; Hall, 1992; Ordinance 1747). Susan Bough, age 34, purchased the property to keep it in the family. The 1901 census shows the Bough family residing at 32 Queen Cross Street and that Susan Bough, age 37, was the owner of the property (Census 1901). Her father, the former owner did not die until 1906, so she had taken over ownership from him. The children of the family were: Susan Caroline Bough born in 1864; Elzira Bough born in 1867; Joseph E. Bough born in 1869; Irvin Gustavus Bough born in 1872; Edward Curtis Bough born in 1874; Jeannet Louise Bough (died at birth); Ralph Julius Bough born in 1881 and Eugene Bough born in 1887 (De Wese).

Just when Susan Bough started her business is unknown. Susan Bough's business card reads: "Susan Bough, Dealer in Provisions, Cigars, Bay Rum, Confectionary, Etc." (Penthany & Colbeth Collection). Bay rum was a special product of the Danish West Indies. Bay trees thrived on St. John and once the oil was extracted, it was mixed with rum to make a refreshing after shave. The photograph below

was taken by pharmacist and amateur photographer Alfred Paludan-Muller in 1900 and labeled as being the business of “Miss Bough” (Rezende & Walbom, 2009: 50). On the image, Susan is standing behind the counter of her dry goods business.



A closer look of the background shows that she is selling different types of cloth. On the counter, there are bolts of white, light-colored, lightly-printed and striped cotton, linen and muslin material. Behind her, strung on a wire, are displayed swatches of white cotton material with fancy laces attached, as well as colored cotton materials with sewed in stripes, chevrons, and lined bindings. Dresses made with these decorations were replacing the all-white cotton, muslin and linen that women had worn in the tropics since the establishment of the colonies. Behind the displayed materials are mahogany cabinets which contain more bolts of cloth.

Of particular interest to us today are the small swatches of madras, imported plaid material in distinct yellows, reds, oranges and greens from India. At the time, madras was called “Martinique cloth” as it was used for head ties and skirts in the French Antilles. In the Danish West Indies, women used madras to create head ties. Susan Bough had most likely acquired this imported material from the larger stores in St. Thomas, who had probably obtained it via England. The managers of these St. Thomas businesses who formed part of Susan’s commercial networks served also as commission-agents to a number of English, Danish and German

textile companies, and they regularly imported goods from foreign textile factories which were shipped in large steamers from South Hampton and Hamburg and distributed the merchandise throughout the Caribbean.

Passenger ship records indicate that the male entrepreneurs of both Frederiksted and Christiansted sailed back and forth to St. Thomas, presumably to make contacts and negotiate their supplies of goods from the numerous commission-merchants there. There is one notation of Susan Bough traveling to St. Thomas on the schooner *Viking* on May 7 1910 presumably to negotiate her purchases of imported cloth and bay rum to sell in her store (*St. Croix Avis*).

The first legal notice of Susan Bough's business dealings is through a bond recorded in the *Real Property Mortgage Book* on Mar. 28, 1905 from Susan Bough to the New St. Croix Savings Bank for 5,000 francs (five francs at the time were worth one dollar). She had secured the loan with a first priority mortgage on her personal home at 32 Queen Cross Street and on another property at 23 Company Street, evidently the address of her shop. On Dec. 16, 1920, the record also indicates that she had paid off the loan in full (p. 52). This borrowed amount could have been the initial seed money which she used to establish her dry goods business.

In the 1911 census, at age 47, she is listed as a retailer (Census 1911). Ms. Bough must have encountered financial problems because in the June 25, 1911 edition of the *St. Croix Avis*, there is a notification of an auction requested by Lawyer Stakemann on behalf of Ms. Susan Bough. Being sold at this time at the property on 23 Company Street is:

“the stock-in-trade consisting of provisions, etc, horses, harness, a phaeton and buggy, mule , donkeys and cow, etc .” Also listed “to be sold immediately thereafter at 41 Company Street is household furniture consisting of mahogany rocking chairs, bedsteads, writing desk, cribs, lamps , etc. At the above Auction will also be offered for sale One Parlor Organ, very fine.”

From the listing of Susan Bough's possessions to be auctioned off, it can be deduced that her place of residence was well furnished with mahogany items, that she had horses and vehicles for her transportation needs, and that she enjoyed music, perhaps playing the organ herself. One can therefore reasonably conclude that she was solidly of the upper middle class.

Not only was Susan Bough a borrower, she was also a co-signer. On September 24, 1913, she and a number of male merchants in Christiansted provided security for Albert M. Fabio, another town merchant, residing at 22 Prince Street (Den Dansk Vestindisk National Bank 1904-15, *Kvartlskitter over udloan 1904-15*).

Not to be deterred by her first attempts at managing a business, she herself received a loan of 325 francs from the same bank. Her loan was signed by three co-signers, including William Phaire, her brother in law, W. Michael, and James Summershill (*Kvartlskitter over udlon 1904-15*). She was also a co-signer in Oct. 1913 with H. de Chabert in a loan of 753 francs to her stepbrother, Osbourne C. Jackson (Hewett) (*Kvartlskitter over lon 1904-15*).

The St. Croix Labor Union was started by D. Hamilton Jackson, a relative of her mother's first child, Susan's stepbrother, Osbourne Jackson (Hewett). In 1916, D. Hamilton Jackson, a former teacher, had organized the sugar cane laborers to strike against the planters, who had refused to increase the wages of the workers. The strike lasted several months (Jensen, 1998). On June 30, 1911, D. Hamilton Jackson had secured two loans in his own name. One was for 550 francs and the other for 928 francs. Paying back the money at the rate of 25 francs per month, the loan was paid off on May 31, 1912 (*National Bank of the Danish West Indies Vol. 4*). Jackson also secured loans in the name of the Labor Union. In 1916, he as labor union president had secured a 10,000 frc loan from the National Bank of the Danish West Indies (*Kvartlskitter over udloan 1914-15*).

On May 12, 1917 the *Record Book of Mortgage Loans* shows that Susan Bough took out a loan of 3,000 francs from the St. Croix Labor Union, for which she used her Ford truck and 2 properties as collateral. She repaid the loan in installments of 600 francs by Dec. 5, 1923 (p. 85). She took out a second loan from the Labor Union Savings Bank on August 20, 1917 for 1,500 francs. For this latter loan, she used a newly acquired property at 5 A Fisher Street (p. 85). One would assume that such loans would be earmarked for bone fide members of the union. How Miss Bough became eligible for such loans is a matter for further investigation. Susan Bough's younger brother, Ralph, 36, served for a time as vice president of the union. Her loans are signed by another vice president, Mario de Chabert.

Between the years 1917 and 1918 Susan Bough took out a number of other loans. On Sept. 21, 1917, she was noted as being indebted to Rudolph Doyles for 2,500 francs for which amount she had to put up her properties at 32 Queen Cross and 23 Company Streets as collateral. She had agreed to repay in quarterly payments of 75 francs with 6 per cent interest. The co-signers of this loan were Charles L. Sheen and John Jolly. The notation states that this loan was paid in full on Dec. 6, 1920 (*Real Property Mortgages*: 49). She took out another loan of 1,500 francs on Mar. 18, 1918 from the New St. Croix Savings Bank. This amount was cancelled on Dec. 16, 1920 (p. 85).

The *Real Property Mortgages* records reveal that there was a substantial court case brought against Susan Bough in 1920 (Court case 98/1920). Lawyer Stakemann was now representing a number of American and British concerns who found that:

spinster and merchant of Christiansted, Susan Bough, acknowledging indebtedness to E.F. Darrell and Co, New York for 350 francs; Owen and Hill, New York, 439 francs; East Coast Cereal Co, New York, 294 francs; and the Wm. White and Sons of Glasgow, pounds sterling. (p. 11)

For these loans amounting to 1,083 francs she had used her properties at 23 Company Street, 25DC and 32 Queen Cross, 5 A, 5 B and 23 Fisher Street, one automatic truck, plus a number of pieces of mahogany furniture and cupping cabinets as collateral. The witnesses to the loan were John and William Phaire. There is a note that on Dec. 1920 she had paid 325 francs toward the loan to Lawyer Stakemann (p. 11).

Now approaching 60 years of age, Susan Bough continued as a merchant of groceries and lived at her own home at 32 Queen Cross Street. On Dec. 1, 1920 she and her brother Joseph Bough, acting as her attorney, signed a deed of conveyance for the property at 32 Queen Cross St. to the Most Holy Redeemer Missionary Society of the Virgin Islands (*Real Property Mortgages* p. 143). The passenger lists of the S.S. *Caracas* show her arriving in New York on July 9, 1920. It is interesting that here she gives her date of birth as Dec. 5, 1872. The record shows that she was to stay at 524 Lenox Ave. She took up residence in New York with two of her brothers, Ralph and Eugene (De Wese). She later returned to St. Croix, as she is listed in the 1940s census as living with her sister and nieces on Prince Street. She died between 1940 and 1943 on St. Croix (De Wese).

Susan Bough was operating her businesses in what J. Antonio Jarvis describes as “the Doldrum Years 1880-1917” (1938: 83). During this period of general economic malaise, there was a slowdown in commercial activity in St. Thomas and a number of merchants migrated from there to Venezuela. It was also the time of the 1916 sugar cane laborers’ strike in St. Croix. All of this seems not to have discouraged Ms. Bough, however, whose businesses were successful enough to allow her to invest in considerable amounts of real estate and to purchase vehicles and mahogany furniture. Her ability to secure loans from the New St. Croix and the St. Croix Labor Union Savings Banks attests to her acumen for business.

In the economically depressed and European descended male controlled mercantile world of the early twentieth century Virgin Islands, Susan Bough struggled and prevailed against unequal odds. For example, as a woman applying for a loan, she had to secure the signatures of two male cosigners, usually two

European descended men with whom she was competing in business. That is probably why she at times secured loans with the assistance of family members, for example, her brothers who were also members of the union. Nevertheless, she managed to obtain substantial amounts of money in order to start up and run her businesses.

There might be some room for debate as to whether Bough meets *all* of Cheryl Smith's very demanding criteria for a self-made black woman, that is: "[a woman] who is not only notable in business history . . . [she is known] most importantly for her vision of true community economic development and recognition of Black women as economically empowered individuals and contributors. . . ." (Smith, 2005: 32). But there is no doubt that when Smith admiringly refers to one of her exemplars of a self made black woman, saying: "Her life, her perspectives and her business skills, attitudes and behavior challenged prevailing and stubborn negative views of Black women both past and present" (p. 36), these same words undoubtedly could have been used to describe Ms. Susan Bough.

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THE ROLE OF CRUCIAN CREOLE IN FORMAL EDUCATION IN ST. CROIX

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St. Croix is a small island whose history and geographic position have made it a point of contact for communities from the entire Caribbean region and beyond. Despite its small size (only 28 by 7 miles across), St. Croix has been the scene of intense cultural interaction throughout its history. Many ethnic groups have played an important part in the evolution of its language and culture. Even though many of the early cultural contacts took the form of violent confrontations, St. Croix's mixed heritage has led to the development of a richly varied linguistic community.

The linguistic richness of the island may, however, be threatened by the insistence on Standard English in the public school system to the total exclusion of Crucian (the Afro Caribbean English lexifier Creole spoken in St. Croix). St. Croix is a territory of the United States and the official language of the island is English; consequently, as in most parts of the Caribbean, Crucians consider the command of Standard English as the key to upward mobility. Parents want their children to gain proficiency in English in primary and secondary schools, so that they can eventually go to the U.S. to pursue a college education and achieve the status that goes along with an American degree. While English is used in formal domains, Crucian is generally only used among family and friends. According to Highfield (1992), the use of Crucian has decreased along with the decline of smallholder agriculture on the island due to industrialization. As more people move to the city and abandon the rural areas, their language practices become increasingly influenced by Standard English.

Crucian Creole does not have overt prestige in St. Croix today. Interviews that I have conducted with several educators indicate that they consider Crucian to be jargon, 'broken English', the language of illiterate and poor communities, a 'calypso', a 'lingo'. While some see Crucian as part of their cultural heritage, few see it as a language to be spoken with pride. Crucian Creole represents the historically demeaning institution of slavery that many Crucians prefer to forget.

For many years, St. Croix has been home to people of numerous nationalities. Historically, the biggest immigrant group in St. Croix has been of Puerto Rican origin, but more recently many Dominicans have settled on the island. Because of the high

number of Spanish speaking immigrants, the government of St. Croix has implemented a bilingual education program. However, the bilingual program's goals of supporting cultural heritage and maintaining the student's native language do not extend to Crucian because Crucian is considered a 'dialect' with no linguistic usefulness. According to a former bilingual teacher from Central High School, speaking the 'lingo' or 'calypso' is something children are born into, and this lingo is to be 'corrected' by total immersion in English. For this former educator, as for many others, there is no need to create a bilingual program for Crucian speakers. Another bilingual teacher from St. Croix observed that "Crucian Creole is broken English."

Crucian students are subjected to a battery of "English-only" methodologies, including countless lessons and drills in Standard English reading, writing, and vocabulary in order to move them toward "national USA norms." In spite of this total immersion approach, reports from St. Croix's schools show that students at all levels are having serious problems with their lack of vocabulary, low reading levels and limited comprehension in Standard English. According to the Pearl B. Larsen Elementary School Integrated School Improvement Plan for 2004-2006, a "large percentage of our students (more than 75%) perform below average based on the results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in comparison to national norms" (2006: 2). The same is true for the Arthur A. Richards Junior High School (2006) where teachers state that their students attain low or mixed achievement levels compared to national (meaning US) norms.

Both school reports advance various hypotheses for these problems, but the two that are language related are: 1) lack of parental support (even though 65% of the parents interviewed by the department of education stated that they were totally involved in their children's education), and 2) the "students inability to relate to materials that are presented to them." This could be an indication that the language of instruction as well as the linguistic and cultural content of the textbooks used does not necessarily enhance student learning.

Would there be a difference in students' performance if Crucian Creole were used in the classroom? Based on studies conducted in Papua New Guinea in 1992 and 1997 Siegel (1999) found that students who learned "initial literacy and numeracy in Tok Pisin (Melanesian English-Lexifier Creole) scored significantly higher in all their subjects."

Siegel, Cummins, James, Srivastava & Khatoon, and UNESCO also suggest that education in the child's mother tongue helps develop her ability to gain proficiency in a second language, because a person's native language is linked to her identity and community. They suggest that using native-language instruction during, at least, the first five years of school guarantees a smooth transition into the target language and helps students keep up in other subjects. Optimally, after two or three years of academic instruction in the mother tongue, a transition to the dominant language can

begin. After five or more years of education in the mother language, the child will have developed cognitive skills through her home language, which can be transferred to the socially dominant language. In addition, the child will have developed a sense of self and of cultural identity that allow for the construction of meaning from communal experience.

The integration of a home language like Crucian into the curriculum increases chances of academic success and empowers children. According to James (1996), if done well, education in the vernacular may enhance cognitive development, reinforce a positive self-image and a sense of identity, increase the valorization of home and community, confer a sense of self worth, increase levels of educational achievement, facilitate the learning of other languages and minimize culture shock for immigrant children. Other benefits of using the vernacular, according to Siegel (2006), include:

1. It is easier for students to learn skills such as reading and writing in their vernacular, and then transfer these skills to the standard.
2. Using the vernacular facilitates the level of self-expression necessary for cognitive development.
3. Teachers will become aware of the complexity and rule-governed nature of the student's vernacular, and develop a positive attitude toward it.
4. Using the vernacular in classrooms can increase students' motivation and self-esteem.

McCourtie (1998) also supports the use of the mother tongue in the classroom. He suggests that the resources of both languages (mother tongue and standard) be utilized in the learning process. More specifically, he recommends that the mother tongue be used initially to facilitate students' transition into the standard, more teachers be trained in bilingual education, and that teachers who are both fluent in the mother tongue and English be assigned to teach at the early primary level.

According to McCourtie, there are more possibilities now for education in Creole than in the past. Effective bilingual education programs in creole languages would allow speakers to move from the acrolect to the basolect without fear of losing their indigenous heritage, culture, and identity. Creole speaking students educated in Creole have been shown to achieve higher test scores in English and other subjects than those who are educated in English only (Siegel, 2006). In addition, Cummins states that the promotion of minority languages does not result in an inferior development of English (Akkari, 1998). There is no concrete evidence that using the vernacular in the classroom will have any negative effect on students' achievement in the standard.

Unfortunately, the above statements favoring the use of the vernacular have their detractors. Researchers like McWhorter (cited in Siegel, 2006: 52) question the effectiveness of using the mother tongue in the classroom as a tool for language acquisition. Despite the information discussed above, McWhorter states that there is no concrete evidence to support the hypothesis that children learn better when their

“vernacular is used in education.” Others like Gupta state that using mother tongue will promote ethnic separation (1997). Many educators and authorities share McWhorter’s view and limit the official use of creole languages to non-formal programs run by government or non-governmental organizations, effectively banning Creole from formal education.

Other arguments against the use of creole languages in schools contend that because some varieties of creole languages are not significantly different from standard varieties of European languages, bilingual programs are not justified. However, Palacas (cited in Siegel, 2006: 53) demonstrates that even decreolized varieties like African American Vernacular English (AAVE) have “substantial typological differences” from the Standard. In this connection, it is interesting to note that AAVE students’ performance on TOEFL tests is similar to that of ESL/EFL students (Siegel, 2006: 53). This evidence strengthens the argument that despite the apparent similarities between AAVE and Standard English, AAVE speaking students perform similar to second language learners of Standard English.

The situation presented by Rickford (2006) for African American students is similar to that for students in St. Croix. Students’ test scores and general performance in reading and writing are significantly lower than those of the U.S. population of European descent. These results may reflect the discriminatory nature of both the U.S. and the USVI education systems. On the other hand, Withagen (1999) studied the use of non-standard dialects in the school system of the Netherlands and found that using non-standard dialects and varieties had no negative effect on the general achievement levels of pupils. However, researchers noticed that teachers perceived less favorably (in terms of personality and intelligence) those students who chose to speak their dialects in school than those pupils who spoke the standard language. Haig and Oliver (2003) found that teachers’ perceptions of their students were influenced by speech. Teachers ranked students who had problems with pronunciation and “limited” vocabulary as low achievers and sympathized with students whose vocabulary and pronunciation was more at par with the standard.

Although Haig and Oliver’s work focuses on schools in Australia, this study resonates with St. Croix. Due to the unfavorable position that the vernacular occupies on the island, students who speak the Creole are considered inferior to those who use the standard. This feeling of inferiority affects young peoples’ performance in school and in society. Recognizing the vernacular as a legitimate language could help provide students with the tools that they need to succeed at the personal and professional levels. To avoid discriminatory practices against Caribbean students, Winer (2006) suggests that teachers be aware of all aspects of language use, that they become familiar with more than one linguistic code, use appropriate assessment measures, be conscious of the child’s social and physiological needs, get appropriate resource materials, respect the students’ vernacular and discuss language variation in the

classroom. Teachers should not be judgmental about language varieties. Translation and conscious code switching should be welcome in the classroom. Finally, both teachers and learners should become familiar with the regularity with which language changes occur. This will guarantee better appreciation of the local varieties and a smoother transition to more standardized forms.

In spite of the evidence in favor of using the vernacular in schools, there is still much skepticism about “the value and practicality of bringing the vernaculars into the classroom” (Siegel: 51). Unfortunately many scholars in St. Croix view Crucian as an obstacle to learning. They fear that students’ use of Crucian will interfere with their proficiency in English. Such negative attitudes toward Crucian may lead to culture and language loss. Many, perhaps most people in St. Croix, do not understand the use of Crucian in the classroom as interfering or impairing students’ performance in English. On the contrary, the use of Crucian in schools could promote competence in English. Yet, schools in St. Croix insist on “proper” use of Standard English, and avoid the use of Creole at all costs.

The curricular plans at the Arthur A. Richards Junior High School and the Pearl B. Larsen Elementary School show that these institutions are promoting the exclusive use of Standard English as the language of instruction. In addition, students’ basic skills are tested at all levels (kindergarten through 12th grade) using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, an examination designed by the College of Education of the University of Iowa, for use with native English speakers in the U.S.. This test evaluates levels of mastery in English vocabulary, word analysis, reading comprehension, listening, language, mathematics, sciences, and social studies, and is intended for mainland American students, not Crucians. One has to wonder how appropriate the Iowa Basic Skills Test is for the measurement of academic achievement by Crucian students.

Why was this test used in St. Croix? Is the Iowa Test of Basic Skills a reliable tool for the identification and analysis of Crucian students’ real learning needs? Why isn’t proficiency in Crucian Creole taken into consideration in the measurement of students’ vocabulary and language skills? Are these tests putting pressure on children to abandon their native language and to assimilate to English? Is this exam a fair test for Crucian students who have a cultural and linguistic background that is radically different from that of the students in Iowa? Are the schools on St. Croix imposing Standard English without taking into consideration students’ feelings toward it? Finally, what effect does the imposition of English have on Crucian students’ self-esteem and performance? To answer such questions, in-depth research needs to be conducted to investigate the results of language policy and practices in St. Croix schools.

Siegel (2005) and James (1996) attribute teachers’ and parents’ negative attitudes toward teaching Creole in schools to the following misguided notions:

- 1) teaching in Creole takes time away from learning the standard

- 2) using Creole will interfere with students' acquisition of the standard
- 3) using the mother tongue will promote cultural, political and social separation
- 4) vernacular education is expensive
- 5) if mother tongue is used, children will have no chances of upward social mobility
- 6) parents will never allow their children to be taught in the vernacular, especially if the vernacular has little official prestige

Unfortunately, the idea that Standard English is better than the Crucian "dialect" is ingrained in Crucian society. As a result, Crucian Creole is stigmatized by the society in general. When I visited St. Croix, several teachers including bilingual teachers, assured me that "Crucian is not a language". Unfortunately, this stigmatization of Crucian will be difficult to overcome. In the meantime, students are suffering the consequences of the lack of serious language planning in St. Croix, and their poor performance in school will continue to be blamed on the use of the creole language, their parents, and the students' lack of motivation. Linguists recognize Creole as a legitimate language, whereas the general population regards Creole as defective (Norish, 1997).

While teachers are reluctant to use of Crucian Creole in the classroom, Porto Crucian and Crucian students seem eager to speak the language. In spite of the negative attitudes about Crucian Creole, students in St. Croix use it to interact among themselves. Is this insistence on using Crucian the result of a rebellion against the English-only education system? Or is it the result of laziness and lack of parental support as the school claims? According to students at the University of the Virgin Islands, there is a lot of pressure on young people to speak Standard English because it is more prestigious and believed to guarantee upward mobility. In spite of this pressure, students graduate from high school without mastering Basic English skills. One possible explanation for such results could be that there seems to be a covert resistance to Standard English evidenced by the students' readiness to speak Crucian at home, in school, and with friends.

Cummins (2006) states that, "The root causes of academic failure among students that belong to socially subordinated groups are to be found in the fact that the interactions between educators and students frequently reflect and reinforce broader societal patterns of coercive relations of power between dominant and subordinated groups" (p.1). To reverse this pattern of interaction educators need to validate Creole and collaborate with students and society to create a curriculum that addresses Crucian students' needs. Van Sickle, Aina & Blake (2002) suggest that schools need to develop a "curriculum that builds on students' strengths and gives them options for communicating the knowledge they possess." The teacher must understand the students' lives and experiences. Cummins (2006) also states that teachers need to create an environment of collaborative empowerment to challenge the traditional

relations of power that operate in the wider society where minorities are subject to the power of majorities. The school system needs to create programs where students are encouraged to refuse the discourse of disempowerment in order to make way for a program that encourages an atmosphere in “which identities are negotiated in the context of teacher-student interaction” (Cummins, 2006: 8). Language is an integral part of the students’ identity.

Allowing the use of Creole in the classroom will provide students with the tools to construct an identity of which to be proud. Marianne Mithun states that language presents the “distillation of the thoughts and communication of a people over their entire history” (Crystal, 2000, p. 38). Even though policy makers and educators in St. Croix all believe that Crucian is “broken English,” they often speak it in their daily lives, even on school premises. Some local writers in St. Croix are creating Crucian literature that addresses issues that pertain to their society. Richard Shrader, a well-known writer in St. Croix, has written “Queen Mary and Dem” one of the first plays written in Crucian Creole. Similarly, Dr. Denise Bennerson has written children’s literature that includes Crucian themes. In addition, the radio station 95.1 FM “Isle Ninety Five” and a TV program on a local ABC affiliate called “The Entertainers Voice” promote the use of Crucian Creole in their programming. Finally, The Landmark Society and individuals like Delta Jackson Dorsch, Janice Tutein, and Kendall Petersen are trying to preserve Crucian by means of storytelling.

“Language standardization is an attempt to stop language change, or at least to fossilize language by means of controlling variation” (Lippi-Green, 1997: 10). The students at the University of the Virgin Islands of St. Croix all agree that Crucian speech varies from one generation to another. They state that this variation is due to level of education, influence of the media, exposure to other linguistic varieties, and individual valorization of Crucian. There has been a lot of influence on Crucian from other Caribbean Creoles through music or through migration. “Crucian dialect is re-shaping. As the years and generations go by, Crucian Creole will fade or continue to shift.” (Highfield, 1992: 8). This shift is unavoidable. The influences from other varieties are unstoppable. The media promotes Standard English, reggae promotes Jamaican Creole, parents and grandparents all come from different linguistic backgrounds. The future of Crucian Creole is far from clear.

Highfield (1992) shows little optimism for the future of Crucian. He believes that English will eventually displace the Creole. However, I believe that the younger generations of Crucian speakers will not let that happen. In spite of the strong influence of English, the young are proud of their Creole, and are not ashamed of speaking it. Showing pride for one’s language is not enough. There has to be language planning that incorporates both Crucian and English to assure smooth transitions from one language to the other and therefore guarantee that students will be better prepared in both languages. Until the people in power understand the need to recognize Crucian

as a valid language, chances are that students will never achieve their potential in either English or Crucian. Thus, students and the general population will continue to live in a linguistic limbo.

Crucian students are not allowed to express themselves in anything but Standard English in the classroom. During my last visit to St. Croix, I had the chance to witness first hand the dynamics between teachers and students concerning language use. When a group of students was showing me how to speak Crucian Creole, I noticed the teachers' strong disapproval. At one point, one student saw her teacher staring at us, and she immediately switched from Creole to English. To my surprise, the rest of the students did not.

The dilemma about what language to use in education is far from being resolved. On one side, opponents of Crucian state that using the home language for instruction causes confusion and learning difficulties and promotes a less cohesive, more antagonistic society. In addition, detractors claim that children cannot operate effectively in two languages and in attempting to do so, children face cognitive problems, personality problems, feelings of disorientation or anomie, and social problems. For teachers, using the vernacular is seen as a roadblock on the student's journey into English. What is more, in the collective imaginary of most Crucians, Creole is an illegitimate, bastardized language that should not be tolerated in schools. Because of these attitudes, Crucian students are punished by an English only system that is detrimental to their self-esteem as well as to their academic performance.

The educational system should ensure that the schools provide an environment for academic success. Using Crucian Creole as a tool for learning in schools will provide Crucian students with the self-confidence required to successfully acquire basic skills and better appreciate their native language and culture. It will also enable them to confront and master the standard language and culture of the academic and professional worlds. The supporters of Crucian believe that St. Croix should be a pioneer in the U.S. Virgin Islands in implementing a curriculum that provides a space for the development and empowerment of Creole. And it seems like their project might have legal grounds in the U.S. In 1974, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in favor of bilingual education. The decision stated that the English only "sink or swim" formula violates the civil rights of students who enter school with little or no English speaking ability. Advocates of bilingual education state that promoting bilingualism and biliteracy can lead to higher achievement while fostering self-esteem and self-identity.

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THE ATTITUDES TOWARD CARIBBEAN CREOLES OF EUROPEAN DESCENDED COMMUNITIES IN MARTINIQUE AND ST. CROIX

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This paper presents the preliminary results of a sociolinguistic comparative study on the attitudes of propertied European descended people toward Caribbean Creoles, in particular, toward martinican (the French lexifier Creole of Martinique) and Crucian (the English lexifier Creole of Saint-Croix). The islands of the Caribbean share a colonial history which has given rise to the creolization of languages, communities and cultures. Creoles are commonly spoken in informal situations by African, Indigenous and European descended native speakers on each island. These creole languages commonly function as symbols of identity of non-propertied Caribbean groups, that is, those that are mainly of African and Indigenous descent. However, these Creoles are not only spoken by these groups but also by the descendants of the propertied European colonizers. While there are some existing studies that present ethnological (Kováts Beaudoux, 2002) and sociological (Lewis, 1972) data about European descended people in Martinique and in Saint-Croix respectively, there are no published sociolinguistic studies that examine in depth their conceptualization of, their appreciation for, and their use of the creole languages of their native islands.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the attitudes of the propertied descendants of early European settlers who were born and raised in Martinique and Saint Croix toward Martinican and Crucian in order to attain a greater understanding of the social matrix of creolization in the Caribbean. This investigation will serve to broaden previous research on the attitudes of African and Indigenous descended groups towards Caribbean Creoles in order to gain a fuller understanding of the sociolinguistic situation in the Caribbean. Since propertied European descended people have demographic and economic characteristics different from those of the local African and Indigenous descended groups, and, because propertied European descended people did not play the same role during the colonial period, it is essential to analyze their ideology and their social organization as a group separately from the others. It is therefore important to identify key social features that characterize these

European descended groups and to provide some historical background that explains the emergence of their particular ideological orientations.

Saint Croix and Martinique are both islands in the Lesser Antilles. St. Croix has been claimed by Spain, Holland, England, France, the Knights of Malta, Denmark, and the United States. In 1493, Columbus reached St. Croix. In 1596, after the massacre of the Indigenous Arawakan speaking 'Caribs' by the Spaniards the island was said to be uninhabited. The settlement of the Virgin Islands by the Dutch and the English took place in the early 1600s. However, after numerous battles the Dutch abandoned the island. After 50 years of English domination the French Governor of St. Kitts, De Poincy, bought St. Croix and later transferred it to the Knights of Malta. In 1665, the French West Indian company bought the island from the Knights of Malta. In 1695, the French left the island and in 1733, the Danes bought St. Croix from Louis XV. By this time, the island had witnessed a wave of immigration from other Caribbean islands which enhanced its already plurilingual and pluricultural character. By 1754, St. Croix became a possession of the Danish crown. The British controlled the island from 1801 to 1803 and 1807 to 1815. The island was taken over again by the Danish in 1815, and in 1916 the United States bought St. Croix for \$25 million along with St. Thomas and St. John, to constitute the U. S. Virgin Islands.

In 1635, Martinique and Guadeloupe were colonized by. In 1674, Louis XIV and Colbert officially incorporated these and other Caribbean territories into the French Empire. The French Revolution of 1789 generated great hopes for emancipation in Guadeloupe where slavery was actually abolished. In 1793, Jean Baptiste Dubuc signed an accord in London, putting Martinique under British jurisdiction until the French Monarchy could be re-established, thus preventing the emancipation of Martinican slaves. Thus, the propertied classes of European descent forestalled the spread of the French Revolution to Martinique by giving the English an excuse to intervene. In 1802, Martinique once again became a French colony and slavery was reintroduced in Guadeloupe. In 1848, the abolition of slavery on both islands was proclaimed by the French authorities under Victor Schoelcher. In 1946 Martinique and Guadeloupe became Overseas Departments of France. The constitutional reform of 2003 confirmed this status.

In this study, we use Baker's theoretical framework (1992) in which he identifies three major components for conceptualizing attitudes. The *cognitive component* is related to thoughts and beliefs, the *affective component* is related to feelings and the *readiness for action component* has to do with behavioral intentions in defined contexts and circumstances. Cargile et al. (1994) interpret attitudes as a disposition to react favorably or unfavorably to a situation, an object, or an event. Attitudes determine the way that members of a language minority group contribute to the maintenance of a minority language (Hamers & Blanc, 2000). According to Chin & Wigglesworth (2007), languages are assigned different levels of prestige. High prestige varieties are

usually used in public and official spheres, while low prestige varieties are used in the home and other informal environments. In the Caribbean, European colonial languages usually enjoy a high level of overt prestige, while creole languages are usually assigned low overt prestige. In the case of propertied European descended people, ideologies deeply impact their attitudes towards Creoles. According to Myers-Scotton (2006: 135), language ideologies are patterns of belief and practice in which the use of a language depends on the interests of a specific group. In Giles' Communication Accommodation Theory (1980), members of upper social strata sometimes use "elite closure," a form of divergent behavior that symbolically marks their domination and "shows how members of the elite reinforce their position in a society through their distinctive patterns of knowledge of both particular languages and how they are used" (Myers-Scotton, 1990: 27; 1993: 149). Many propertied European descended people in the Caribbean who represent an elite "dominant minority" need to maintain a certain distance between their own ideologies and those of African or Indigenous descended people, while paradoxically insisting on the legitimacy of their claim to be authentic and autochthonous members of their island communities and native speakers of the local creole language.

To recruit the necessary informants for this study, Milroy's social networking model (1987) was used. Open question interviews of approximately one hour each were conducted with each informant to test the following hypotheses:

- ▶ H1: Propertied European descended people claim to be fluent native speakers of the local Creole (while lower class European descended people might deny this)
- ▶ H2: The attitudes of propertied European descended people towards the local Creole depend on socio-historical factors and the ideological agendas of the local colonial power
- ▶ H3: The attitudes of propertied European descended people towards the local Creole are the result of ideological factors typical of "dominant minorities"
- ▶ H4: The attitudes of propertied European descended people towards the local Creole depend on the particular socio-historical and political changes that have impacted them on their particular island since Abolition.

In Saint Croix, we interviewed a total of 17 informants (9 male and 8 female) and in Martinique, 25 informants (10 male and 15 female). Kováts Beaudoux (2002) considers European descended people in Martinique to be a "dominant minority" because even though they constitute a small percentage of the population, they control large sectors of the economy of the island. A similar situation appears to exist in Saint Croix, where, according to Dookhan (2006), only 12% of the population of St. Croix is 'white' (i.e. is of non-African descent), but despite their small numbers, these non-African descended people play a preponderant role in many (but not all) sectors of St. Croix society. Saint Pierre (1973) finds that the *békés* (propertied European descended

people) of Martinique display a surprisingly positive attitude toward Martinican Creole.

In St. Croix, we found that most of the informants said that they speak three languages: English, Spanish, and Crucian. They gave different definitions of what the terms English and Crucian mean. Crucian was variously defined as a language, a vernacular language, and/or a local Creole. One of the informants declared that the English he speaks is Crucian or 'heavy English'. The eldest informants speak Crucian with their employees, their children, people they know, classmates, older people, and people of Crucian heritage. It is important to note that the youngest informant said that she speaks Crucian when she is at home and when she gets angry. The eldest informants learned Crucian by growing up on St. Croix, at school when playing with their playmates, and at home with yardmen, servants, and housekeepers. The youngest informant learned Crucian from family and in her neighborhood. In Martinique, most of the informants said that they speak French and Martinican Creole (MC). Others said that they only speak French because, for them MC is a dialect of French. Older informants speak Creole mostly in informal situations, especially with friends, classmates, housekeepers and other employees who cannot speak French. Like the older Crucian informants, they learned Creole at school with playmates, at home with servants, and housekeepers. Informants aged 40 to 60 learned Creole by growing up in Martinique and from classmates. They added that they cannot have a full conversation in Creole but can say some words among friends or family or when angry.

Regarding the relation between the creole languages and European languages, the informants on St. Croix said that they were allowed to speak Crucian at school, especially with classmates. One of them mentioned that he could only speak it with the authorization of his teachers. In Martinique, informants reported being able to speak MC on the playground with classmates as well. All the informants on the both islands stressed the importance of learning the official languages English and French, in order to be successful in one's professional life. English and French were perceived by them as languages of prestige, which provide economic advantages, whereas Crucian and Martinican Creole were associated with one's cultural roots. In the specific case of Martinique, some informants pointed out that learning MC at school as an optional subject is not a bad idea. They stressed, however, that those hours dedicated to MC should be used to strengthen the learning of French because the students should concentrate on French. Learning MC at the university is appreciated by most of the informants as a strategy to preserve the language. But they found the way in which MC was being developed and taught at the University level was too academic, making it difficult to read and understand because of features inspired by the Créolité movement, such as lexical changes and the use of an orthographic spelling very different from that of French (Alleyne, 2002). Some of the informants even stated that

this tendency to distance Creole from French forms is due to the independentist ideologies of some linguists and writers.

Crucian was identified by the informants as a language, a dialect, a variety of English with a lot of African, French, and Danish features mixed in, broken English, a Creole and/ or a patois. For some of the informants, Crucian is a marker of identity, culture, and heritage. However, others think that Crucian is not a marker of identity anymore because Crucian is too mixed with languages of other islands. They also point out the strong influences of Jamaican Creole and Puerto Rican Spanish on Crucian. In addition, they state that Crucian is becoming an endangered language. The youngest informant did not share this opinion, however, because she thinks there is no distinction between older Crucian and more modern and mixed varieties of Crucian. She sees Crucian as something 'raw'. Another point that is important to mention is that although some informants stated that Crucian is a dying language, they are aware that it is also part of their heritage. An informant stated that old folks who speak Crucian are dying with the history that they know, which is different from the history written in library books.

Martinican Creole is considered by some as a language and by others as a dialect. Even if the informants offer different definitions of what it is, they all affectionately say that MC is the language of friendship, feelings, jokes, and creativity. They add that it is an integral part of their life and "it comes from their guts". Most of the informants considered MC as a marker of identity and they expressed their concerns regarding the loss of oral traditions in MC, such as storytelling and proverbs. They regret that academic MC has lost the spontaneity that used to characterize the language and some observe that young people are now reacting against this and are re-appropriating MC by converting it into a form of "bad boy Creole".

Even if the European descended people of Martinique and Saint Croix constitute relatively isolated groups and often go to great lengths to cultivate and protect their social insularity, many of them claim to be an integral part of the Caribbean island society where they were born and raised. When Kováts Beaudoux started her ethnographic research in the 1970's among the European descended community in Martinique, her main question was: "How is it possible that this community has maintained its traditional ideology a full century after the abolition of slavery in Martinique?" Indeed, in the 21st century, this community continues to play the role of a small but dominant oligarchy with a racial ideology. This study has been designed to help answer this and other questions pertaining to the descendants of the European colonial oligarchies in the Caribbean.

The similarities in attitudes toward the local creole language by the propertied European descended groups in islands as different as Martinique and Saint Croix

suggests that beneath the dynamic and fascinating mosaic of Caribbean diversity there exist equally strong similarities and continuities that unite the politics, economics, cultures, ideologies, and attitudes of the region. Systematic research is urgently needed to follow up on the preliminary findings from Martinique and Saint Croix reported above, not only because existing studies on the language attitudes of European descended people in the Caribbean are few and relatively impressionistic, but also because such research can shed important light on the politics, economics, ideologies, and societies that form the matrix from which the creole languages and cultures of the region have emerged.

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PROBLEMATIZING CARIBBEAN CULTURE, IDENTITY AND AGENCY

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This paper is about culture and identity and what it means for different people, “to belong”, to have a “heritage” and to feel “at home” in the Caribbean. These meanings are not static constructs but continually negotiated by the agencies of individuals. In that process, I shall indicate how this finds expression when investigating the roles and practices of women in the context of family health and health communication. Thus, the aim of this paper is twofold: 1) to delineate some of the general dynamics underlying the construction of (postcolonial) identity/ies in the Caribbean; and 2) to comment on the agencies, especially of mothers, underlying many aspects of culture and identity.

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This paper has been written in the context of a set of projects in which the author has been involved, including a proposed visit by Virgin Islanders to Denmark, the colonial administrator of the slave plantation society that prevailed in their islands from the 16th to the 19th centuries¹. Such a visit requires reflection on Caribbean culture and identity, on how people in the region have been *actively* engaging with and shaping their history, culture and identity, as well as on how they have been constantly confronting outsiders and external pressures on their development. These outsiders are seen by many as attempting to impose their views, mingling in the affairs of the Caribbean and hampering the construction of its own identity. Some cases in point include the invasion by the USA of Grenada in 1982, the strained history of US-Cuban relations and US interference in the affairs of Haiti over the years. The list of US interventions in the Caribbean is long and can be seen as an integral part of established US foreign policy that has driven it not only to meddle in developments in the region but also in Central and South America and elsewhere such as Southeast Asia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

¹In colonial times the US Virgin Islands were mostly known as the Danish West Indies. Their Danish ownership terminated in 1917 and the islands were then sold to the United States of America. As a consequence of Denmark's participation in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade it ranks #7 among the European slave trading nations, having transported about 100,000 Africans across the Atlantic to its West Indian colonies.

A few years ago, a film to be produced by the author and a Danish film company about a proposed visit by Afro-descendants from the Virgin Islands to Denmark, the former colonial metropolis, was sanctioned by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The film was designed to complement UNESCO's documentary *Slave routes: a global vision* by contributing a more regional perspective on the global tragedy of the slave trade, slavery and the agencies of the enslaved (especially, women). The film project is still searching for adequate funding. Its concept, Virgin Islanders traveling to Denmark and provoking the Danes to face their colonial past, focuses on lessons to be learned from such a confrontation. The film project is designed as a clear tribute to Afro-descendants and their agencies everywhere. At present UNESCO is also conducting an international competition that an artist and I are involved in. The goal is to establish a permanent slavery monument in honor of the victims of slavery and the trans-Atlantic slave trade at the United Nations in New York. This project is envisioned to resonate with people concerned with human rights, women's rights and multi-culturalism in general.

The idea of a visit by African descended Virgin Islanders to Denmark was the catalyst that led me to write this paper by focusing my thinking on the Caribbean region and its diversity, challenging conceptualizations of a "homogenous Caribbean region". While there is ample ground for what may be thought of as "Caribbean voices" referring to common notions of dominance, freedom, otherness, boundaries, nationalism, citizenship, ethnicity, gender, religion, feelings of belonging, home –, there is also ground, I argue, for addressing diversities as well as inequalities.

A visit by Virgin Islanders to Denmark would reveal how the people of the European metropolis maintain strange, unrealistic fairy tale images of beautiful tropical islands stripped of all the horrors of their colonial past (Bierlich, 2010). These representations demonstrate that the islands are first of all thought of as places designed to accommodate foreign interests and pleasure-seeking Western tourists. They reflect a lack of awareness not only of the past but also of present-day realities in the islands where colonial policies brought together different peoples and ethnicities and forced them into some form or another of cohabitation. The diversity yielded by this process can be found in all the islands throughout the Caribbean. Sometimes this finds expression in ethnic rivalries and unrest, structured by underlying poverty, inequalities and subtle, and not so subtle, forms of Western culture striving to dominate the minds and desires of islanders. The different linguistic and cultural enclaves into which the colonial powers have carved up the Caribbean are also rooted in the islands' problematic relationships with their "mother countries", Spain, France, England and the Netherlands (Price, 1985; Safa, 1987).

Against this background, this paper advocates for diversity as a source of strength but without erasing issues common to all of the societies in the region, such as racism, poverty, ill health, gender inequality, etc. that need to be confronted. It acknowledges that Caribbean islanders are actively creating their own cultures and identities out of their rich African heritages, languages and cultures. In his *History of the mission of evangelical brethren* the missionary Christian Georg Andreas Oldendorp records that in 1777 at least 30 different African ethnolinguistic groups were present in the Danish West Indies (cf. the missionary Sigismund Kölle working in Sierra Leone in West Africa and his [1855] *Polyglotta Africana* listing more than 100 African languages and dialects). As Derek Walcott (1993) puts it,

“Deprived of their original language, the captured and indentured tribes
create their

own, accreting and secreting fragments of an old, an epic vocabulary,
from Asia and from Africa, but to an ancestral, an ecstatic rhythm in the
blood that cannot be subdued by slavery or indenture,...” (p. 10)

The exploitation, racism and inequalities produced by colonialism and domination are ever-present in the Caribbean. This has made the region an epicenter for resistance to systems of domination, and a hotbed of revolutionary theory and practice. An example of the extraordinary quality of politically engaged academic endeavor in the Caribbean is the work of renowned Martinique-born psychiatrist, philosopher, revolutionary and writer Frantz Fanon, which influenced the anti-colonial liberation struggles in Algeria and elsewhere as well as Cuba’s involvement in the struggles against colonialism in Africa.

“*WHO more sci-fi than us*” is a quote taken from *The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao*, by Dominican-American writer and Pulitzer Prize-winner Junot Díaz (2009: 21, footnote 6) as well as the title of an exhibition on contemporary Caribbean art recently curated in the Netherlands by Surinamese-Dutch artist Nancy Hoffmann. The book and, in particular, the exhibition reveal not only facets of a kind of common Caribbean culture, but also aspects of the region’s shared history, political conditions, religious influences, views on sexuality and gender alongside the commonalities that mark the day-to-day lives of the people. At the same time these art works also attest to the complexity and diversity of the region. In fact, it may be quite wrong to talk about “the Caribbean” at all. As Trinidad researcher Ralph Premdas (1996) remarks, the Caribbean is “uniform only as a region of the mind...defying broad generalizations regarding a shared Caribbean culture, society, and personality” (p. 36). He also notes that particular local blends of “creole culture” have also emerged, stating that

“Creolized adaptations have produced cultural systems with their own
completeness and integrity, the metropolitan contributions
notwithstanding. Creolization processes incorporate the special genius

of the different Caribbean peoples in forging a separate and dignified existence out of economic and political domination. It has produced a diversity of dialects and language systems, a kaleidoscope of musical forms, a new set of syncretistic religions, and a proliferation of colorful Caribbean personality types. These are more meaningfully clustered into regional types as a form of association and belonging than a wider trans-Caribbean identity seeks to construct.” (p. 36).

There is thus not one paradigmatic, overarching Caribbean identity but a plurality of identities, cultures and languages. All express certain identities for particular language speakers. Moreover, “home” and feeling at home do not necessarily refer to only one physical place but may express a multitude of spaces, as dramatized in the Caribbean migration narratives of Diaz (2009), Foner (2001) and Olwig (1993). This capacity to claim multiple homes and multiple identities as well as diversity alongside commonality is perhaps also exemplified by the distance learning or “Open Campus” system of the University of the West Indies that assures access to education from Belize in the north to Trinidad and Tobago in the south – a distance of some 3,000 kilometers.

Anthropologist Karen Fog Olwig (1999) refers to the tension between more *localized* island identities stressing the value of local traditions and respect for the elders and mutual support, and an apparent dominant pressure to think in more *global, unifying, pan-Caribbean* terms in her analysis of local oral culture on the small island of St. John in the US Virgin Islands. Reflecting a local-global tension, one St. Johnian warns of the danger of reifying the island’s heritage as though culture were *a thing* to be as easily accessed as information about a particular practice or tradition. At the same time, extremely powerful narratives of resistance have emerged from St. John, which resonate culturally among the youth of the island and beyond. These narratives center on the slave uprising of 1733, during which the enslaved successfully overturned the plantocracy for a number of months, and from which plantation slavery never fully recovered on the island.

As a metaphor of processes of ideological de-colonization and nation-building that have unfolded since the 1960’s speaking of “the Caribbean” has a great attraction (see Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*). In spite of real ethnic and linguistic boundaries and a lack of homogeneity, many Caribbean people are inclined to feel an elusive and intangible bond and connectedness with others in the region because of common beliefs and life styles. In other words, feeling at home in the Caribbean is about diversities as well as unifying ideologies, and about local island identities as well as a global digital market place. Irrespective of the global context it is also about gender relations.

I would like to conclude this paper with a concrete example of how culture and identity can be studied by looking at the impact of culture in the domains of gender and health which – like racism and oppression – structure identity. As a social scientist I have been trained to always focus and collect data at the community and family levels. In parallel to my work in the Caribbean I have conducted research for over 15 years in West Africa where my focus has consistently been mothers and family-centered care of children and youth. This has made me a strong advocate of the agencies, voices, and resilience of women, local communities and families.

Taking this approach further, my future research will have culture as its focus as it pertains to gender and family health. In particular I will study healthy eating and living and people's practices, diverse as they may be, in this regard in the Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean region. I will study the authoritative voices of women surrounding food, nutrition, weight, illness, space, time, rights and other issues related to family life and health through interviews, observations and video-recordings of interactions at home as well as in clinics. The planned research will follow the pluralistic behavior of people in their quest for therapy, visiting clinics, local healers and returning home. It will specifically focus on how Caribbean women emerge as key decision-makers, thus challenging traditional assumptions and the invisibility of women in contexts dominated by the patriarchal voices of the dominant discourses on medicine (Parpart, Connelly & Barriteau, 2000; Leo-Rhynie, 1997; Bierlich, 2012).

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**THE RHIZOMATIC LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES EMERGING
FROM CELTIC AND SOUTH ASIAN INDENTURE IN THE CARIBBEAN**

CROSSING' THE ATLANTIC: THE POLITICS OF IRISH INDENTURE

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The story of how thousands of Irish indentures arrived in the West Indies is one that has been left largely untold and understudied. The reasons for this are inextricably intertwined into the politics of race and identity in early Caribbean history. On one side of the Atlantic, as English subjects, the Irish were oppressed for their catholic faith, yet in the Caribbean, the indentured workers' white skin raised them to a social status above that of the enslaved Africans. The result is that much of their early history has been subsumed into that of the colonial settlers with relatively little study given to the complex nature of their indentured status or their influence on the evolution of Caribbean identity.

Historians estimate that from 1641 to 1652, over 500,000 Irish were killed by the English and another 300,000 were sold as slaves. In order to understand the politics of the Irish/English tensions that began in England and were transported to the New World in the mid-17th century, we must revisit events leading up to the mass shipments of Irish indentured workers to Barbados, Jamaica and other English Caribbean territories after the Civil War. One such study is Joseph Williams' *Whence the "Black Irish" of Jamaica?* (1932) which discusses Cromwell's plan to rid the English Empire of the Irish, and his son's urgent request for over 2000 young Irish children, between the ages of twelve and fourteen, to work on the plantations. This transatlantic resettlement of the Irish set a precedent for the later importation of indentured workers from Scotland, Wales, India and China to the Americas. From this point forward, one can reasonably argue that the Irish and other indentured workers became marginalized sub-groups that frequently aligned with the African enslaved to undermine the white plantocracy.

The story of Irish persecution dates back to at least the 12th-century when Pope Adrian IV issued the papal bull, *Laudabiliter*, to give Henry II permission to conquer Ireland



Figure 1 The (1653–1658) Standard of Oliver Cromwell includes the Irish Harp, the symbol used in the flag of the Irish Kingdom from 1542–1651

as a means of strengthening the Papacy's control over the Irish Church. However, an intense push to rid England of the Irish began in 1612 after the Battle of Kinsdale (1603), when Kings James I found himself saddled with 30,000 military prisoners. Although some Irish voluntarily emigrated to the colonies and elsewhere, the first recorded sale of Irish is in 1612 when a group was sold to English colonists on the Amazon River (Cavanaugh). King James' Proclamation of 1625 codified this practice by ordering that all Irish political prisoners be transported overseas and sold as laborers to English planters, settling the islands of the West Indies. In 1629, transport records mention a large group of Irish sent to "Guiana" to work on a large plantation. By 1632, the Irish were being shipped to both Antigua and Montserrat in large numbers. According to the Montserrat census of 1637, Irish slaves formed 69% of the total population. Today, the island of Montserrat continues to reflect its Irish heritage as evidenced by the fact that the island's immigration stamp is a shamrock.

Eventually, the forced exile of the Irish reached a peak after the English Civil War; the numbers increasing dramatically with Oliver Cromwell's rise to power during the Protectorate when "... in 1655 he ordered that 'all English, Scots and Irish' prisoners in Dorchester jail be 'forthwith sent to Barbados'" (Beckles: 507). During the Civil War, partisan passion overruled human reason as all factions in England killed in the name of God or King. The tone of England changed as secular art and literature went underground and Cromwell closed theaters, and censored art, literature, and music, in addition to abolishing such established English institutions as the monarchy, the House of Lords and the Anglican Church (see Uzgalis). Similarly, the tenor of English politics reflected those dangerous times, as properties were seized, priests murdered and King Charles I beheaded. It was a perilous time for all the people, but the Irish were particularly oppressed by Cromwell's anti-Catholic policies. In an effort to depopulate Ireland for English settlement and control, Cromwell rounded up men suitable for military service and sent them to remote colonies in Asia or Africa to fight the multiple wars being waged there; older men, adolescent boys, women and young children were kidnapped and sent to the West Indies as indentured workers. Thus, the Protectorate engaged in a *de facto* genocide and enslavement of the Irish by sending thousands of men, women, and children to the West Indian colonies in chains, locked below decks under conditions usually associated with the Black Atlantic slave trade.

Although the use of the Irish as indentured servants in the West Indies is well documented, less attention has been given to the methodology of forced transportation and the living conditions for Irish workers shipped to the colonies. Thus, while

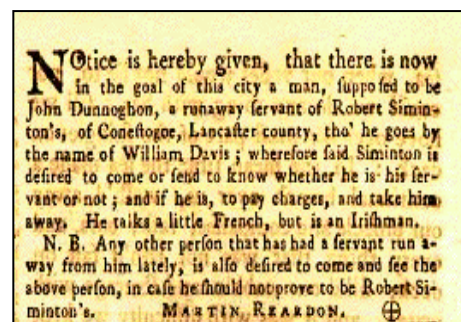


Figure 2. Ad for a runaway Irish bondservant

histories may briefly mention the Irish exodus as a source of labor, a failure to follow through and examine the methods and terms of that labor erases the origins of the exodus as a form of ethnic cleansing and genocide. One consequence of this situation is that, in the scramble to rid the kingdom of the Irish opposition, Cromwell's scheme of using forced indentures from Ireland as cheap labor for the growing plantation machine caused the purchase prices for indentured servants to sink far below the prices for African slaves. For instance, In *The French Encounter with the Africans* William Cohen states that "A slave cost the equivalent of 9000 pounds of sugar; the service of an indentured servant, only 1200 pounds of sugar" (p. 38). This particular aspect of plantation economics is typically rendered invisible by the politics of a history that tends to focus on only one form of forced labor in the colonial period – that of the African slave trade. Consequently, forced labor and/or enslavement is frequently viewed through a lens colored black whereas, until the final years of the 17th century, the politics of slavery and forced labor had more to do with power relations than with phenotype.

This power-relations based theory of the economics and politics of using Irish labor meshes with the arguments made by Williams in his study of the black Irish in Jamaica, where he provides a detailed account of events and discussions related to the deportation of 1000 men and 1000 women from Ireland to the English West Indian colonies to "assist in the planting" (p. 2). As evidence of this plan, Williams cites a 1655 letter from Cromwell's son who was in charge of the forces in Ireland to Secretary Thurloe in England:

"Concernige the younge women, although we must use force in taking them up, yet it beinge so much for their owne goode, and likely to be of soe great advantage to the publique, it is not in the least doubted, that you may have such number of them as you shall thinke fitt to make use upon this account."
(Williams: 4)

Cromwell continues with a rather detached observation that labels the young Irish children as little more than chattel property:

"If you should thinke fitt to sende 1500 or 2000 younge boys of 12 to 14 years of age to the place aforementioned. We could well spare them, and they would be of use to you; and who knows, but that it may be a meanes to make them English-men. I meane, rather, Christians." (Williams: 4)

As a consequence of this plan, Barbados became a transportation hub of the English West Indies. The island also became a center for human trafficking; so much so that, eventually, when referring to a person who had been forced out of England, the person was said to have been "Barbadosed". According to a recent study of the Irish and African connection in Barbados:

"Those who were barbadosed were sold as slaves or indentured servants, to British (sic) planters. They lived in slave conditions and had no control over the

number of years they had to serve. The number of Barbadosed Irish is not known and estimates vary widely, from a high of 60,000 to a low of 12,000.”
(*Tangled Roots*)

This reinforces the notion that, unlike more privileged English settlers, once in Barbados the indentured servants, along with a motley assortment of other white English dissidents and criminals, were sent to plantations to work out their contracts, and had little opportunity to improve their social or economic status. Technically “free” in the modern conceptual context, they were “unfree” in the pre-modern legal context dating back to the Magna Carta. Unlike the English indentured servants who may have chosen to emigrate in search of a better life, Irish indentured servants sent by Cromwell had either been kidnapped or transported under illegal contracts, with the indentured parties forced to work under non-negotiable conditions.

In his search for the origins of the Black Irish in Jamaica, Williams provides evidence that Barbados was the first leg of another form of triangular slave trade: the routing of the Irish from England to Barbados to Jamaica. In this variation on the African slave trade, the first port of call for indentured captives was Barbados where some were transferred to Jamaica and elsewhere to work out their contracts. He further notes the frequency of Irish names among the current black residents of Jamaica and argues against the usual rationale that enslaved Africans were often named after their white masters. He bases his argument on the fact that during the slavery period, few Irish were landowners and fewer, if any, were slave owners. To the contrary, the conditions of the Irish indentures during the 17th and 18th century were as miserable as that of the enslaved (see excerpt in Fig. 2).

Once in the West Indies, the usual process was for both men and women to work in the fields while children worked as house servants until old enough to work in the fields –usually around age twelve. Rape of Irish women by plantation owners and overseers was common and anecdotal evidence indicates that young Irish women were encouraged, or forcibly “married” to Africans in order to produce the mulatto concubines

preferred by English military officers (McCafferty: viii). Because breeding for lighter skinned slaves was impinging on the profits of the Royal African Company, in 1681 a law was passed that indirectly prohibited the practice by stating that black children born to white women would be free (*Understanding Race*) However, as some scholars

bound by other ties to these English soldiers in Jamaica.”²⁶
A specific instance cited by Prendergast²⁷ is the following: “Daniel Connery, a gentleman of Clare, was sentenced, in Morison’s presence, to banishment, in 1657, by Colonel Henry Ingolsby, for harboring a priest. ‘This gentleman has a wife and twelve children. His wife fell sick, and died in poverty. Three of his daughters, most beautiful girls, were transported to the West Indies, to an island called the Barbadoes; and there, if they are alive, they are in miserable slavery.’ ”²⁸

Figure 3 Just aiding a Catholic could result in banishment.

have noted, in a society where the English kept meticulous records, actual hard data about the Irish is missing. For the most part the Irish arrived in the West Indies speaking Gaelic and illiterate in English. In addition, they were viewed by the English as a disposable resource with little monetary or social value. Therefore, unlike the case of the more valuable enslaved Africans, little effort was spent recording their demographic information.

In a study of *A “riotous and unruly lot”: Irish indentured servants and freeman in the English West Indies, 1644-1713*, historian Hilary Beckles offers an analysis of the complex relationships between the Irish, the slaves, and the planter class. Within creole society, the Irish were considered a “riotous and unruly lot” (Beckles: 503). Marginalized by social status rather than color, the role of these early Irish indentures complicated both the social and legal hierarchies in Barbados. Although ‘white’ in phenotype, their “unfree” legal¹ status located them socially closer to free blacks within the colonial hierarchies. In effect, this also relegated their descendants to a lower class. For instance, the term ‘red legs,’ a derogatory reference to the intense sunburns resulting from long days of fieldwork is still used to denote Irish descendants in Barbados.

For modern scholars, the challenge is to make the connection between the politics of Irish indentures of the 17th-century and their descendants today in order to recognize the influence of Irish culture and language on the New World identity. Some icons, such as rum and other spirits distilled in the West Indies, can trace their roots to the Irish servants. More recently, scholarship has also made the connection between Gaelic and English lexifier Creole varieties. Yet, on another level, the Irish presence in the Caribbean has not evolved positively. Irish descendants in Barbados have continued to be viewed as a liminal social group – in much the same way as the Irish immigrants in New York City and Boston were viewed during the early 20th-century. According to Edward Price in 1957, “. . . They not only stand out as anomalies, but are likely to be hard-pressed for survival in a society that has no niche for them, that assumes they will not exist” (Price: 35). Thus, as Elena Lawton argues in her article in this volume, the social consequences of forced Irish indenture in creating an ethnic community/society of Red Legs and their present day descendants in Barbados is a topic that demands greater study.

¹ Both William the Conqueror and the Magna Carta make the distinction between men who were free and men who were not free. The trading of slaves was common throughout the Anglo-Saxon period and the term ‘unfree’ could refer to either the enslaved or to the serfs and villeins who worked the soil. There were many levels among the ‘unfree’. For example, serfs who lived and worked the land but who might be sold as part of the land even though technically they were not slaves.(O’Callaghan: 8).

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WHENCE THE IRISH IN BARBADOS?

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Comprehending the long, slow, painful history of England's colonization of the Celtic island of Ireland, which provided the English a training ground for securing, developing, and 'improving' their multifarious island and mainland, holdings in the Americas, is far too vast a project for a single essay; the attempt here is to highlight the bits that factored most directly into the 17th century English herding and shipping of thousands of Irish men, women, and children to Barbados – as well as to other Eastern Caribbean islands and Virginia. For several centuries preceding Cromwell's overbearing invasion and subjugation of Ireland in the 1650's, English interest(s) in the island had waxed and waned, in response to a combination of factors, but the fundamental motivators could be understood as, first, simple real estate acquisition and second, (after Henry VIII's 16th century escapades), fear of Catholic Ireland allying with England's papist enemies on the continent. Whenever English pressure on Ireland waned, it was because of other more urgent concerns – like the 100 Years War and the War of the Roses.

The salient facts of 17th century Irish demographics may be traced to the 12th century Norman invasion of Britain. By the 13th century, a significant number of Norman and newly Anglo-Norman families had settled in Ireland and largely acculturated, becoming Hiberno-Norman: they created alliances with the local population through the marriage and through mutual fostering of children; they practiced Catholicism and spoke Gaelic, or a dialect thereof. Later, during the 16th century "Tudor conquest" of Ireland, these older settler families came to be called the "Old English" to distinguish them from the "New English", the Protestants, usually more recently arrived, who were bent on anglicizing the island (Ohlmeyer: 12 footnote; Canny: 411-418). Until this "Tudor conquest", the English were largely concentrated within "the Pale" – the fortified region around Dublin, which expanded and shrank as England's attention shifted back and forth from its interests in Ireland to its concerns on the continent. The English and Anglo-Irish living within the Pale pressed England, always, for support in policing and "civilizing" the unruly Gaelic natives in order to extend English influence further into the island.

Meanwhile, outside the Pale, throughout the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, there was ongoing petty warfare accompanied by shifting alliances among the Old English, the

New English, Scottish Celts, and other ethnic groups that were all gradually becoming hibernicized. After a few famines caused by bad harvest years, the Gaelic natives who had been pushed off the good land by the early Norman and Anglo settlers had begun pushing back. This “Gaelic resurgence” was boosted in the mid-14th century by the Black Death, which wiped out a far greater number of the upper-crust Anglo-Irish clustered in the more urban areas than it did the Gaelic-Irish out in the hills (Kelly: xv). So by 1350, the Gaelic Irish had regained much of their lost power and were closing back in on a shrinking Pale, tenaciously held by the Anglo-Irish and governed by British law. “Beyond the Pale” Ireland was run once again by autonomous Irish Gaelic (or Gaelicized Hiberno-Norman) kings or chieftains according to their own ancient Irish *brehon law* (O’Brien: 18, 47; Canny: 46, 61).

In response, in 1366, a harried England, amply pre-occupied with The Hundred Years War but feeling panicky about totally losing its grip on Ireland, enacted the infamous Statutes of Kilkenny. The statutes forbade intermarriage between the native Irish and the English, English adoption or fostering of Irish children, and use of Irish language, names, or dress. Note that here before Henry VIII religion was not yet a factor – Irish sports were outlawed, and Irish minstrels were prohibited in English areas. Had England been able to focus its attention on Ireland at this point, perhaps the complete colonization of the island might have been effected. But The Hundred Years War and then the Wars of the Roses drew England’s fists elsewhere, and Gaelic Ireland was saved for another couple of centuries (MacLysaght: 120; McCourt: 78; O’Brien: 47). Nonetheless, the Statutes of Kilkenny had codified the denigration of the Irish and segregation between the two “races.”

The next watershed in this history occurred in 1494 when the diminished Anglo-Irish nobles living tensely within the Pale convinced the English crown, finally, for the moment, not at war, to pass Poynings’ Law, which subordinated the Irish Parliament to the English one. Thus, at least on paper, England could govern Ireland. This set the stage for the 16th century Tudor conquest of Ireland: Henry VIII in 1541, his imperial political motivations enhanced by a brand new abhorrence of Catholicism, had the English-run Irish Parliament declare him King of Ireland. He then embarked on an ingenious kind of retro-feudal project called “surrender and regrant” by which any Irish nobles willing to recognize the English crown – *and* aspire to a certain “English” civility, now involving religion as well as language and culture – were “re-granted” the legal rights to their land as well as the right to attend Parliament. The requisite English civility included not just paying taxes and swearing loyalty to England, but speaking English, wearing English-style clothing, and converting to the Anglican Church: obliterating any Irish identity. Though many Irish kings defied it, a significant number submitted, gaining English titles and some political voice. The policy was effective of course only because it was pretty loosely enforced, but it functioned to somewhat stabilize English-Irish relations in the mid-16th century to make way for the

continued and expanded occupation of Irish lands by the younger sons of English aristocracy, who used indigenous Irish to labor as their serfs.

By the time of Elizabeth's accession, however, the zealous energies of the Protestant Reformation were running up against a militant Catholic Counter-Reformation in Europe, particularly Spain. Catholic Ireland would provide a bloody battleground in this new escalation of the conflict. During the Anglo-Spanish War at the end of the 16th century, Spain supported the Irish Catholics against the English in the Nine Years War in Ireland, which included a series of Irish revolts against English rule that became Elizabeth's bloodiest and most costly military campaign (Canny: 66; Morgan: 308). By the start of the 17th century, Spain and England, exhausted, had ceased hostilities, and Catholic Ireland could no longer count on Spain's support. The Irish kings who had initiated the revolt exiled themselves to Europe in what is colorfully known as the Flight of the Earls, and the English settlement of Ireland resumed in earnest, with massive new English colonization, especially in Ulster and Munster.

Conditions were, of course, abysmal for the dispossessed Irish tenants and laborers, but it was the as-yet-still-landed Irish gentry, clinging desperately to their property, who initiated the bloody Irish Rebellion of 1641. The rising tensions between the English Parliament and their king were becoming apparent to Irish Catholic observers; likewise apparent was the increasing militancy of Parliament's Protestantism. Irish Catholics quite rationally feared a Protestant invasion not unlike the one that Cromwell would, in fact, conduct by the end of the decade. Foreseeing the conflict that was about to become the English Civil War, this small coalition of Irish Catholic lords sought the favor of the Royalists as they seized Dublin Castle in the name of King Charles. Their hope, of course, was that the king would prevail and commence to look more favorably on Irish Catholics.

This coup failed, but it ignited the pent up fury and despair of thousands of Irish peasants seeking revenge for the longstanding abuses of the English Protestant planters. (Descriptions of this 1641 Rebellion are interestingly reminiscent of the early months of the Haitian Revolution.) Though the number of English planters killed was substantial, English reporters grossly exaggerated the figure and used it in their anti-Irish propaganda during the next twenty years. English reprisals against the peasants were prolonged and deadly (Nicholls: 178-186; O'Brien: 68). Within a few months of this Rebellion, as the English Civil War broke out, the Irish formed their own independent government, called the Catholic Confederation, which soon controlled most of Ireland. Throughout the Civil War, the Confederation was usually loosely allied with the English (and Anglo-Irish) Royalists.

What came next, once King Charles was beheaded, was Cromwell's bloody and total, if impermanent, conquest of Ireland from 1649 to 1653. He used the sensational English reports on the 1641 Rebellion to construct the Irish Catholics as soulless brutes seeking only to exterminate the Protestant English (Barnard: 27-28). His

campaign in Ireland, in particular his massacres at Drogheda and Wexford, earned him his reputation for ruthlessness. The Irish death toll was massive not only because of Cromwell's massacres but also because of the counter-guerilla tactics employed by a number of his generals against the peasant resistance in the countryside. Cromwell's army burned crops, drove communities off the land, and killed any civilians they suspected. The result was devastating famine and disease (Barnard: 29).

Once he had thus pacified Ireland, Cromwell passed a series of penal laws against Catholicism and meted out a "justice" that enabled him to reward his supporters with good, arable Irish land: land confiscation – total for any Catholic who had borne arms against him. He transferred ownership of up to two and a quarter million acres. For the most part the land the Catholics were compensated with was the stony ground in far west Connaught – hence the expression popularly attributed to Cromwell: "[they can go] to hell or Connaught" (Barnard: 29; McKenny: 195-196). The other "hell" to which he was able to conveniently consign the problematic poor and/or law-breaking Irish was the Americas, in particular Barbados, the young British colony at that moment most in need of cheap plantation laborers.

In closing, I'd like to illustrate the degree to which the Irish were (conveniently) demonized by the English here at the dawn of English global imperialism. Even the great English poets of the day participated in the construction of the Irish as less than human. Edmund Spenser and John Milton both reviled the Irish in their poetry as well as their prose – and in a way that adumbrates the colonial racism yet to evolve. About the time he became Cromwell's secretary, Milton was referring to the Irish as "not onely sottish but indocible and averse from all Civility and amendment" (Raymond: 319). A generation before him, Spenser, himself an English Protestant owner of Irish land, mused aloud in his prose writing whether the Final Solution for achieving "sweetness" and "civility" in wild Ireland wouldn't have to be the extirpation of the Irish (O'Brien: 54). In his prose treatise, *A view of the present state of Ireland*, Spenser argued without irony that English civilization demanded the elimination, by any means necessary (including starvation), of the savagery he deemed inherent in the Irish, who were "the most untutored of all peoples, utterly enveloped in vice."

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BARBADOES WATER: CELTIC-AFRO-CARIBBEAN DISTILLED RUM (1, 2)¹

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(3) *Waving fields of memory* is the translated name from Spanish of the TV documentary, *Cañas de la memoria*. In 2005, I translated the subtitles of this documentary into English, fermenting sugar cane stories with Caribbean languages. Sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, it documented the story of sugar production in Puerto Rico by interviewing elders who were children at its peak and aged workers at its closing; the number of sugar mills on the island went from 32 to 0 in their lifetimes. This was the end of the transmutation of local sugar cane into *Snow White* sugar. (4) Prior to working with the documentary, I lived in Barbados for about 4 years, where I learned about another story of sugar; the story of rum, “sugar’s ugly sister” according to Parker (2011: 297). Puerto Rico has a powerful rum presence in the world today, but the circumstantial evidence of rum’s Celtic origin in the Caribbean points to Barbados in the 1600s. In his book, *Rum: a social and sociable history*, Ian Williams cites the Bermuda Assizes, November 27, 1660, relating “a rollicking tale of Celtic rumbunctiousness” about John, an Irishman who sneaked-in a cask of rumbullion to the governor’s house and shared it with slaves and others. He was discovered retailing it for his advantage, after all were caught drunk and disorderly in the governor’s house.

(5) Rum’s story points to the indentured servants from the “Celtic fringes of the British islands” (Williams, 2005: 33). However illiterate they may have been, the Celtic skill of distilling whisky, was put to use in distilling the sugar cane residue that was dumped outside their hovels. Williams, who makes a compelling case for rum’s Barbados origin, shares that Celts had a combination of “taste for strong liquor and skills in meeting their needs” (p. 28).

(6) However, this circular story begins with a plant. Aykroyd, in *The Story of Sugar*, states that, “The plant from which it sprang was probably a native of South-east Asia, or conceivably some island in the Pacific” (p. 10). (7) The article, *Sugar, please*, states that, “Few plants have had a greater impact on how we live, eat and work than a sweet

¹ The numbers refer to the slide presentation numbers that accompanied the presentation of this paper at the University of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas, 11/19/12. It is available at: <http://www.slideshare.net/evadelourdes/barbadoes-water>

fibrous native of tropical Asia: sugar cane, which archaeologists are learning was first refined in mass quantities around the 12th century at mills in Jordan and throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Those places became the gateways to the global sugar revolution.” However, the sugar cane plant did not like dry climates. (8) It was tried successfully in the Canary Islands, off the northwest coast of Africa, making the indigenous Guanches among the first genocidal victims of its cultivation in the 1400s. The plant also required extraordinary efforts to process it. The Guanches were enslaved by the Spaniards because they were not Catholic. Ironically, the Irish were later enslaved by the English because they were Catholic.

Christopher Columbus, on his second voyage, brought plant seedlings and Canarians (some of my ancestors) to cultivate and process the plant in the Caribbean. The Canary Islands, north of the Tropic of Cancer, provided a good location for sugar cane cultivation, though not as optimal as the Caribbean. The Amerindians were added to the list of victims, followed by the stronger African slaves, and the not so strong but spirited Celts.

(9) How did the plant get to Barbados? Barty-King and Massel, in *Rum yesterday and today* state that, “it was one Pieter Blower who was responsible for the first sugar cane to be planted in Barbados – in 1637” (p. 9). Parker points to Colonel James Holdip as the first (Parker, 2011: 13). Richard Ligon indicates that when he landed in Barbados in 1647, sugar-making was already practiced (Ligon, 2011: 85).

The plant thrives in Barbados because, according to Parker, “its climate and distance from the equator are similar to those of the ancestral home of sugar cane – the islands of New Guinea. Both are hot, around 30°C, humid and wet” (p. 9). Sugar’s commercial disadvantages include the very labor-intensive processes required to grow it and process it and the limited number of locations suitable to its successful agro-industrial production. Many of these locations that are suitable for cane were not very suitable for Northern European planters. For example, in the Caribbean, they were plagued by tropical diseases, assaulted by the heat, battered by hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes, and other natural disasters, besieged by Carib warriors and challenged by rebellious slaves (Parker: 3). Sugar’s commercial advantages include its highly addictive and therefore highly marketable nature and its rapid growth, planting and harvesting cycles. As Griffith Hughes stated in 1750, in *The natural history of Barbados*: “It generally grows to perfection in about fourteen months” (p. 245). Processing sugar produced skimmings, which were originally discarded. After rum was initially distilled from these skimmings, it was promoted for medicinal purposes. Hughes adds that it was good for preserving the bowels (p. 250).

(10) The Brazilian and Cuban contenders for the title of Rum’s birthplace in the Caribbean are still searching for the evidence that will prove their claims. None has been found yet that predates the documents that support the case of Barbados. The

names for the elixir are first documented in Barbados. Wayne Curtis in his book, *And a bottle of rum: a history of the New World in ten cocktails*, states that:

“The first documented appearances of both the words *kill-devil* and *rum* surfaced in Barbados. In 1652, a visitor to the island observed that “the chief fuddling they make in the island is Rumbullion, alias Kill-Divil, and this is made of sugar canes, ...” A 1658 deed for the sale of the Three Houses Plantation included in the sale ‘four large mastrick cisterns for liquor for rum’, which is the first known official appearance of the word *rum* in any of the islands. (Laws governing liquor had previously been passed by the Barbadian assembly, but these referred only to ‘this country’s spirits’.).

Barbados can also claim to be home to the oldest-known continuously produced rum – from the Mount Gay distillery” (p. 26).

(11) I lived in Barbados when Remy-Martin, the French makers of what is considered one of the best cognacs in the world, became a financial partner of Mount Gay. I had the opportunity to speak to Ms. Martin about what she perceived were the mutual benefits of the merger – financial stimulus for Mount Gay, and the prestige of adding a quality product to the Martin label. Rum has come full circle, from a moonshine lacking prestige to a spirit with the prestige of fine cognac.

(12) This prestige has come with a large price tag. In the Caribbean, the global sugar revolution that brought about the rum revolution, played a pivotal role in the emergence of modern capitalism. Taussig suggests that it was rum and not tea that ignited the colonists’ rebellion in the United States: “The significance of rum as a major cause of the Revolution lay in its complex effect on the economic, social and political life of the colonists. ... The old Molasses Act of 1733 and the new Molasses Act of 1763 served to crystallize the economic importance of the rum trade in the minds of the people” (Taussig, 1928: 69).

The sugar/rum revolutions brought about environmental problems on a grand scale – deforestation, water/air pollution, extinctions of plants and animals, destruction of ecological habitats and ecosystems. The avarice that these revolutions engendered condoned and financed slavery, violence, smuggling, and piratical barbarities. They speeded up the rise of mechanistic science and technologies that led to the perfection of the internal combustion engine, ushering in the current era of massive fossil fuel consumption. (13) These are the grim realities that still threaten our physical, moral, and social existence today.

On a more jovial note, let’s get back to the question of what Irish soul may have unknowingly and accidentally triggered this global pandemonium in Barbados. If perhaps it was done knowingly, what Pandora opened the box that let the spirits out? According to Ligon, there were three types of people on Barbados in the mid 17th century – masters, servants and slaves. The servants, of lesser value than the slaves

had worse lives (Ligon: 43). (14) The ill-lodged, hungry and thirsty scum and dregs of society could not have been very far from “the Scums, Dregs and excrementitious Parts [of the sugar-cane juice] which are separated from the finer and more essential parts” and which were later found to be “of some value, for from the same being fermented and distilled, is extracted a strong Spirit which they call Rumm” (Taussig: 4). This excerpt is from a 1684 letter by Thomas Tenison, an English ecclesiast, in Taussig’s book, *Rum, Romance & Rebellion* (1928). (15) Williams summarizes the Celtic origin argument best when he states:

“Without being too stereotypical, we can hypothesize that some thirsty and inventive Scot or Irishman landed, voluntarily or involuntarily, in Barbados in its early days. Any exiled Celt who had dealt with malt to make a mash for a still would not need to be an Einstein to make the connection with molasses, not least on an island like Barbados, where traditional cereal production was insufficient for food, let alone brewing. So the odds are high that it may well have been an aesthete Celt, desperate for a decent drink, who decided that all those spirits needed releasing from their distasteful, wet, and murky brown shroud.” (Williams, 2005: 42)

(16) Necessity being the mother of invention, I further conclude, with a twist, that the involuntary migrant, the Irish, had the greatest need, the greatest likelihood of being close to the ‘distasteful, wet, and murky brown shroud’, and the highest probability of making the first rumbullion. To bring a little joy into a most miserable existence, all he or she needed was a cauldron, a little fire, a bit of copper tubing and a jug.

She? Possibly an Irish woman? What Irishman would have kept it to himself that he invented the brew? In Cromwell’s times, one lived in constant fear of being accused of meddling with occult arts and spirits, of being a healer, or of dabbling in witchcraft. Distilling was only done by alchemists from the 12th to the 16th century and in the 17th century it still carried esoteric connotations (Barty-King & Massel: 8). (17) In the article, *The Irish-Feminine Touch*, on the website, *Celtic Malts*, Alex Kraaijeveld writes:

“Nowadays, whisky distilling is seen as a man's world, but that hasn't always been the case. Before it turned from a domestic activity into a commercial enterprise, distilling was very much a woman's job. We have many stories from Scotland featuring women involved in illicit distilling and smuggling. The surviving Campbeltown account books of Robert Armour, a copper smith, and John Colville, a maltster, clearly show that women were still very much involved in whisky distilling in the early 19th century, but as distilling became more and more a business, the involvement of women gradually decreased.” (p. 1)

It is unlikely that we will ever have a definitive answer to our questions concerning the origins of rum. Our waving fields of memory dim with time and dogma. The sign of the four – sugar, treacle, molasses, rum – leaves us with an open-ended story. (18) *The Sign of the four* is also the name of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's story in which Sherlock Holmes says: "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth" (Doyle, 1977: 111).

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THE REDLEGS OF BARBADOS: A TALE OF TRAUMA, ROOTLESSNESS, AND ERASURE

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In August of 1649, Oliver Cromwell invaded Ireland on behalf of the English Rump Parliament. The years that followed were some of the bloodiest and brutal in Irish history. The St. Lucian poet Kendel Hippolyte struggles with the bitter memories of more than one history in his poem *Night Vision*. One of these historical moments is the experience of the “Redlegs”, including the 50,000 Irish whom the British invader Cromwell rounded up in their own country and sold as indentured servants to plantation owners in the Caribbean, especially Barbados: “desperate indentured servants, scarecrow tobacco farmers/ who’d fled from hungering Ireland, the hardening boundaries of England,/ chewed to white trash in the grinding maws of sugar factories...” (Hippolyte: 18-20). The lives of these men, women and children were “trashed”, seemingly robbed of the chance to be resilient, too consumed by endless labor, hunger, sickness, punishment, a merciless tropical climate, unfair extensions of their indenture contracts for petty infractions, and, most importantly, a deep sense of belonging neither to the white plantocracy nor to the growing African slave population.

As a fourth generation descendant of Irish women from Mallow, Country Cork, in Ireland, I view Cromwell’s invasion and plundering of Ireland, followed by banishing shipload after shipload of Irish to Barbados (and other Caribbean destinations) as nothing short of perverse existential entrapment. There are aspects to this story, mostly slim hopes repeatedly dashed, that add to the remarkable cruelty, sustained degradation, and systematic historical erasure of the Redlegs.

The story is fragmented. The Public Records Office in Dublin burned down in 1922. In England, the English Public Records Office in Kew, together with the Shipping Registry, reveal the names of many of the ships that made the journey between Cork and Barbados. Also listed are the names of some of the ships’ captains. The passengers are numbered but not named. We know that some individuals went to Barbados and then on to Montserrat, or Antigua; some even went to Virginia. There are no firsthand accounts of the voyages themselves. We do know that since the Irish

indentures were cheaper than the African slaves, less care was taken of them en route to Barbados, and a very high percentage died, either on ship or just after arrival.

Many of the slaves were young people kidnapped from the streets, lured by the promise of a sweet or enticed to sign on by a slim-to-none chance of a better future; others were kidnapped as “vagrants” while they wandered through the streets looking for food. Still others were arrested for frivolous infractions, thrown in jail, and from jail shipped to Barbados. The indenture business was brisk, profitable, and pitiless.

During the English Civil War Cromwell was a Roundhead, a Parliamentarian who took a position in opposition to the Royalists, who were loyal to King Charles I. Cromwell’s greatest fear was that the Scots would rally behind young King Charles and, joined by the Irish, would invade England. He was haunted by the rebellion of 1641 when those “barbarous wretches” the Irish rose up against the English and Scottish planters who had seized their lands throughout the Elizabethan plantation period. The rebels were efficient and bloody. They killed indiscriminately, and managed to take back all but Dublin and Derry.

Cromwell, who loathed Catholics, was obsessed with the rumors that in this rebellion, the Catholic clergy – particularly the Jesuits – enflamed and motivated the rebels. Cromwell saw the Irish as far crueller than any “Turk or Infidel” (O’Callaghan: 13). The crown believed Cromwell’s accounts, however exaggerated. King Charles reacted with passion. At first, he considered leading the invasion of Ireland himself, to “chastise those wicked and detestable rebels” (p. 13), but Parliament put a stop to this insanity by declaring that it would consider such a move grounds for immediate abdication (p. 14). Instead, Cromwell moved ahead with impunity.

The dreams and ambitions of the House members included rooting out all the Irish and establishing new English plantations everywhere in Ireland, so that all of Ireland would become an extension of England. To accomplish this dream, the orders given were clear and complete: Cromwell was to “burn, destroy, and demolish” all the houses, all the towns where the rebels were hiding...and to “kill and destroy every man... able to bear arms” (p. 14). For Cromwell and the British, there was no doubt that the Irish papists were an inferior race, and treacherous. By contrast, The English supporting Cromwell and Charles saw themselves as high minded and honest, defending their own good cause. Convinced that Irish blood should drip from every English sword, and Irish lands should and must be devastated and confiscated, Cromwell stormed Drogheda and bragged in a letter to Council of State that of the approximately 3,000 in the town, barely 30 escaped; when those 30 were eventually captured, they were put into custody, ready to be sent to Barbados (p. 25). In another group of captured soldiers, the officers were killed, as was every tenth man; the rest were off to Barbados. For many years after the sack of Drogheda, thousands of men, women and children were shipped off to Barbados. Cromwell and his men cleaned up Ireland to make way for a better race.

Once the lured, signed-on, kidnapped, or sentenced indentured arrived in Barbados, an announcement for the sale of the Irish would appear in the local papers and would read something like this one from a Virginia newspaper: “Just arrived, the Ship XXX, with about a hundred healthy servants, men, women, and boys. The sale will commence on xxx” (Akamatsu, Chapter 5). The indentured labor was always referred to as servants as opposed to “slaves”. The years of contract service for indentured servants generally varied from 4 to 7, but the master of the plantation could and would extend this time for any infraction of his rules, however petty. The contracts were in this sense unilateral. Indentured women were chosen for breeding on the plantations as well. An African mate was assigned to them. Their offspring were light skinned. Children born to this parentage were automatically classified as slaves for life. Many indentured mothers, upon completing their servitude, requested to stay on the plantation in order to be near their children. Their wish was not always granted. If the plantation master saw these women as frail or sickly and a potential burden to the plantation, their request to continue working nearby their children would be denied. Other indentured Irish women were taken to the great house of the plantation, bathed and fed well in order to help them gain weight. Their grooming was for the pleasure of the master’s sons, or the master himself.

We ask why anyone would sign on for indentured servitude considering the unfair and unpredictable future it promised. The answer is simple. England’s legal deprivations and restrictions for the Irish in Ireland prevented them from employment, from owning or renting a house, from owning any horse worth more than 5 pounds, from all education, from all Catholic religious worship, from sending their children away to be educated. Such repression boiled down to one *freedom*: selling oneself into bondage in Barbados. It must have seemed like the only possible escape. The grim Barbadian adventure appeared preferable to terrible poverty, poor health, and no future for one’s children in Ireland. Edmund Burke, noted 18th century Irish-born author, statesman, philosopher, and member of the English Parliament, considered Cromwell’s laws crippling the Irish as “a machine well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people and the debasement of human nature itself...” The laws, Burke added, were “perverted ingenuity” (Akumatsu, Chapter 1).

In her historical novel, *Testimony of an Irish slave girl*, Kate McCafferty’s narrator Cot Daley – an indentured servant – recounts a life of painful times on the Barbados plantation she has known since she was kidnapped at the age of ten. Her insights open a window on to what I believe may be the centerpiece of the Redleg failure to thrive after emancipation. Cot calls them life’s mistakes; I would call them a slow descent into hopelessness, nihilism: “Further I strayed, straining to woo and coddle those unsound, ungenerous beings that held my young life in their hands. [Cot refers here to the plantation owners who bought her off the indenture block.] The Captain. Mistress and Henry Plackler. I stumbled from false hope to numbness. And suddenly, with Big

Dinah, a woman who would not be a mother to me, I arrived, a creature surrounded by a forest full of hate” (McCafferty: 92). Big Dinah, a leader in the African slave community on the same plantation, at first protects little Cot from punishment, nursing slight hope in Cot that she will be mothered. Dinah, however, does not countenance any further intimacy, and coldly rejects the young Irish orphan. Cot tells us why: Dinah “sees the thing...creeping on me” (p. 99), that thing she calls “hatred” (p. 99).

For Cot thereafter, nothing but her own story can be cherished or trusted. She and the other Redlegs remain unlovable because they cannot hide that something creeping on their burnt white skin called hatred. Decade after decade, one century upon the next, traces of that hatred turn inward, manifesting at once insecurity and self-loathing. Cot’s significant mark of resiliency – demonstrated even as an old and infirm “hag” (p. 73) – is her astute insistence upon intertwining her life story along with her testimony to the Governor regarding the Barbadian slave rebellion in ’75 (her husband Quaco Quashey was an African slave). She also testifies regarding the conspiracy plot of 1692, but sketches (again with deliberate, lengthy tangents) her own degrading and painful experiences as an indentured Redleg. Not only does her personal story eventually dominate her testimony, but also, her vivid memories of widespread abuse and injustice work to build a case for the rebellion.

Presenting a contrast to Cot’s feisty resilience are some Redlegs today clustered in Barbados’ rural parish of St. John. Several still look remarkably Celtic, fair-haired and freckled, but after three hundred years of in-breeding, many suffer from blindness or hemophilia. Although their accent has traces of the nasal twang associated with the lands near Galway, very few can tell you anything about their past, blaming their parents and grandparents for this cultural amnesia. Unlike Cot, they cannot tell their story and insert themselves into history in this important way. Take Richard Bailey, a Redleg interviewed three years ago by the *Daily Mirror*, a Barbadian newspaper, who observes: “In years gone by, I never really thought about it [my Irish past]. They [his ancestors] never really said where we came from.... [Since they are no longer alive] we can’t ask no more” (Kelleher).

Bailey also sees himself as dismissed by the blacks of the island: he cannot talk about being an outcast from Ireland, but he can and indeed does talk about times when he is an outcast in Barbados: “The first thing they say is about your skin. They try and keep you down. You still have a lot of racism here. They [the blacks] talk about the slavery days, saying we were the boys that caused them to be slaves” (Kelleher).

Although the Redlegs have been intermarrying with the Afro-Caribbean communities for decades, one can still spot these light skinned (phenotypically white) men and women walking barefooted up the country roads of St. John, “hauling coconuts”. Their failure to thrive began with Cromwell’s “perverted ingenuity” of legal and social repression. Richard Bailey’s disinterest in his past and his marked listlessness suggests the remnants of Cot’s hatred and anger brewing for well over three hundred

years, an inward-turning attitude of defeat. Bailey's story notwithstanding, many historians insist that Cromwell's "Final Solution" was not the total cultural failure that he would have wished. The apathetic and semi-isolated Richard Baileys represent only one segment of the remaining Redlegs; many others over the decades have sought education and prospered as professionals and entrepreneurs.

Epilogue

The toxic narrative of the Redlegs from Ireland who were tossed from their homes and their shores onto Caribbean plantations (and from there, many to other islands or as far north as Virginia) remains a story without an ending. Its ending, and for that matter, its middle passages, have been lost, submerged. The apparent erasure of the Irish Redlegs' story is indeed part of its enduring tragedy.

The St. Lucian poet Hippolyte asks about the Redlegs' place in history as well, after viewing them as the "hungering Irish...desperate...chewed to white trash" by the grinding machines of the plantocracy. Ground down and fragmented, they never again as a people came together. In a case of gross generalization, philosopher and sociologist Franz Fanon codifies the racist and classist position of many whites and blacks in Caribbean island cultures when he observes that "you are rich because you are white and you are white because you are rich" (Fanon: 30). Such a viewpoint makes it even more difficult, if not impossible, to locate the Redlegs in Caribbean social structures. Instead, they are rendered invisible in Fanon's conceptual universe. So now sociologists join historians in ignoring these people, erasing their footprints and silencing their Gaelic voices. Except for scant and incidental blips in the historical record, they have come and gone.

It is my belief that the Redlegs merit more research and more intellectual curiosity, befitting the Irish resilience that was starved and flogged out of their character. Their stories are less than half told, but will roll in with the smallest waves that reach our Caribbean shores.

I will end with a poem about the Redleg stories:

Dawn after dawn
I walk the shore
but cannot understand
the language at my feet,
polyglot whispers
rising and falling silent,
waiting for response,
and instead,
another wave,
and the next,

clips of monologue
breathed between silences;
but what tongue?

Dawn after dawn
I wet my feet
and listen.
The yellowed, rattling palms
interfere
with their morning gossip;
plunging almonds
punctuate sentences that are
still unfinished.

Dawn upon dawn
I hear but
do not understand,
until today's storm:
I hear a Gaelic throttle
and curve of tongue,
urgent it is,
and drowning.

Dawn after dawn
these messages have
rolled in from Cork,
no bottles,
borne, too, on the wake
of Cromwell's ships
out of the Cork Harbor--
Cromwell's servant ships--
listing dangerously,
exhausted ships
pitching toward
Barbadian harbors,
perhaps then north.
Watery voices,
parched,
their accent our enigma,

their story,
dawn and after,
on our breath.

The story of the Redlegs is, and remains, unfinished.

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TRACES OF IRISH LINGUISTIC HERITAGE IN THE CARIBBEAN: THE DECLARATIVE HIGH RISE

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Hiberno English (HE), spoken by indentured servants and political prisoners deported from Ireland in the 17th century, was a formative input variety in the Anglophone Caribbean. However, it has been largely ignored in linguistic studies as a result of approaches that highlight the predominantly lexical influence of prestigious varieties of English or focus on African substrates exclusively. This article includes a brief discussion of some preliminary results obtained from a pilot study designed to evaluate the hypothesis that Irish settlers in the early colonial Caribbean had an impact on the intonation patterns of settler populations that is still evident today in the form of the declarative high rise.

The over-simplification that all varieties of English were prestigious in dichotomy with West African languages fails to acknowledge the stigmatized varieties of people from low socio-economic backgrounds who were deported to work in the early colonial system, living in outcast communities, or escaping political hegemony in what are today the British Isles. Irish deportees and indentured workers were commonly assigned to work gangs alongside slaves from West Africa and potentially had a significant influence on the English varieties, as well as on the pidgins and creole languages that developed through this contact situation. Sutcliffe (2003) suggests that speakers of Irish (and other Celtic languages) left intonation patterns as lingering substratum features, and that Caribbean varieties of English assign tone based on a re-interpretation of the stress and intonation patterns of these features. He asserts “even the Bajan or Guyanese Rise that we have commented on as so typical may well be modeled on the so called Celtic rise” (2003: 293). This paper aims to sketch the design and preliminary results of a pilot study designed to validate Sutcliffe’s claim by presenting comparative data on the final declarative intonation patterns in HE and six Caribbean varieties of English.

Numerous studies on postcolonial English varieties seek to find the origins of regional variation in dialects of the British Isles that were transported overseas (e.g. Carver, 1987; Gordon & Trudgill, 2004; Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2006). Research into varieties of English in the United States looks to historical migration patterns from the

Ulster region, and therefore the influence of Scotch-Irish English rather than HE (Kurath, 1928; Montgomery, 2004). Of the scholars who focus on Irish influence Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2004) study the linguistic impact of Irish settlers in isolated coastal regions that were populated in the 17th and 18th centuries, and Rickford (1986) draws attention to the potential influence of HE in New World Black English and raises the issue of potential Caribbean transference.

Research acknowledges the importance of Irish populations during the formative stages of koineization in Australasia and Canada. Prentis (2010) examines how the penal colonies and settlements of the late 19th century played a role in the formation of regional identity, educational reform, and religious practice in Australia and New Zealand; and Gordon et al. (2004) explore the significance that this had on language contact and the internal developments that led to immigrant koines in the region. Chambers explains the influence that Irish settlers in Canada had in the development of rising intonation patterns (1973), but ultimately concludes that more unified and socially prestigious varieties of English were influential in the formation of a national British-influenced sociolect (2004). Mannion (2001) presents research on Irish immigration and settlement in Newfoundland during the late 17th and early 18th century that comprised a formative phase in regional dialect formation; and Clarke (2004) connects this explicitly to language developments in isolated communities on Fogo Island and the Avalon Peninsula.

214 Few studies consider the potential impact of HE on the genesis of varieties of English and creole languages in the Caribbean. Early publications are instead dismissive of Irish influence, e.g. Wells's research into pronunciation patterns in Montserrat that makes the rejection of HE influence explicit in the title: 'The brogue that isn't' (1980). However, more recent publications have advocated for traces of contact. Rickford suggests that habitual aspect markers in New World Black English derive from HE and African language contact in colonial America and the Caribbean (1986). Harris similarly connects habitual aspect markers in Atlantic Englishes to Irish settler populations (1986) and traces the origins of the back rounded pronunciation of Standard English /u/ in the varieties of English spoken by African descended people in the Americas to Irish speech patterns (1990, 1996). Hickey explores the development and diffusion of Irish English (2004a) and explicitly cites this in his discussion of English dialect input to the Caribbean (2004b). There are few studies that deal explicitly with lexical items in Caribbean usage that may have been transferred from Irish settler populations, but isolated evidence of individual lexemes suggest that further studies are warranted. For example, Allsopp (2003) and Cassidy and Le Page (2002) cite lexemes with Irish etymology in general Caribbean usage and Jamaican Creole, and Holm (1981) identifies lexemes that derive from Ireland in Miskito Coast Creole.

As a result of the English colonies in Munster (established in the late 1580s) and Ulster (established in 1603), there were large numbers of displaced Irish who were problematic for the English settlers and colonial administration alike. In 1623 Irish journalist and political commentator Bouchier claimed that the best way to stop the Irish from becoming a threat was to put them to work in Virginia or “the newly discovered lands in the West” (Akenson, 1997: 20). Connolly states, “before the mid 18th century most Irish offenders were not punished by imprisonment, [instead] capital and corporal punishment, fines, and transportation were widely employed” (2002: 488). Bouchier envisioned a way to solve a local problem that would also address an increasing overseas demand for labor. Before the taxation of shipping and threats of maritime predation drove up prices on servant imports and favored slavery as the most economic way to meet workforce demands, “the pre-sugar economy was based almost totally upon the employment of white indentured labour” (Beckles & Downes, 2000: 239). Thus, in the years between 1630 and 1700, the Caribbean received 59 percent of all migrants from the present British Isles (Gemery, 1986: 40), many of whom were Irish.

In 1649 Cromwell began a military campaign in Ireland that resulted in the mass suppression, execution and transportation of Catholics (Connolly, 2002: 135). In 1649, after the Battle of Drogheda, Cromwell wrote, “the Enemy were about 3,000... They made a stout resistance... [but those who] escaped with their lives... are in safe custody for the Barbados” (Beckles, 2000: 228). In addition to the clergy and military captives that Cromwell sent to the Caribbean, in 1655 he ordered that “all English, Scots and Irish” prisoners in Dorchester jail be “forthwith sent to Barbados” (Beckles, 2000: 228), thus adding vagrants, common criminals and the poor to the list of deportees.

Cromwell’s regime also perpetuated widespread economic hardship and endorsed religious persecution that promoted voluntary emigration. Connolly suggests that the majority of those who emigrated from Ireland did so willingly to improve life chances as part of a larger process of migration in Western Europe (2002). There was no organized system of poor relief in Ireland until the 19th century, and after years of severe poverty many people were attracted by indenture and the promise of land and a lump sum of money upon completion (that in reality, rarely came to fruition). Indenture was widely promoted well into the 18th century by wealthy landowning classes who complained about what they perceived to be the endemic lack of industry among Irish laborers. Although there are no official statistics of indentured arrivals in the Caribbean before 1737, Bridenbaugh and Bridenbaugh claim, “In the English West Indies in 1650, the Irish settlers constituted more than half of the entire population” (1972: 17). And, as late as the period between 1737 and 1743, the average number of indentured servants transported from Ireland, including both deportees and voluntary emigrants, was equal to 227 per year (Connolly, 2002: 580).

Beckles and Downes cite multiple sources to support their claim that until 1670, white indentured servants were the majority workforce in the English Caribbean. They present data that show a total of 13,676 servants arriving in the Caribbean between 1634 and 1702 (2000: 242,6-7); yet this is likely to be an extremely conservative estimate given the fragmentary nature of the data. One clear trend in the population demographics of the early settler workforce was the fact that the Irish were the single largest ethnic group of white servants. In fact, the later colonies took so many Irish indentured servants from Barbados that Akenson describes them as “Anglo-Celtic” settlements (1997: 20).

Irish immigrants were functional as workers, and were also used to bolster the numbers of white settlers when the threat of revolt from the increasing population of African slaves began to concern landowners in the later part of the 17th century. For example, in 1675, in an effort to curb the growing black population, a proclamation from the Governor and Council of Jamaica stipulated, “all planters (shall) take care to provide themselves with one white servant for every ten negroes on their plantation” (Le Page, 1960: 18). Thus, Irish indentured servants were moved around the English colonial territories. Irish men were also highly sought after to bolster military forces. In 1656 settlers bound for Nevis arrived with Irish soldiers, and in the same year, a regiment came from Knockfergus, Ireland. In 1667 Willoughby, appointed governor of English colonies in the Caribbean, stated, “Barbados hath beene soe magnified for her strength, I find not above 4,000 fighting men upon the Place; here are 2,000 Irish.” (Le Page, 1960: 13).

Before the Caribbean colonies made the complete transition to slave labor in the early 18th century, work gangs were routinely made up of racially mixed groups of indentured servants and slaves. During this time Beckles and Downes claim, “Both slave and servant worked in gangs doing the same work for the same hours...driven by the same overseers” (2000: 246). The extensive early contact between populations of Irish indentured servants and African slaves in work gangs has relevance in terms of language contact. In 1667, an unidentified writer from Barbados reports, “there being so many white ‘servants’ in the island, and poor whites who worked in the fields, and so many negroes having become tradesmen, now there are many thousands of slaves that speak English” (cited in Le Page, 1960: 18). This clearly suggests that West African slaves were learning English through contact with the servants. But there is another possibility. Connolly observes, “Irish remained the language of the majority of Irishmen and women until c.1745” (2001: 315). Given that many of the deportees were native Irish and would have therefore potentially been monolingual Irish Celtic speakers, Todd suggests that these Irish servants could well have learned English from West Africans who had been exposed to it before transportation, and that the features of their Celtic mother tongue may have been a substrate influence in the language contact situation (Todd, personal communication, January 20, 2012).

Much of the data that informs the design of the proposed study regarding Irish influence in the Caribbean has been drawn from linguistic scholarship that is not explicitly about HE, but includes reference to its influence in original data or discussion. Included in this group is Sutcliffe's (2003) 'Eastern Caribbean suprasegmental systems: A comparative view with particular reference to Barbadian, Trinidadian, and Guyanese'. In this paper Sutcliffe suggests that Caribbean intonation patterns may derive from the Celtic rise that was transmitted to the Caribbean when the first African slaves worked alongside speakers of marginalized varieties of English. This brief unsupported reference to the Celtic rise motivated the proposed comparative research into the intonation patterns of Caribbean Englishes and HE regarding the declarative high rise feature.

Subrez (2006) connects the high rise feature to the creole language spoken in St. Croix and suggests that it may be a region-wide phenomenon, which motivated the selection of six speech samples from across the region, including the Greater Antilles (Jamaica and Puerto Rico), the Lesser Antilles (St. Croix, St. Lucia, Trinidad, and Martinique), and one associated variety of the Atlantic (Bermuda). The audio data of the six varieties has been sourced from recordings documented in the database of the *International Dialects of English Archive (IDEA)* and posted on the public access website *You Tube*. These recordings are graphically represented using Pratt software and its integrated visible pitch contour instrument to determine and compare patterns of intonation. The initial data collected and analyzed thus far support Sutcliffe's claim that intonation patterns in Caribbean varieties of English are potentially modeled on the Celtic rise and also validates

rez's (2006) claim that it may be a region-wide phenomenon. However, the restricted scope of the data in this study permits no definitive conclusions as of yet. The next stage of research therefore requires the analysis of a wider variety of utterance types, the inclusion of regional creole languages in the corpus and a quantitative analysis of frequency in individual speech.

In terms of a conceptual approach to contact linguistics in the Caribbean and Atlantic regions, the findings of this pilot study validate the inclusion of stigmatized varieties of English and regional variation in the input data. Specifically, scholars are advised to recognize the potential of Irish Celtic substrate influence in Caribbean varieties of English and creole languages that may have been directly in contact, or transferred through Irish varieties of English, and to consider how these features may have been spread among the colonial territories of the English by a highly mobile population.

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DIFFUSION VS. INDEPENDENT EMERGENCE OF THE *DO BE* HABITUAL: EXPLORING LINGUISTIC CONNECTIONS BETWEEN IRELAND AND THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

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Introduction

Hiberno-English (HE) spoken in Ireland is generally regarded as a local English dialect of the British Isles, although it should be remembered that HE would not be present if the imported or imposed English language had not been in contact with the native Irish language. This dual status, as an English dialect and as a contact language, makes HE an interesting subject not only in English studies but also in contact linguistics, especially in relation to Creole studies. An intriguing area of investigation lies in the continuum from the varieties labeled as English-lexifier creoles and those regarded as English dialects. This article explores the possibility of a continuum between Creoles and an English dialect via a grammatical form found in both Eastern Caribbean Creoles and HE, namely the *do be* habitual; a form found in traditional varieties of Southwest Hiberno-English (SwHE) (e.g. *We do be praying for you.* ‘We usually pray for you.’).

The article takes into consideration that a significant number of Irish people were involved in the early stages of the formation of Caribbean varieties of English and English-lexifier creoles in the seventeenth century. However, I argue that this does not automatically validate a ‘HE-diffusion-to-the-Caribbean’ hypothesis. Instead, available evidence concerning the habitual *do be* form in SwHE suggests that the use of *do (be)* in association with the habitual meaning in English-oriented varieties in the Caribbean emerged independently of HE in Ireland. To assess the adequacy of this

argument, I investigate the language-historical background of Ireland and contact-induced grammatical formation. To begin, the habitual *do be* form in SwHE is illustrated. Then, Caribbean constructions with similar form-function pairings are considered; followed by a consideration of the resemblance in the grammatical realisation of the habitual aspect between HE and Caribbean Englishes. The Irish context is finally examined; this focuses on language shift from Irish to English and the emergence of *do be* in Southwest Ireland. All of these investigative and analytical strands are woven together to formulate a hypothesis of contact-induced grammatical formation in Ireland and the Eastern Caribbean.

The *do be* form in Southwest Hiberno-English

The *do be* habitual is a well-known feature of traditional varieties of SwHE, although the use of *do be* seems to be moving into disuse today. This disuse seems to be caused by speakers' awareness of standard norms. In the questionnaire I administered in order to investigate sociolinguistic awareness of certain morphosyntactic forms and lexical items (11 feature-based categories, 26 sentential examples, N=64), including salient features of HE, the examples of the *do be* group, *I do be taking three plates from the cupboard (do be V-ing)* and *She does be lovely with her long hair (does be AdjP)*, were exceedingly marked in the indexes of non-use and bad grammar (Shimada, 2010). It has been confirmed, however, that the majority of the SwHE speakers, both urban and rural, including the younger generations, know the habitual meaning of the *do be* form.

This section illustrates usages of the *do be* form by using play scripts written by John B. Keane (1928-2002), a playwright from Listowel, County Kerry¹. Through the examination of the *do be* form, as used in Keane's play scripts and letters written from the 1950s to the 1970s, it has become obvious that there are two discrete usages of *do*

¹ The following is a list of Keane's works cited in this paper, headed with their abbreviations: SIV *Sive* (1959), SRG *Sharon's Grave* (1960), MYM *Many Young Men of Twenty* (1961), FLD *The Field* (1966), RES *The Rain at the End of Summer* (1968), LHF *Letters of a Love-Hungry Farmer* (1974) and CHT *The Chastitute* (1981). The spellings used in the citations are those used in Keane's plays.

be in Keane's writing: *do be*₁ which expresses basic habituality and *do be*₂ which expresses inherent property.

(1)-(5) are examples of *do be*₁. The most dominant pattern of *do be* appears in *do be* V-ing, as in (1) and (2).

(1) We *do be praying* for you in our prayers, whenever we get the notion to kneel.
[SIV 21]

‘We usually pray for you in our prayers, ...’

(2) Why *do you be* always *singin* that oul song? [MYM 1]

‘Why *do you always sing* that old song?’

There are other forms, including *do be* AdjP in (3), *do be* AdvP in (4) and (5). (5) is also an example of negation.

(3) Sure, I see the girls going to chapel every Sunday. They *do be lovely* with their long hair jumping up and down on their shoulders... [SRG 27]

‘They are (always) lovely with their long hair jumping up....’

(4) I *do be* often at my wits’ end wondering at the ways of women. [LHF 237]

‘I am often at my wits’ end.’

(5) I’m afraid I *don’t be* in the village very often. [FLD 9]

‘I am not in the village very often.’

Besides this *do be*₁, there are a significant number of examples where the *do be* form appears in a predicate phrase, expressing the inherent property of the object. This *do be*₂ ‘inherent property’ refers to a stated quality that belongs to the object by nature.

(6) Will you open it or you'll drive me to Gleann na nGealt where your own equals *do be*. [SIV 39]

‘Gleann na nGealt where your own equals are (Gleann na nGealt is known to be the place where your own equals are)’

(7) 'Tis a wonder you took your backside from the table where people *do be eating*. [SIV 3]

‘the table where people eat (Table is the place where people eat)’

(8) D’you see th’ oul’ cock salmon that *do be hidin’* in the deep hole of the river. [SIV 25]

‘the old cock salmon that hides in the deep hole of the river (The old cock salmon is known to hide in the deep hole of the river.)’

(9) Have you no knowledge of *the way* a woman *do be* the night before? [SIV 38]

‘Do you know what a woman is like the night before? (There is a way a woman would be the night before marriage.)’

*Do be*₂ in SwHE occurs in relative clauses, often following a noun phrase + *where*, *the way* (including *how*). This kind of clause, appended to a head NP, defines an inherent property, offering a complementation of the antecedent.

Habitual realisation as a link

As illustrated in (1)-(9), habituality is explicitly decoded in the grammatical form of *do be V-ing* in SwHE. Other habitual forms such as *be~bes/do+V* are reported in other varieties of HE (e.g. Henry, 1957 for Roscommon; Harris, 1986 for Northern Ireland, including Belfast). The habitual use of *be* can be found in northern varieties of HE, but not in southern varieties of HE, including SwHE. It is interesting to note that this north-south discrepancy appears to be preserved on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. For example, in African American English, *be* not *do* is used to indicate

‘habitual meaning (i.e., an event occurs over and over)’ (Green, 2002: 50). Comparing varieties of HE with the varietal forms in Caribbean Englishes / English-lexifier Creoles and African American English spoken in the United States may help investigate how English-derived varieties in these areas have been formed.

This article focuses on the *do be* form because this is the only form attested by present speakers of SwHE. In the present varieties of SwHE, the *do+V* constituent tends to be construed as emphatic with the *DO* accented. (10) illustrates the judgement of the consultants for this study, who are middle-aged to senior native-speakers of SwHE in County Kerry.

- (10) a. We *do be praying* in our prayers (whenever we get the notion to kneel). [= (1)]
 b.*We *be praying* for you in our prayers (whenever....). [attested]
 c.*We *do pray* for you in our prayers (whenever). [attested]

Intended meaning: ‘We usually/always pray for you in our prayers, whenever...’

Habitual *do be*: Diffusion of Hiberno-English or not?

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The habitual marking in HE has been examined with reference to varieties of English in the Americas, because of a striking resemblance between them: both HE and some varieties of so-called New World English express the habitual aspect through a similar grammatical form. In this work, I follow Rickford who employs the term New World Black English (NWBE) to describe the ‘West Atlantic English-based creoles and American Vernacular Black English’ (Rickford, 1986: 246) . My study highlights Eastern Caribbean varieties, including English-lexifier creoles and dialects of English in the Caribbean.

The following are the examples given by Williams (2003), who describes a variety of Anguillan English spoken in Island Harbour.

From noon ’til three o’clock, it [də bi] hot. (ibid: 114)

They [dʌ zbi] big and big. (ibid: 115)

February, March corn do be comin’. (ibid: 115)²

² This example is described by Williams as a form of the ‘progressive aspect’, rather than ‘habitual/

It seems important to note that *do be* is one of the variations in this variety of Caribbean English. William notes other forms of the ‘habitual/continuative aspect’.

Every night she [dʌ z] come for you. (ibid: 114)

Those rooms [də] come hot. (ibid: 114)

The use of *does be* can be found in another variety. Reaser (2010: 166), notes that *does be V-ing* occurs in the ‘Basilect’ of Bahamian English, as in *We does be reading play every time*. In Winford’s (2000) description of Bajan which is spoken in Barbados, *does* is used to express the category of Present Habitual: ‘*Does* is invariant with all subjects, and always conveys the sense of Present Habitual’; ‘*Does* is used with all verbs, including *be*.’ (ibid: 231).

These similarities in the realisation of the habitual aspect have triggered a lively discussion among linguists. One of the most widely held views is that the use of (*do/does*) *be* diffused from HE to NWBE. Traugott (1972: 191-192), noting the resemblance of ‘uninflected *be*’ in ‘Black English’ to ‘Northern English and Scottish forms’, considers the flow of the population of the Ulster-Scots who migrated to the United States to be one of the contributing factors to the emergence of this construction. Bailey (1982), in his short article, suggests the likely possibility that Irish English was the source of vernacular black English [VBE] *be*, based upon his assumption that the use of *be* ‘first appeared in an area where fifty thousand Irishmen were resident’ and that ‘*be* could have come into Caribbean Creole from Irish English before the slaves were brought to the states’ (ibid: 238).

Rickford (1986) rejects Bailey’s hypothesis that *be* was diffused from HE to NWBE and proposes the major alternative hypothesis about the emergence of *be*. Rickford points out the flaws in Bailey’s argument by noting that ‘*be* (by itself) is not used as a habitual marker in any of the Caribbean varieties of NWBE’ and that Bailey ‘does not consider the role of habitual *do* in HE’ (ibid: 261). According to Rickford’s ‘single best hypothesis’, VBE *be* emerged as a habitual marker as part of a decreolisation

process which yielded the creole *does (be)* form. He explains the emergence of VBE *be* in the light of the processes of pidginisation, creolisation, and decreolisation accompanying the acquisition of English by African and Afro-American populations in the New World.

Harris (1986), when considering the same grammatical feature and the resemblance between HE and NWBE, pays particular attention to superstratal effects. He argues that the common superstratal source shared by both HE and NWBE consists of nonstandard varieties of British English. Harris' fundamental suggestion, while he acknowledges the role of a substratal contribution, is that the superstrate model for Blacks in the New World employs habitual forms. In Harris' theory, the use of habitual markers spread from British vernaculars into early HE; this theory therefore complements the British-origins hypothesis (see below for a detailed examination of his theory on HE).

Winford (2000) focuses on the emergence of the habitual forms in Bajan. His study concerns the sources of habitual *does*, noting HE input playing a role in the selection of this auxiliary. He describes Bajan as an intermediate creole variety, which developed in intense contact between speakers of the substrate and superstrate languages in seventeenth and eighteenth century Barbados. Winford points out the weakness of the decreolization hypothesis and suggests that a substrate influence from West Africa has resulted in the structural reanalysis and modification of a mainly southwestern English input. Regarding the socio-historical context of Barbados, Winford's work contends that the vast majority of British settlers to Barbados in the seventeenth century were speakers of regional dialects of English, Bristol was the major port for shipment, and many Irish had migrated to the midland and southwestern areas of England in the seventeenth century and earlier (ibid: 225); however, his assertion that 'early HE was itself a significant part of the input to the formation of mainstream Bajan' (ibid: 233) may leave room for further examination of an Irish perspective.

From Ireland to the Atlantic

Rickford (1986) is informative and thorough in his research into the demographic aspects of settlement patterns in the colonial Atlantic during the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. This helps us in our efforts to give further consideration to the Irish impact on the formation of NWBE, including ‘when’ and ‘how’ this impact took effect. Rickford’s study largely addresses the ‘when’ question, namely when Irish populations arrived in the New World. He states that ‘opportunities for social contact and linguistic diffusion between Irish and African populations in British colonies were most favorable in the seventeenth century, when African slaves and native Irish servants – who would have been speakers of southern HE – worked side by side on Caribbean and American plantations’ (ibid: 259). In the eighteenth century, most Irish immigrants that came to America were Scots Irish, who would have spoken a northern (Ulster Scots) variety of HE. In the nineteenth century, Irish immigrants to America were mainly from southern provinces of Ireland, including the Cork and Kerry counties (Wakin, 2002).

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In earlier data, it is not easy to estimate how many ‘whites’ or ‘English’, which is how the immigrants were labelled in most of the demographic records, were actually from Ireland, but certainly the proportion of Irish would not have been small (Bailey, 1982; Baker, 2000; Dunn, 1972). Many Irish who had migrated to England in the seventeenth century and earlier were part of the indentured population transported to Barbados and elsewhere (Winford, 2000). Thousands of Irish servants and indentured workers were sent to Barbados and Montserrat in the seventeenth century (Dunn, 1972; Rickford, 1986). Baker (2000: 55) highlights that ‘a large population of the “English” were in fact Irish bonded servants, and that Gaelic would have been the first language of some and perhaps many of the latter.’

There was intimate and sustained contact between peoples of African, Indigenous and European descent (including speakers of Celtic languages and Celtic influenced varieties of English) in the renegade and pirate communities of the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas from the sixteenth century onwards (Faraclas, 2012). Nevertheless, it is highly noteworthy that St. Kitts from the 1620s is the first place in

the New World where ‘English’ migrant settlers (many of whom were Scots-Irish or Irish) arrived, and that it was from St. Kitts that much of the settlement of the rest of the Caribbean took place (Baker, 2000; 2012). According to Baker (2000), two groups travelled from St. Kitts to Barbados between 1627 and 1629, forming about one third of the population on their arrival. ‘Islands settled directly from English St. Kitts include Nevis in 1628 and both Montserrat and Antigua in 1632 (ibid: 56).’ Baker further notes that ‘English St. Kitts also contributed subsequently to the settlement of Surinam, Jamaica and what was to become the Gullah-speaking area of the USA (2000: 56).’

Thus, Irish people would have constituted an important constituency among the ‘English’ settlers involved in the colonization of the Eastern Caribbean and beyond. In the Western Caribbean, especially Jamaica, colonists ‘directly from the British Isles (above all from Scotland and Ireland)’ arrived around 1730, along with those from the eastern British Caribbean (Bartens & Farquharson, 2012: 171). Williams (2003), whose examples were discussed above, highlights references made to a group called the ‘Wild Irish’ coming to Anguilla from the French portion of St. Kitts, and furthermore notes that the present-day Harrigans of the Anguillan village of Island Harbour are in part descended from these ‘Wild Irish’. It is noteworthy that ‘although this group is partly Irish in ethnicity, they are typically classified as “brown-skinned” in the local color classification scheme’ and this may be further evidence of cohabitation and other forms of contact between Irish servants and African slaves in the colonial Caribbean (ibid: 119).

The Irish Context

This section closely examines the language-historical background of Ireland in general and the formation of the *do be* habitual in SwHE in particular. The purpose here is to consider (i) the linguistic background of the Irish who were sent to the Eastern Caribbean in the seventeenth century and (ii) how *do be* was established as a habitual marker in SwHE through contact-induced grammatical formation.

Language shift from Irish to English

English gradually spread as an L1 in Ireland largely at the expense of the Irish language, mostly through contacts with other Irish people who had already acquired an English vernacular. This dissemination of English proceeded from east to west, from urban to rural areas, and from the Cromwellian era in the seventeenth century to the post-Famine period in the second-half of the nineteenth century. The crucial factors favoring this language shift which eventually occurred over the whole of Ireland were plantations and settlements by the English in the seventeenth century (Hindley, 1990; Filppula, 1999; Todd, 1999; Hickey, 2004). English settlements in the southwest of Ireland developed later and were less influential than those in the north. As a result, English did not spread as substantially in this area as it did in the north. Ó Cuíve (1951: 14) states that ‘with the exception of a small number in parts of Leinster and in certain urban areas, the people of Ireland were Irish-speaking and Irish-speaking only’ by the end of the sixteenth century. Thus, even at the end of that century, Irish was still in common use, despite centuries of English colonial efforts to extend the use of the English language (Ó Cuíve, 1986: 374).

The main superstratal source for the initial emergence of SwHE is thus the English vernaculars of the seventeenth century, although it is important to note that the majority of Irish monoglots became bilingual through contact and interaction with other Irish people who had already acquired English, most likely archaic or basilectal HE. According to Bliss (1972: 63), the English of the mid-seventeenth century was ‘acquired, gradually and with difficulty, by speakers of Irish; and in the process of their acquisition of it they modified it, both in pronunciation and in syntax, towards conformity with their own linguistic habits’. There were of course different processes unfolding at the same time, in different areas and in different contact situations, fostering language shift and the formation of HE. If we see this phenomenon from a micro-perspective – that is, focusing on a speech community in one particular area but not on the whole country of Ireland – HE has been shaped in a somewhat similar way as other contact languages. Language shift in many individual communities was completed over three generations (or approximately one hundred years) while the

propagation of the English language over the whole of Ireland has taken a much longer time.

In southwest Ireland, the shift started at a comparatively late date, understood to be around the mid to late nineteenth century. In this area as well, however, the earlier English-lexifier varieties emerged in most cases as the result of natural or untutored second language acquisition. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the only schooling available for the population was obtained from ‘hedge’ schools (Edwards, 1981: 241), where local masters were paid a small sum by parents and Irish was likely to be used (Ó Cuíve, 1986: 380-381). The illiteracy figures in the census reveal the scarcity of schooling in the mid nineteenth century in Ireland as a whole: 53% in 1841 (70% in County Kerry and 66% in County Cork), 47% in 1851, then decreasing to 18% in 1891 (Edwards, 1981: 242-243). Odlin (1997), using demographic data, suggests that seasonal migration in this century was a very important factor in the adoption of English. Odlin (*ibid*: 12) states that ‘most workers from Ulster went to Scotland, whereas the southwestern counties of Kerry, Cork and Limerick sent few migrants at all to Britain – most workers from these areas sought work in more prosperous Irish counties such as Wexford’.

The shift from Irish to English was accelerated in the nineteenth century by the establishment of the National Education System in 1831 and the Great Famine in the late 1840s. Ó Cuíve (1986: 387), analysing census data on the distribution of Irish speakers among those born between 1750 and 1800, notes that ‘by 1851 the decline which had begun over two centuries earlier was gaining momentum and that Irish was being discarded rapidly’. This is also supported by FitzGerald (2004), who uses the census data classified by age groups to establish approximate minimum levels of Irish-speaking in successive generations of young people. According to FitzGerald (*ibid*: 125), Irish survived in the later eighteenth century to some degree amongst the young in much the greater part of Ireland, since the 1881 census indicates that 41% of the population aged 70-79 in that year had been Irish-speaking in their youth (77% in Munster, the southern province). His study confirms that Irish remained vigorously spoken in South Cork and North Kerry in 1841 and was more prominent in southeast

and southwest Cork and Kerry from Tralee southwards (ibid: 128). Nevertheless, many of the Irish-speaking population may have already been bilingual; evidence for this could be found in the data which illustrate that ‘Irish and English’ speakers outnumber by four times ‘Irish only’ speakers in 1851 (ibid: 140). It is fair to assume that in the southwest of Ireland, namely Counties Cork and Kerry, Irish had not succumbed to English before the Famine, but Irish was not inherited by most of the generation of speakers who were born in the post-Famine period.

The formation of *do be* in Southwest Ireland

It is generally acknowledged that the use of *do (be)* for expressing habitual meaning does not appear in Ireland until after 1700, although dating of its emergence is difficult (Bliss, 1979; Kallen, 1986; Filppula, 1999).³ According to Filppula (1999: 138), the *do be* form has not been found to have occurred in letters earlier than the 1860s. The following examples are cited from letters written in the mid-nineteenth century. The letters are written by an Irish mother and daughter, Nancy and Bridget Oldham from Rossmore, County Cork (TCD MS 10435: *Oldham Papers*, Department of Manuscripts Trinity College Dublin). The first example is already cited by Filppula (1999: 139).

I *do be* disputing with my mother... [1857 / TCD 10435-15]

I *do be* sick every year at this time but I was not prepared anytime until now.
[1863 / TCD 10435-21]

Habitual forms in HE have been described from earlier days (Joyce, 1988; Van Hamel, 1912; Bliss, 1972; Kallen, 1986; Harris, 1986; Dolan, 1999; Filppula, 1999; Hickey, 2000) and the formation of the habitual forms has been a target of debate especially in the exploration of substratal influences (Bliss, 1979; Harris, 1986; Kallen, 1986; Filppula, 1999). I confine myself here to southwest HE and summarise my view on the formation of *do be* in SwHE. My view is drawn from the evidence reported by

³ There are several examples of periphrastic *do* found in earlier texts, for example in John Michelburne’s *Ireland Preserved*, which dates back to 1705 (Filppula 1999: 138). It is in most cases not easy to discern uses of *do* [i.e. *do *(be)*] as habitual marker from the other uses of periphrastic *do*.

prior studies on the occurrence of the periphrastic *do* in British English (BrE) on the one hand and the *do be* form (especially in southwest Ireland) on the other, as well as from the insights provided from the substratum-vs-superstratum among by Bliss (1972), Harris (1986) and Filppula (1999) and others.

Filppula (1999: 140-142) has undertaken a thorough survey of studies about the use of periphrastic *do* in BrE. Based on his survey, it is reasonable to estimate that periphrastic *do* was used approximately between the middle of the sixteenth century to the early eighteenth century. It is also noteworthy that periphrastic *do* survived afterwards as the normal form in the southwestern dialects (Wright, 1900). We could suspect that, in southwest Ireland, periphrastic *do* was relatively pervasive in primary linguistic data of English in the eighteenth century at least to the extent that Irish speakers came to adopt it in their accommodation of English speech. Authors also mention that at this time there were trade connections and other social contacts between the southwest of England and south Ireland (Odlin, 1997; Filppula, 1999). It is also worth bearing in mind that the *do be* form appeared at a comparatively later time, as late as 1860s in texts of SwHE, as noted above. There is a likely possibility that the periphrastic *do* remained in the non-standard daily-spoken English vernaculars in southern Ireland and that the use of *do* was fortified by the linguistic practices of Gaelic/English bilingual speakers, even if it is assumed that it was declining over the eighteenth century in the south of England. My assertion here is supported by Harris's insights. Harris notes (ibid: 193): 'it can be argued that the distinctive habitual markers in both the substrate and nonstandard varieties of the superstrate had a mutually reinforcing effect on the development of a similar category in the new contact vernaculars.'

It is thus feasible to explain the formation of the *do be* pattern in SwHE in part by influence from the substratal language, rather than exclusively by the retention of the superstratal pattern. A consensus has now emerged to the effect that the formation of *do be* as a habitual marker is primarily motivated by the pre-existence of the habitual category in the Irish language and that the substratal presence of the category conditions the analysis of *do be* as a habitual marker. In other words, speakers' needs

for the category converged with the periphrastic use of *do* in early modern English. It seems likely, as Kallen (1985) suggests, that the *do be* form results from a re-interpretation of the periphrastic *do* of EModE, which in Hiberno-English is juxtaposed with *be*, to mark the habitual, durative, or generic aspect.

Still, we could further explore this question by revisiting the points where prior studies disagree with one another. I would like to consider two points: (i) the occurrence of the *do be* form in BrE and (ii) the relevance of the dependent form in Early Modern Irish *-(e)ann* (present indicative), which are central in the debate in the literature between Bliss (1972; 1979) and Harris (1986). Concerning (i), Harris has provides counter-examples to Bliss's assertion that *do be* never occurred in BrE; these take the form of four examples from Oxfordshire, Surrey, Sussex, and Cornwall which were cited from Wright's (1900) *English Dialect Dictionary*. Filppula (1999: 143), however, questions the reliability of Harris's evidence on the use of *do be* in nonstandard dialects of BrE. According to Filppula, whose assertion is based on Klemola's note (1996: 68-69, *Non-standard periphrastic DO: A study in variation and change*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Essex), these examples were from non-local informants, including one writer with an Irish name. The occurrence of the *do be* form in BrE may thus not be demonstrated after all. It is important to note, however, that Harris's emphasis on non-standard dialectal variations in BrE is useful and should be adopted in future work in this and other areas. It is not at all surprising that there is appreciable sociolinguistic variation in non-standardised varieties. Given Filppula's re-examination of Harris's (1986) evidence from BrE, it is more likely that auxiliary *do* was associated with the habitual category and collocated with *be* in SwHE rather than that earlier speakers adopted the readily-made superstratal *do be* as a habitual marker.

The relevance of the dependent form ending in Early Modern Irish is another point of controversy. According to Bliss's (1972; 1979) argument, Irish speakers acquiring English associated periphrastic *do* with the Irish ending *-(e)ann* on the basis of their contextual parallels; the use of this ending, which originally functioned as a dependent form, was extended during the course of the seventeenth century. '[T]he ending

-(e)ann is found only in the consuetudinal present *bídheann*; the auxiliary *do* ‘would therefore come to be associated with a consuetudinal meaning’ (Bliss, 1979: 293). However, Harris (1986) points out a flaw in Bliss’s account. In Harris’s argument, ‘the degree of fit between syntactic contexts in which the Irish dependent form and StE periphrastic *do* occur is not as great as Bliss implies (ibid: 179).’ Harris explains that the dependent form in Modern Irish not only occurs after the particles *ni* (negative), *an* (interrogative), *nach* (negative-interrogative), as an expanded use in the contexts where *do*-support is required, but also in other contexts such as after the conjunctions *mura* (‘unless’), *dá* (‘if’), *go/gur* (‘that’) and the relative particle *a*.

However, it may be that this discrepancy between EModE and Irish does not deal a crushing blow to a substratal account of the rise of the habitual form. If not a perfect fit, it is conceivable that contextual overlaps in usage, which occur with high frequency and thus are conspicuous to speakers, established sufficient conditions for an extended function pattern in speakers’ linguistic practice.

It is furthermore interesting to note that in SwHE there is a type of usage in which *do be* occurs in relative clauses in play-scripts in the 1950s, as illustrated as *do be*₂ (see examples (6)-(9)). The condition in which *do be*₂ occurs exhibits a partial similarity to the dependent form in Early Modern Irish. The use of the dependent form in Irish can be related to the occurrence of *do be* in relative clauses in SwHE. The match in the morphosyntactic conditions of occurrence in Bliss’s account needs to be carefully re-examined, but it seems that in the final analysis we can continue to assume substratal influence over function, whilst simultaneously accepting superstratal influence over the selection of the auxiliary *do*. The scenario suggested by Bliss may not give a full account but provides a scaffolding for the explanation of the initial emergence of these habitual forms in HE.

Following Bliss’s account, a scenario we could envisage concerning the formation of the *do be* habitual in SwHE is that the contextual, syntactic and/or pragmatic parallelism prompted bilingual language-shifting speakers to associate the Irish dependent morpheme with the English auxiliary *do*. This is, in later stages, exclusively used in the habitual present of the substantive verb (*bídheann* in Early

Modern Irish), as opposed to the punctual present form *tá*. There are contrasts in the form of the continuous aspect in Modern Irish: ‘present’ *tá*, ‘habitual present’ *bíonn*, ‘past’ *bhí*, ‘imperfect’ [past habitual] *bhíodh*, future *beidh*, conditional *bheadh* (Russell, 1995: 99).

It may be important to consider the patterns that typify the Irish verbal system as a whole rather than calques and one-to-one correspondence parallels. In Irish, the opposition between permanency and temporality is of primary significance in the specification of copular and substantive verbs. Aspectual distinctions such as perfect, progressive, prospective and conditional are secondarily and periphrastically expressed by a combination of the substantial verb *bí* and a preposition with a verbal noun phrase (Stenson, 1981: 137; Ó Siadhail, 1989: 293-302; Russell, 1995: 99). It is noteworthy that habituality is, on the other hand, morphologically expressed in an inflectional form of *bí* (i.e. *bíonn* in Modern Irish). By taking into account the basic oppositions in the Irish verbal system, we can seek an answer to the question as to why *do be V-ing* and not *do+V* was innovated and has survived in SwHE, a variety of English which has been heavily influenced by Irish. The difference between *tá* and *bíonn* is perhaps best illustrated in the semantic distinction between ‘I am writing a letter’ (but not ‘I write a letter’) and ‘I do be writing a letter’ in SwHE. The *do be V-ing* construction has proved to be more stable than *do+V* when expressing habituality and has thus become an established pattern contemporary varieties of SwHE.

Conclusion: a separate development hypothesis

Based on the survey thus far, it is certain that a substantial number of Irish servants and indentured workers were involved in language contact in the East Caribbean in the seventeenth century. My research on both the history of immigration to the English Caribbean and the history of HE itself tend to suggest not only that Irish immigrants were primarily Gaelic speakers (Irish being their first language) on their arrival to the Caribbean, but also that, if they spoke some form of English, it is rather unlikely that the use of *do*, let alone *do be*, as habitual markers would have been

already established in the varieties of English that they brought with them. It therefore cannot be concluded that habitual forms of HE diffused among the early Caribbean varieties of NWBE or that HE was the main variety of English spoken in the contact between peoples of European and African descent during the earliest years of English colonization of the region. The most likely possibility is that Irish indentured servants spoke Irish-Gaelic natively and knew little or no English when they first arrived in St. Kitts, Barbados, Anguilla and other islands in the New World in the seventeenth century. The HE-diffusion-to-the-Caribbean hypothesis should thus be discarded for the early period of English expansion into the Caribbean. The influence of HE on varieties of NWBE can, however, be defended for later periods, which witnessed rapidly increasing numbers of Irish arrivals in the English Americas (Wakin, 2002).

No definitive hypothesis that accounts for the resemblances in the grammatical realisation of the habitual aspect between HE and Caribbean forms of NWBE can be advanced until the profiles of early Irish immigrants are known in detail (place of birth, experience in England etc.). This information is important because the linguistic situation in Ireland varies significantly from north to south. Having examined the sociohistorical and linguistic context, however, we may now be in a position to venture a tentative hypothesis that the use of *do be* in association with a habitual meaning in the Eastern Caribbean first emerged independently from the emergence of the *do be* habitual in HE in Ireland itself, especially if the first Irish servants and indentured workers came predominantly from the southwest counties of Ireland. This separate-development hypothesis suggests that similar contact-induced grammatical formation has occurred in two separate places: in the communities of southwest Ireland and in the Eastern Caribbean. In both cases, especially at the seminal stage, this process involved language contact between English and Irish-Gaelic.

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HOME AS A SITE OF REFUGE AND OPPRESSION: THE INDO-CARIBBEAN WOMAN MEDIATING THE DISCOURSES OF MATIKOR, DOUGLA POETICS AND KALA PANI

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This article explores the position of Indo-Caribbean women within the master narrative of Caribbean feminism. One of the the chief feminist organisation working for women in the Caribbean is CAFRA (the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action). Though the Indo-Caribbean woman is not unrepresented, the organisation is Afro-centric in its composition and work. This may be because the Caribbean is Afro-centric as a whole and the Indo-Caribbean population is a majority with a minority discourse only in Trinidad and Guyana. Of course, there are other factors to consider, such as the greater hold of family on social interaction in Indo-Caribbean society that hampers a more participatory role in CAFRA.

Rhoda Reddock documents the phenomenon of Afro-centric “othering” of Indo-Caribbean women as one of the factors that discourages their participation in CAFRA. She writes that while Afro-Caribbean women have been constructed as loose, immoral, loud, independent and sexually available, Indo-Caribbean women have been constructed as chaste, pure, controlled and sexually unavailable (Reddock, 2007: 5). She is also mindful, however, that historical records seriously challenge these stereotypes since Indian women often traveled to the Caribbean alone and were neither docile nor submissive per se.

In the Caribbean itself, these women found themselves in a new position since the estates considered them to be individual workers and paid them separately for their work. This remuneration, though minimal and substantially less for women than men, along with the sparse female to male gender ratios ensured that Indo-Caribbean women received more individual attention than in India. In the barrack communities on the estates, however, women were never really independent. As indenture ended and the Indians chose to stay back reconstituting their communities as villages across Trinidad, even this small space of independence was redefined and constrained under patriarchal structures re-inforced by the Sanatan Dharma, the Arya Samaj, Canadian

Missionaries and Muslim “purdah” system that emphasised the submissive role of women within households.

This article intervenes with a renegotiation of two images that feminism has been guilty of fostering: that of the battered suffering Indian wife who is a victim of society and that of the assertive feminist who actively fights for her physical and economic independence. This article asks if there is a subject position between victimhood and agency, because both discourses place an enormous burden upon the Indo-Caribbean woman. Secondly, it questions the way in which violence has often been narrowly characterized in feminist discourse as exclusively the oppressive violence through which patriarchy maintains its control. While there is no doubt that women are routinely subject to violence in the domestic sphere, violence on the part of women can also be seen as a form of agency for breaking out of patriarchal enclosure. This article seeks to expand the feminist agenda to allow for the validation of the *presence* of women who choose neither victimhood nor agency in the public sphere. Unlike the western feminist image of the liberated young woman, the image at the centre of this renegotiation is one of the Bhowjee or sister-in-law – a middle-aged woman with children.

In recent years, there have been various studies carried out on the Indo-Caribbean woman, each defining her through various metaphoric spaces, including the discourses of Matikor, Dougl Poetics, Kala Pani and even the re-articulation of the existing spaces of the Calypso, Carnival and Chutney music. This article will follow the Indo-Caribbean woman’s negotiation of a Caribbean feminist space in the discourses of Matikor, Dougl Poetics and Kala Pani through a reading of Rosanne Kanhai’s short story *Rum sweet rum* (1999), Sheila Rampersad’s *My mother, myself: a personal narrative* (1999) and Ramabai Espinet’s *Barred: Trinidad 1987* (1991). While all these discourses integrate the Indo and the Afro worlds, they do so in varying degrees, while the stories often operate in an exclusive Indo-Caribbean space. This article attempts to define the emerging Indo-Caribbean poetics in female writing that draws heavily on the specific versions of history and Indian culture that most heavily impact the East Indian community.

Rosanne Kanhai’s *Rum sweet rum* is about two women, the narrator, an upper middle class woman and Dolly, a lower class woman, and the bonding between the two. We can read the story in two possible ways: from a gendered perspective, in which the middle class woman takes on the agency of telling the truth about the life of her less privileged sister or from a class perspective, wherein the English educational model and sensibility of the narrator is imposed upon the actual life story of the folk, represented by Dolly. The overlapping of the two readings provides depth to the story of Dolly who is both a victim and an agent. The story ends without the reader being able to judge either Dolly or the narrator, who is perhaps the catalyst and perpetuator of her crime.

The story does not include the strong characters of an Aaji or a Nani – a paternal or maternal grandmother. It instead focuses on two independent households that do not have a senior lady at home. The narrator is described as the traditional paradigm of success for the Indo-Caribbean woman who has made the journey to Trinidad: educated, married, mother, free not to work in the cane fields but elsewhere and therefore “happy”. Her “success” is juxtaposed with the “misery” of Dolly who is uneducated, married, mother, free not to work in the cane fields but in others’ households and therefore a “victim”. Education, money and a non-working drunkard husband separate the life and destinies of the two women. Dolly calls the narrator Bhowjee. As the narrator explains, “A Bhowjee was an old-fashioned Indian lady who had an arranged marriage and then stayed home to take care of children and do the housework” (Kanhai, 1999: 3). The narrator, however, implies that she is not a Bhowjee, since the word makes her wince. The narrator creates a generational gap between her circumstance and position and those of Dolly when she says that Bhowjee is a word used mainly by her mother’s generation.

The interaction between the two women shows their sisterhood and bonding. Throughout the story, the two women share work rather than conforming to a strict employer-employee relationship. The narrator replaces each empty bottle of cheap cooking rum in the kitchen that Dolly drinks without much thought. They share a common space as they take turns to iron the clothes. The narrator even goes to the extent of paying for the missing diapers from the Neighbour’s yard that Dolly is accused of stealing. At the end of the story, however, the narrator’s recoil at hearing the news of the death of Dolly’s husband re-creates the class gap by transforming it into a moral gap. The narrator, by virtue of her control over her narrative, presents herself as a willing victim at the hands of Dolly, who has taken advantage of her good nature to procure items for her house and children by asking for leftovers, old clothes, etc.

Even though the story operates within an exclusively Indo-Trinidadian world, Kanhai highlights how racial stereotypes bias the administration of justice. When the narrator suggests that Dolly complain to the police about her husband’s beatings, Dolly tells her that the policeman says it is a “husband-and-wife-business” (Kanhai, 1999: 8). Nesha Haniff states that “Violence within East Indian marriages is ritualised to the extent that it conforms to a social script, which has clear rules concerning who is permitted to use violence in a marriage and who is not. This script strongly condemns wife-to-husband violence but permits violence by mother towards children, and tolerates violence by husbands towards wives” (Haniff, 1999: 50). In this story, the husband undermines the well-being of the family. At the time of marriage, Dolly’s father had given her a piece of land, where she plants and keeps animals. When her husband sets her wooden house on fire and destroys it, Dolly collects wood and makes

her home anew. The husband and father of her children lurks in the background as a destructive force.

The text plays with rum as a symbol of oppression that is turned into a symbol of release. Though Indian males are stereotyped as drunkards who beat their wives, the story makes rum a catalyst for sisterhood and communion between the two women and a symbol of emotional and physical release. Dolly's release from her oppressive relationship is through the death of the husband. The poison phosphono, commonly referred to as the Indian tonic, which is often used by Indian women to escape the harshness of the life imposed upon them, is instead mobilised as a weapon against the male in this story. Dolly mixes phosphono in her husband's drink, thereby subverting and to some extent inverting the image of the aggressive male who has a monopoly on violence, which he uses to silence a woman in order to exercise his manhood. The ingenuity of the plot is that Dolly escapes any police action by claiming to be the victim in the relationship and because she is away from home when her husband drinks the phosphono-laced drink. Before carrying out her plan, Dolly discusses it with the narrator, making her Bhowjee a partner in crime. The narrator does not realise the cost of camaraderie that she shares with Dolly until she learns of the deed from another neighbour. The narration spares the narrator and the reader of any moral guilt at being accomplices to the crime.

However, the camaraderie between the narrator and Dolly remains embedded in a strictly Indo-Caribbean context, since it is not a solution to be offered to all women. Rosanne Kanhai, in her essay on the world of the Bhowjee titled *The masala stone sings* writes that the Bhowjee at the masala stone "is a signifier of both her oppression and her creativity" because the Indo-Caribbean woman writer balances various factors that shape her creative world: "the heritage of indentureship and plantation labor, a nurturing, yet repressive and male-dominated Indo-Caribbean community, problematic relationship with the vibrant, hegemonic Afro-Caribbean culture, and proximity to the resources (material, intellectual, creative) of western metropolitan centres" (p. 212). Given these circumstances, she projects the relationship between Indo-Caribbean and Afro-Caribbean women's writing as mobile, dialogic and mutually transformative with each community imbibing cultural influences from the other. She comments on Ramabai Espinet's use of Mama Glo and Niala Maharaj's use of Diabliesse as instances of how Indo-Caribbean women poets subvert ethnic and gender taboos that alienate them from their Afro-Caribbean sisters with whom they share history, landscape and gender.

Kanhai also realises, however, that ultimately the muse and the expression remain within the Indo-Caribbean community. She articulates a discourse on Matikor that re-enforces the elite-folk divide by its emphasis upon the folk. The Matikor is an enclosed transient world that lights up two days before any marriage. It is a space for sexual, emotional and physical release complete with song and dance throughout the

night. The exclusiveness of the Matikor space exemplifies the exclusiveness of the Indo-Caribbean world represented in the short story. The story tells us of the pleasure that the narrator feels in having left behind “her Bhowjee” in the fields. Kanhai sees the inter-space between Indo- and Afro-Caribbean worlds as empowering the Indo-Caribbean woman with motifs and tropes for expression and emancipation, though transplanted to uniquely Indian spaces. One limitation of this model is the trajectory that Kanhai sketches. She discusses Michelle Mohabeer’s film “Coconut/Cane and Cutlass” as an instance of the full realisation of Matikor inside the body. Hence, on the one hand, Matikor looks outwards to forming new alliances while, on the other, withdraws to find fulfilment in individual rather than social space.

Kanhai’s story is noteworthy for its lack of investment in a solace or protector figure, such as a God or fate that can be blamed for the damage done by racial, class, and patriarchal hegemonies. Even when Dolly goes to the hospital where the nurse and the doctor are unable to draw out blood for testing, she screams that it is her poverty and not her fate that is responsible for the drying up of the blood in her veins. Paradoxically, the home is a site of both refuge and struggle that both protects and needs to be protected, that shields from violence while harbouring violence. The problematics of home as both refuge and site of violence carries on in the work of Sheila Rampersad.

Rampersad’s *My mother, myself: a personal narrative* is an autobiography that includes a biography of the author’s mother’s life. Seeing herself as the product of her mother’s struggle, the account is of three generations of women and how the social function of women is privileged over their legal status. Didi – meaning elder sister – is the name given to her mother. Didi’s mother Sonia leaves Didi’s father to live for a time with another man. This stepfather marries Didi off at an early age and when she has marital problems after bearing two children, he does not offer Didi sanctuary. Didi turns to Sonia, who by then is living on her own. Sonia supports Didi through her various relationships with equally domineering men who often beat and rape her. On the one hand, Didi’s story arouses pity on the part of the reader, given how the various men in her life, father, surrogate father, husband, surrogate husbands, brothers and sons, mistreat her. On the other hand, the story evokes our admiration for the exemplary courage and strength with which Didi perseveres to earn a sufficient living to build a house for herself and to educate her daughters. The story centers on Didi’s struggle to buy and maintain a house, while men seem to slip irresponsibly in and out of her life, with no obligations to her or her children.

Rampersad’s story highlights the Indo-Caribbean woman’s plight in a Douglan world where there is fluidity between Christianity and Hinduism as well as between Indian and African poverty. There is also fluidity and continuity in relationships that are not necessarily emancipating. According to Shalini Puri, Africans and Indians have internalised many of the racist evolutionary discourses of colonialism, including the

subordinate assimilation of Afro-Trinidadians and the subordinate segregation of Indo-Trinidadians. Puri sees the control over Indian women by African men as one aspect of douglarisation, just as the “creolisation” that is usually associated with douglarization can involve Indian cultural subordination to Afro-creole norms. However, for Puri, Dougla poetics is a means for articulating potentially progressive cultural identities for reframing the problematic of African/Indian party politics as well as race, gender and sexual relations. Douglarisation is valorised in the Creole discourse as inevitable while it is deplored in Indian discourse as tragic compromise and loss. Puri sees both these attitudes as racist, yet also recognises that douglarisation goes well beyond the biological to other spheres. As Kamala Kempadoo says “‘Dougla’ becomes merely a vehicle for breaking open existing categories, a basis for resistance to hegemonic racist ideologies and practices, a relational as opposed to a fixed, essential sense of self” (1999: 109). However, the douglarisation that Puri would politically wish to see as equal space is not realised in this autobiographical narrative by Rampersad. The story illustrates that the inter-racial space does not provide refuge from either male aggression or racial stigmatisation. Didi is censured for working on road projects and develops a drinking problem because of the frustrations in her life. However, the dougla “space” allows the Indo-Caribbean woman’s struggle against patriarchal structures to simultaneously involve a struggle against ethnic polarity. The Dougla space is an already existing space for the Indo-Caribbean woman to use to her advantage, yet it is not free of political and ethnic divides.

Rampersad highlights the crucial support that Aajis and Nanis provide to Indo-Caribbean women as well as the strength of the Bhowjee, who supports not only herself and her family but also her Aaji/Nani in old age. The transitional generation of the Bhowjee is an important link between the old Aaji world of the cane-cutters and the contemporary university educated narrator. Just as was the case in Kanhai’s “Rum sweet rum,” Rampersad’s autobiography makes little reference to God, religion or fate. This underscores an important facet of Indo-Caribbean women’s lives and their journey away from the past that becomes the mainstay of their strength in the present. Ramabai Espinet lays out this historical journey in *Barred: Trinidad 1987* which is a series of women’s narratives interlinked in their historical placement through a framing narrative. The narrator of the first piece is a much travelled single woman who has recently lost her keys and her wallet and is therefore apprehensive of a possible intrusion on herself, physically and metaphorically. The piece plays with the images of the mountains in Vancouver reminding the narrator of mountains in Trinidad with the smells of the mango season. The second narrative piece is about a docile, peasant woman who waits on her husband, is often battered and eventually kills him when, in drunken frenzy he threatens to kill her child. The third piece is set in the cane-fields where an imposed Afro-Caribbean voice catalogues Indo-Caribbean stereotypes. It documents the struggle of the Bhowjees to educate their daughters

despite society condemning them as lame, sickly, violent and stingy. The fourth piece tells of how a peasant woman becomes a shopkeeper and bread-winner for her family, in spite of her limited resources and a drunkard husband. The last short piece signals the end of the traumatic Vancouver night for the walletless narrator of the first piece. These stories together narrate the traumatic journey of the Indo-Caribbean woman in Trinidad and beyond. She is alone in Canada now, but the fears that haunted her in Trinidad persist. The starting point of the narrative is the journey away from home in Trinidad rather than that initial journey across the Kala Pani from home in India.

It is interesting to view how the critics have analysed this story. Shalini Puri views “Barred” as an attempt to push outward from an Indian space to a Dougla space, articulating that which is “barred” from dominant representations of race and sexuality. Though there are pointers towards an internally fractured community and emphasis on ambivalence, she sees the story as an attempt to re-configure discourses of “... ‘isolation or rape’, ‘insularity or assimilation’, ‘stereotype or silence’, ‘no exchange or commercial exchange’” (Puri, 1999: 271-272). Puri sees the story as replete with pregnant images that are waiting to be discovered, the image of the balcony as a closed space looking on to the landscape, killing the husband not as an act of rage or impulsiveness but to do ‘whatever which is necessary for living’, the correction of the name of Ramdillah to Ramleela as an act of alliance with a larger Indian discourse, a negotiation of an Indian living in the west, a negotiation of the diasporic space through a collapse of historical and social identity. Esteves and Paravisini-Gerbert, however, view Espinet’s story as symptomatic of the traditional tropes and themes of Caribbean women writers: slavery, the plantation economy, colonialism, and complexities of class, race and language coupled with the audacity of writing itself. “Espinet’s tale articulates the uneasy relationship between the East Indian immigrant and his or her new landscape- and the silence to which it leads- a theme that has widespread resonance in cultures founded upon the horrors of slavery and the Middle Passage” (1991: xiv). In their attempt at integrating the narrative into a Caribbean space, they overlook the specificity of race in favour of the emergence of Caribbean women writers.

Brinda Mehta works around these two readings of *Barred* as an expression of the suppressed exilic consciousness of Indo-Caribbean women through an effective claiming of exilic space to assert their right of authorship. She builds the discourse of the Kala Pani on the heritage of a common trans-Atlantic journey of Africans and Indians that symbolises the common loss of homeland, purity, race, language and culture. She expands the Indian concept of loss of caste over sea travel or Kala Pani, to include ethnicity, race and class under the umbrella of gender association. Mehta views Kala Pani as a hybrid space that provides a solution to the problematic of naming and the privileging of particular ethnic experiences. “The kala pani is a discourse of rupture that initiates transgressive boundary crossings through creative

(self) assertions in literary production”(Mehta, 2004: 4). While Mehta offers diasporic space as assimilationist, the privileging of diasporic affiliations could occasion thoughts of cultural differences. While advancing the Kala Pani model, Mehta overlooks the specific upper caste notions embedded in the concept. Also, by positing the journey over the Atlantic as the unifying motif, she does not attend to the specifics of history and culture to invest in the trope of the journey. Thus, while Puri reads this story as reflective of an Indian heritage and Esteves and Paravisini-Gerbert see it as pushing outward to a common Caribbean woman space, Mehta sees the story as symptomatic of the feelings of isolation and alienation in both Indo- and Afro- inter-spaces. The three positions qualify the coming into voice of the Indo-Caribbean woman in mainstream Caribbean feminism. In spite of the writers’ investments in history and the critics’ investments in inter-spaces, however, it is more often in geographical re-location that one comes to terms with one’s diasporic consciousness. In more recent writings, as opposed to the journey from India to Trinidad, it is the journey away from Trinidad that points to the theme of searching one’s self. However, this movement also needs to be carefully detailed for it can lead to an erasure of history. As the narrator of “Barred” says, “I am an Indian, plain and simple, not East nor West, just an Indian. I live in the west” (Puri, 1991: 82). However, a literal translation of this would mean an obliteration of the West Indian experience for what becomes privileged are the racial origins in India and the present location in Canada.

248 Kanhai, Puri and Mehta agree nonetheless that the phenomenon of Chutney music is a positive development for reclaiming an Indo-Caribbean space by women. Kanhai sees the emergence of Chutney songs as a helpful step forward in taking what is valuable from the calypso/ carnival culture and infusing it into their own Indo-Caribbean female ethnic-based expression. “Chutney denies neither their Indian heritage nor their claim to elements of Afrocentric cultural expression available to them” (Kanhai, 1999: 227). Puri sees Chutney-soca’s musical form and instruments as a successful hybridisation of Indo- and Afro- Trinidadian musical traditions. “Chutney-soca intervenes in the historically “African” calypso tent rather than in a separate “Indian” space articulating a dougla, that is, de-legitimised or disallowed Indian or women’s identity”(Puri, 1999: 205). However, a word of caution is needed because the world of music is itself embedded in racial and class stereotypes. Baksh-Soodeen sees chutney as a movement by lower class Hindu women against male control (1999: 198). She says that the condemnation of chutney often comes from the upper and middle classes, who see themselves as the preservers of so-called authentic Hindu culture (Baksh-Soodeen, 1999: 197). The class angle is important for it again represents a menace in the Indo-Caribbean woman’s world. While all the three stories by Kanhai, Rampersad and Espinet deal with the question of class in different ways, there is clearly an overlap which reflects all of these authors’ more highly educated and less rural/folk subject positions. Yet this bias is not so great as to cry out for a class analysis of their

work. The educated narrators never trivialise, sideline, underestimate or take for granted the struggles of the less educated and less urbanised women in their lives.

In this article, an attempt has been made to situate Indo-Caribbean women writers in relation to multi-ethnic literary traditions within which each author can express her being and come to terms with her life, culture and selfhood. Like the Indo-Caribbean space that pushes its boundaries outward, Indo-Caribbean women are advancing feminist discourses which obliterate the division between private and public spheres. It is clear that a largely assimilationist model has less chances of meeting these women's needs than a historically and culturally contextualised Indo-Caribbean tradition. The article puts forwards a poetics of the Indo-Caribbean woman that includes yet is not necessarily restricted to: 1) the significance of the grandmotherly figure of the Ajis and Nanis; 2) the Bhowjee's struggle to educate her daughters; 3) the fluid dynamics of female bonding; 4) the integration of various diasporic experiences working through the binary oppositions of home and abroad, home and married home, home and work place, home and away; 5) the obliteration of the opposition between private suffering and public articulation; 6) the acknowledgement and celebration of the female cane-cutter as a literary muse; and 7) the absence of god or fate as a target for blame or as a source of solace. This last reflects the diasporicity and acculturation of the Indo-Caribbean woman who has to some extent set aside traditions and familial beliefs in order to more effectively place her own stoic self at the centre of her negotiation of her Caribbean experience.

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NO PLACE LIKE HOME – DISPLACEMENT IN RAMBAI ESPINET’S *THE SWINGING BRIDGE*

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This paper forms part of a larger study in which I explore the themes of emergence, reclamation and remembering in the writings of post-colonial authors in the Caribbean. My particular interest has been the significance of “home” and the role it plays in healing, an interest that was prompted by a concept presented by Toni Morrison in her essay *Home* which speaks of home as a place of escape or protection in the face of trauma – as a space in which an artist may create an existence free from the pressures of prejudice and marginalization in order for subjectivity or self-definition to emerge (Morrison, 1997: 3). Schreiber (2010: 1) surmises that “home, whether place or concept, retrieved through memory, provides protection from trauma”. In other words, home is a respite that allows for the emergence of self, despite emotional turmoil. In contrast, Edwards and Hogarth (2008: 2) posit that the writings of many female authors reflect internal conflict and “represent ‘home’ as a site of struggle – mental, physical, or both... as a significant and troubling aspect of identity.” In this instance, home is seen as a place of internal angst which impacts on the personality.

Ramabhai Espinet’s *The Swinging Bridge* opens up these concepts of home through her focus on the associated concept of ‘displacement’ – the loss of home. Espinet uses ‘home’ as a pivotal point to explore the indentured immigrant experience and the dimensions of displacement. The novel relates the story of an Indo-Trinidadian family who have migrated to Canada. After many years, one daughter, Mona, who is the narrator and main character, is tasked with returning home to her native Trinidad by her terminally-ill brother to reclaim the family property that had been contentiously sold many years before by their father. Mona’s journey becomes more than one to reclaim physical property: it takes her into the reclamation of self, heritage and home. Within the context of this journey, Espinet examines how displacement arises and the impact that it has on women, the transmission of familial history and the establishment of national identity.

Issues surrounding women are central to Espinet’s analysis of displacement. Women by their very existence have been displaced historically, culturally, socially and

linguistically. When discussing displacement, Gillan (2002: 113) notes that theoretical studies in sociology explore the abstract concept of the bodiless citizen which has marked women as being “outside the boundaries of full citizenship, because the [associations] of gender and race... precludes them from being categorised as the representative norm.” Phelan (1993: 5) sees “The male [being] marked with value; the female [being] unmarked [and] lacking measured value and meaning...”

In *The Swinging Bridge*, Espinet treats the displacement of the matriarch Gainder, Mona’s great-grandmother. Mona confesses that she knows little about Gainder – an indentured labourer who, at the age of thirteen, escaped marriage to a much older man after her father died. She joined with other women whom she met at a temple dedicated to Shiva, widows who, with no husbands and no sons, had been cast out of a culture and a society that had no place for them. These women had been abandoned by their relatives, because the rights of women could only be granted through a bond with a man. In a bid for survival, they banded together and embarked on the journey to the Caribbean to become indentured labourers.

After surviving the challenges of the journey, Gainder worked tirelessly as a labourer in Trinidad. To supplement her income, she exploited her talent for entertaining, composing songs, singing and performing at weddings. Gainder became successful and was able to provide for herself and was even able to finance her own dowry for her marriage to a young businessman. However, her story of survival, resilience, and triumph was never told. The lessons that she learnt about survival in the face of adversity were not taught or passed on to her progeny. Instead, upon marriage, Gainder was relegated to silence and anonymity. She could no longer cultivate her talent for singing and composing because of the stigma associated with such occupations. Mona’s mother relates “we don’t know much about her...she was a low class kind of person...” (p. 251). Despite her intelligence and courage, Gainder’s importance is displaced in the family history – she is marked by the social branding of her time.

Not only is Gainder displaced from familial history, but the movement from her country of origin has displaced her linguistically as well. Entwined with linguistic displacement is a displacement of identity. Brekhus (1998: 35) posits that “language plays a key role in the social marking process. The very act of naming or labelling a category simultaneously constructs and foregrounds that category.” In other words, by naming we are assigning an identity. Hence, “when we linguistically mark something we are essentially qualifying it as a ‘specialized’ form...” Upon arriving in Trinidad, Gainder took on a new name, thus breaking with the past, but this did not allow her to connect with the future: the name that she took did not allow her to forge relations. Mona’s mother explains: “She took on the name Beharry [but] we are not related to any of the Beharrys in Trinidad...” Significant also is the fact that Gainder’s name is

never spoken among her own family members. “Nobody in the family has ever mentioned her name” (p. 251). When Mona asks her mother about Gainder, the reaction is sharp and dismissive: “She was a woman they called Gainder...she didn’t have a real name... I don’t even know if her first name was Gainder...” (p. 251). Notably the use of the indefinite article here (“*a* woman”) also diminishes her importance. The control through language use – the withholding of Gainder’s name in family gatherings and the absence of a ‘real’ name – has bearing on the social significance attached to names and naming. Names link one to his or her heritage/history. In the absence of a family name, one is displaced from one’s heritage, and from ties of kinship. Without a real name, Gainder is not only linguistically displaced, but is also effectively displaced in terms of her identity.

Significantly, Gainder dies while giving birth to her daughter, which effectively eliminates any possibility for her to transmit her heritage to her only child. The result is that the women of Gainder’s line remain subjected to male dominance and unable to establish independent spaces from which to cultivate their own strength. Thus, they are unable to revolt against male patriarchal dictates which prevail over the generations. For instance, Grandma Lil, Gainder’s daughter, despite being astute in business, was unable to establish social independence. Her granddaughter reports: “She wore the pants inside the house...she managed everything – everyday life, children, the household... but anything to do with the outside world was in Grandpa James’ control. He was the boss of all her money because she was his wife. Even though he did not know what to do with it” (p. 278). Similarly, Mona recounts that her mother, Grandma’s Lil’s daughter: “...had been a force holding together fragments, creating something out of nothing each time... yet in spite of her circumstances Muddie stayed with Dada ... the man without a place” (p. 39).

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These women hid their struggles, maintaining a culture of secrecy, which kept them psychologically imprisoned. It was only upon approaching death that Grandma Lil revolted. Bess, the granddaughter whom she nurtured, narrates: “When Grandma Lil was dying she refused to hold it anymore. If Grandpa Jamesie appeared at the doorway to her room, she would scream loudly ‘get that man out of here. Get him the hell out!’ She didn’t care who was around church people, family neighbours, she didn’t give a damn!” (p. 280)

The displacement of Gainder’s story from familial history represents the perpetuation of the dominant discourses that erase the historical, cultural and social agency of marginalized peoples. Simmering yet smothered resentment against this state of affairs surfaces symptomatically from one generation to the next. Change cannot come about until these women’s stories are told, until the truth is revealed, until their

existence is acknowledged, valorized, and re-assigned their rightful place in familial history.

Even in religion there is a disconnection. For Mona and her family, the religion of Hinduism had become a 'relic'. Mona says "I knew the Ramayan in name only" (p. 113). Religious traditions had become displaced in favour of the economic and social advancement offered by the Canadian Presbyterian Church. Still for Mona there was disengagement from Christianity as well, which she expresses when she says "somehow I always stayed at the edge of that circling sphere, never making my way to the centre" (p. 30). Here we see that even from religion, Mona is displaced.

Espinete makes the connection between heritage and identity clear when she probes the concept of a national identity. She challenges the validity of achieving such an identity in the face of an increasingly displaced heritage. In the ever more rapidly changing political landscape that accompanies wave upon wave of colonial and neo-colonial globalization, displacement is inevitable. Mona refers to her father, Dada, as 'the man without a place'. Dada perceives himself as having escaped national identity. He exclaims: "it ain't have no place here for Indians. All ah them think that we less than them. I have to get out of here. By hook or crook I go get out..." (p. 101). When Dada finally leaves for Canada, he leaves with many other Indians who feel the same frustrations. The move however, results in no greater gain. Dada's search for subjectivity remains unrewarded. As Mona looks at her father against the Canadian landscape many years later she observes "I saw only a brown Indian man ... his appearance ordinary... I thought this was all this country can ever make of him" (p. 79). He later admits that the move was "not worth it, at all, at all. I shoulda never leave!" (p. 95)

It is in this search for a true home – which might provide social, historical, ethnic, and psychological comfort – that the characters of the novel swing, as if suspended on a swinging bridge. This is all crystallised for contemporary Caribbean generations in the figure of Mona – her return home becomes crucial in the process of re-locating and re-placing her history.

For Mona Singh, home is a source of conflicting emotions. She leads us to home – a place where words evoke nostalgia: "Patois words and Hindi words...old time words calling out...signal[ing], beckoning into the past" (p. 5). On the other hand, these reminiscences evoke problematic and unresolved feelings about home. These underlying emotions point to a disconnection between self and home and moreover, within the self as home – indeed, Mona has become displaced in her relation to 'home'. She gives insight into this displacement when she observes that "drifting had always been my style, even from an early age" (p. 94). She subsequently describes herself as a 'Nowarian' (p. 152) – someone who belongs to nowhere in particular.

Mona is determined not to continue on the path of her foremothers. As she reflects on the sacrifices made by her mother she declares that “the one thing I did not want was a domestic life”. Of her relationship she says, “I was in love with Roddy but adamant about not living with him... I couldn’t see why a domestic relationship was necessary in this or any relationship...I did not want soul and spirit pried out of me in an unwary moment, benign though such prying might be” (pp. 12-13).

Mona revolts against the markings that have displaced generations of her foremothers. It is in breaking away from these constraints that subjectivity can take shape. In the midst of her rebellion, she reflects “... I had lost something, but what was it, and how would I begin to replace it? At the age of forty-two, I was still reluctant to join the ranks of adults in the family ... I couldn’t see myself functioning the way they did in family matters. They had not told me enough. I needed more legends, more stories, more knowledge of the past to sustain me” (p. 79). Here we see the impact of displacement on Mona. She is aware of her ignorance of family history, and the displacement that this has caused within herself. Her assignment to return home to Trinidad therefore offers her an opportunity for the reclamation of self, not only herself, but the selves of the women whose courage and resilience brought them to Trinidad.

Juxtaposed to Mona’s life experiences are the experiences of Bess, Mona’s cousin and child born out of wedlock to her Uncle Sweetie. Though rejected by her grandfather, she is accepted by her Grandma Lil who on her deathbed calls her “my own, own daughter” (p. 280). Bess inherits Grandma Lil’s house in Trinidad after her five aunts close ranks and support her claim to the inheritance, following Grandma Lil’s wish. This scenario is significant because it demonstrates the power of a gathering of women and their role in repossessing their heritage. It is also symbolic of what having one’s heritage transmitted can be like: Bess, the child who is born outside of the family ‘circle’, becomes the custodian of family history.

When Mona returns to this house, she reports, “The place had changed but not around Grandma Lil’s house... the place was as welcoming as it had always been to its nowarians of old...” (p. 263). Bess has kept everything intact in fine detail. She has become the guardian of family history. She has kept the home like a museum and can relate events of the past to Mona. As Mona explains “the first night I slept with soundness that I had not known for weeks. My dreams were mapped by a spotlight moving backwards rapidly leafing through stacked papyrus folios half-lying in the shallows near the shoreline of turquoise sea” (p. 264). In her dreams, Mona was peeling back the pages of history. Through this matriarchal home, the displaced Mona is granted an opportunity to connect not only with family history, but also with self.

Displacement is an important theme in Caribbean literature, since it allows for the exploration of the impact of slavery and indentureship on creating individual and national identities. It is an inevitable feature in Caribbean literature since subjectivity

among marginalized peoples can only be realised through cultural, linguistic, economic and/or political agitation. In conversation with Mona, Bess suggests “the real problem is how we fit into life here.” It is not simply the prejudice of other groups, but “it is the way Indians hate their own background... they hate the history that marks them as coolies...” (p. 285). Espinet points to displacement at many levels and along many dimensions, from the violent disarticulation of women’s power by patriarchy to the violent disruption of communities and families by the labor demands of capitalism. She suggests that it is only by embracing and reclaiming those aspects of one’s own history and culture where agency, resilience, resistance, and triumph over domination have been silenced and erased that one can experience a ‘groundedness’ and sense of belonging, regardless of where one calls home.

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THE COARSE COMEDY IN LADOO'S *YESTERDAYS*: A CRITIQUE OF THE INDO-CARIBBEAN LOWER CLASSES

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Harold Sonny Ladoo (1945-1973), a Trinidadian-born writer of Indian descent, who at the age of 28 had already authored two novels, also had his life tragically cut short in a violent murder while in the prime of his youth, depriving the world of an Indo-Caribbean talent whose unique style remains unmatched. The author's untimely demise most probably resulted from his honest depictions of what he described as the lowest rung in the caste system. As Peter Such, a Ladoo friend and biographer, has stated, many of his friends and acquaintances, and perhaps total strangers were not happy with the way he represented the West Indian family in his first novel, *No pain like this body* (1972)



Harold Sonny Ladoo (1945-1973)

in which the head of the family batters his wife and causes the death of one of his children. Yet honesty was what characterized this young author in both of his works. If in *No pain like this body*, Ladoo manages to cause unease and discomfort, in his second work he is determined to shock his readers.

In *Yesterdays* (1974), Ladoo employs humor, profane language and repulsive descriptions to clearly depict the futility and decadence of the caste system in the West Indian community of Trinidad. The characters' behavior and the crude verbiage in their dialogues reflect a hopeless existence for all parties. Their hypocritical values, ludicrous and outlandish behavior and immoral and unethical practices trap them in an abyss that offers no escape. Roydon Salick, a Ladoo critic, lists the castes of peasantry in his analysis of *Yesterdays*. Among them, he highlights the *Janglees*, whose way of life includes violence, profanity and poverty and the *Chamars* who belong to the lowest level in the caste structure. Salick subdivides the *Janglees* into *Bhangees* and the *Topus* whose charges are cleaning latrines and disposing of fecal matter.

As Dr. Nalini Natarajan points out in an essay entitled ‘Gender, caste and modernity: a reading of U.R. Anantha Murthy’s “Samskara” in its intellectual context’, found in her book *Women and Indian modernity: readings of colonial and postcolonial novels*, the caste system in the sixties was “seriously practiced” by the Indian population, except the Anglicized sectors, yet it had degenerated after indenture amongst the Indo-Caribbean community. In a personal communication with Natarajan, she expands on the meaning of *Janglees* which comes from the word for “forest” or “jungle” and by extension, the people who inhabited such remote areas. A better known term with a similar meaning in India is *Vanvasi*, the forest dwellers who are mainly aboriginal or tribal people. In contrast, the *Nagarvasi* are the city dwellers who are perceived as superior and civilized. There were indentured servants of both types in Trinidad as well as those belonging to the upper caste. According to Natarajan, Hindu groups attempted to re-establish the caste system to keep the *Janglees* in their low position. Other social groups who were thus looked down upon included the *Bhangees* or sweepers and the *Chamars* who were also deemed untouchables due to their work with cow hides.

Although the novel is hilariously narrated, the treatment of the theme is tragic. The author attempts to catch people’s attention by poking fun at his characters and their modus operandi in everyday living. Choonilal, the protagonist of the narrative, rents a room to Tailor, who not only refuses to pay rent, but who owes his landlord the money he borrowed to start a sewing business. Choonilal’s generosity goes beyond an act of kindness as he is pushed to the edge of stupidity. He not only rents a room to a total stranger, but also buys him a hand-operated sewing machine so that he can earn a living. Yet the tenant has the audacity to ask his landlord for a more expensive electric sewing machine which Choonilal proceeds to purchase for him. Needless to say, the incompetent tenant fails in his tailoring business and abandons the trade.

The payment that Choonilal gets for his kindness is Tailor’s refusal to reimburse him for the sewing machine or pay the rent. Tailor feeds off Choonilal’s ignorance and refuses to do anything to pay for his freeloading lifestyle. To make matters worse, the delinquent tenant has the gall to cuss out the landlord who has treated him like a son: “Look Choonilal, I not livin by you two years! It is nearly two years, but not two years. Too besides you is not me fadder Choonilal. You hear dat!” “...I not payin no rent! I not cleanin dat larine eider!” “...You givin you mout too much liberty Choonilal! You is not me fadder you know Choonilal. So try and hush dat mout of yours” (Ladoo, 1974: 3).

Tailor’s ludicrous treatment of his benefactor defies reason, rendering him a buffoon-like signature character. His brazenness escalates throughout the novel as he begins to demand payment for having to put up with Choonilal’s badgering: “Under British Law Choonilal, I go lost you ass in jail. Under British Law you have to pay me for livin

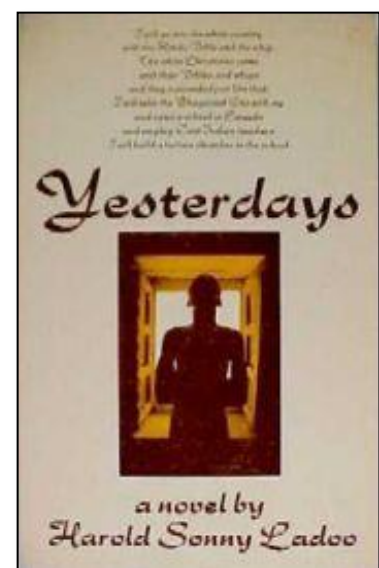
under you house. I goin to sue you for every cent you have in you bald head ass” (p. 18).

Tailor’s absurd assertions can only bring forth chuckles from the readers. Yet on a more serious note, the thought of misusing the judicial system to suit individual interests in what clearly would be a miscarriage of justice if it were to occur, leaves the reader wondering about the mockery of justice a landlord would have to face when irresponsible and dishonest tenants are brought before a court of law. The final ironic twist comes when the emboldened tenant advises Choonilal to “act like a big man” when the landlord duns him for payment (p. 7). In this novel, policemen, lawyers and priests are all quacks who idle, pilfer and cheat the people who have placed their trust blindly in them. Policemen take a whole month to travel a few miles to reach the place to which they have been summoned, lawyers are in cahoots with thieves to manipulate the law to their advantage and *pandits* sell the grace of Godly pretence.

The novel opens in the decadent community of Karan Settlement in Tola on Carib Island, and the stench of feces from the latrines overwhelms the environment from beginning to end. The subject of fecal matter emerges regularly in different scenes. Either the unbearable effluvium interrupts a dialogue or a character pauses to relieve himself/herself, running off to the outhouse in the middle of a conversation. In fact, in the opening dialogue between Choonilal and Tailor, the landlord pleads with his eccentric tenant to clean the outhouse to settle his rent debt which of course is met with objections from the lazy tenant. There is a tug of war between tenant and landlord about who has to clean the latrine. In the meantime, they are suffocating in the intolerable odors. The characters are literally wasting their lives away in their own waste.

In addition, the latrine is the focal point where weird undertakings occur. Despite the unpleasant smells, the characters in one way or another are drawn to that location. For the inhabitants of Karan Settlement, outhouses and their surroundings are the perfect places to engage in secret undertakings, such as illicit sexual liaisons, bestiality, and the consumption of dung. Moreover, the neighbors run off to relieve themselves in each other’s outhouses to avoid adding more litter to their own. They exchange one another’s filth in a bizarre, unchecked economy of excrement.

A psychoanalytical interpretation of the text might position the author at Sigmund Freud’s psychosexual anal stage. According to some interpretations of Freud, an individual’s personality development is hampered or



stunted if he/she becomes fixated in any one of the four stages (the oral, anal, phallic, and latency stages) that ultimately lead to the normal adult fifth stage (the genital stage). Following Freud's theory Ladoo's scatological depictions of bodily excretions might reveal his fixation at the anal stage and his inability to progress past this phase. Consequently, Ladoo's characters exhibit characteristics of the anal-expulsive personality, such as, recklessness, carelessness, obsession and insubordination. All of the characters in *Yesterdays* are paradigmatic exemplars of one or more of these anal traits.

Basdai, Choonilal's wife, although doomed to live in this pit of vipers, at least possesses the presence of mind to procure an education for her son Poonwa. As a responsible mother she realizes that if her son is to have a brighter future, he must escape the profligacy of Karan Settlement and go to school with the missionaries in Canada. Choonilal does not want Poonwa to attend school; he wants him to work on the sugarcane estate instead. It is Basdai who has the courage to speak up for Poonwa, but to do so she must wage a constant battle against Choonilal.

When Poonwa completes his elementary education, Choonilal wants him to learn a trade such as mechanics or welding. Again Basdai uses her influence to prove to her husband that it is better for Poonwa to go to college (pp. 33-34). This scene is reminiscent of that found in fellow Trinidadian author, Samuel Selvon's story, "Cane is Bitter" in *Ways of Sunlight* (1957). In "Cane is Bitter" the mother likewise wishes her son Romesh to advance himself through education but the father Ramlal sees no value in it: "...is all your damn fault in the first place, wanting to send him for education in the city. You see what it cause? The boy come like a stranger as soon as he start to learn all those funny things they teach you in school, talking about poetry and books and them funny things. I did never want to send him for education, but is you who make me do it." (Selvon, 1957: 61)

Such apathy on the part of parents towards educational pursuits dooms their children to a world of ignorance and keeps them on the lowest level of the social totem pole without any possibilities for advancement. Salick asserts that the Hindu caste system locks an individual into a caste, preventing him/her from moving up the social ladder. Basdai wants to save her son from an uncertain fate. The reader eventually begins to hone in on the 25 year-old Poonwa as the last hope for the Karan Settlement community. Will Poonwa be able to escape his *Janglee* caste or will he become another miserable soul and a victim of his circumstances, anchored to his low-class caste by birth?

Poonwa asks his father for \$5,000 to become a Hindu missionary in Canada, but Choonilal opposes this because he would have to sell his house to sponsor his son. Basdai knows that this is her son's last chance to flee from his putrid environment, so

she devises a plan to help her son convince his father. Taking advantage of the situation, *pandit* Puru, who has been stealing Basdai's money, now attempts to bamboozle them out of their home. Ragbir, Choonilal's neighbor warns him about the *pandit's* scheme: "...Choon as I see it, dat priest playin a game for your property. Believe me boy" (p. 57). After much coaxing, the lawyer and the *pandit* steal Choonilal's property right before his eyes: Now that the priest had Choonilal where he wants him, he doesn't intend to waste time. Leaning out the window he says to Poonwa, "Stay on dat tree wid the rope around your neck. Don't come down till you fadder sign de paper!" "I can't write." The lawyer signs for him (p. 92).

Poonwa is not only the youngest character in this novel, but also the only educated one. If there is someone to be salvaged in this Settlement, it is Poonwa. However, the authorial voice seeps in to adumbrate the futility of salvation for any of these low bred individuals who have been mercilessly trapped in the *Janglee* caste. The reader begins to lose hope as the omniscient narrator mocks the high school graduate's knowledge and education: Poonwa is Hindu, but he is a modern Hindu. He has been emptying his bowels all his life in outhouses. But with a job as a law clerk in Spanish City, he has the good fortune to discover the wonders of a modern toilet. His employer's toilet exercises a special attraction for him. There are no smells; there are no flies; there is always toilet paper; there is that special kind of security which creates an atmosphere of pleasantness: it is so pleasant that Poonwa eats his lunch while he defecates (p. 54). Poonwa's motives for becoming a Hindu missionary are misguided by his thirst for vengeance against the white Christians who flogged him ruthlessly at school in Canada. Due to his obsessiveness, he cannot be saved. For example, his plans for a Hindu mission school include some five punishment rooms, instead of a single punishment room like the Mission School had in Tolaville. Through flogging and teaching he was going to pound Hinduism into his students. Then he would teach them to deny their Canadian culture and he would make them wear Hindu garments. Then he would get merchants from Carib Island to monopolize their trade and divert all of the Canadians' national resources to the West Indies (p. 106).

Despite having obtained the money to go to Canada, Poonwa plunges into the social abyss towards the end of the book when he has sexual relations with Sook, a man who has been marginalized by the community because of his sexuality. No matter where he goes, Poonwa will never be able to escape his caste. He will always be associated with manure and filth. Salick contends that Poonwa's decision to sleep with Sook "seals his fate."

Ladoo's coarse language is appropriately employed in his characters' dialogues, adding credibility to their portrayal as low class individuals who live in squalor. As *Janglees*, the characters' language and demeanor are depicted as uncouth, cacophonous and profane. Their colloquial speech includes constant swearing and filthy language.

To illustrate, Tailor angrily scolds his neighbor Ragbir for not helping him clean the pit: “But Rag you is a modderass yeh,” Tailor said. “You say you do come to help me clean de pit, but you didn’t help one ass” (p. 80).

Similarly, the women’s ways are unrefined and coarse: Although Basdai has had many affairs with Ragbir because he had the longest penis in Tola, she still feels that he is meddling too much in her household affairs. She says hotly, “I is Poonwa modder. He goin to Canada on dat Mission by de hook or de crook” (p. 81). The women are sexualized in this narrative. As Natarajan contends “the representation of lower-caste women [tends to be] ritualistic and libidinal” (Natarajan: 51). Basdai and Rookmin engage in shameful sexual liaisons with men other than their husbands. There is no other possible representation for lower class women but that of sexual object due to their ‘impure’ status.

However, Basdai is the only character who is capable of committing a selfless act. She has her son’s interest at heart. Her actions are prompted by a genuine love for her son. Basdai’s apprehension about allowing her son to remain in Tola is in part due to the societal corruption that she has witnessed: Basdai observes that the college boys and school teachers were the greatest rum drinkers in Carib Island. She points out that labourers on the sugar estates can’t keep up with the teachers. According to her, there are some teachers who spent all their salary on rum (p. 26). Rookmin, Basdai’s friend, has similar feelings about those who stay in the island: “Choon you should send Poonwa. Carib Island have no future for de boy. Send him over man. All de future he have on dis island is to come a police or a postman or a teacher, den drink drink rum till he dead” (p. 58). In other words, Karan Settlement is suited only for those who are beyond salvation on all accounts – the incorrigible, the misfits and the morally corrupt.

To conclude, Ladoo’s premature death, deprived the world of a talented writer – a master of irony, comedy, and colloquial coarseness. His work is able to stir different kinds of emotions: mirth, anger, sadness, intolerance and bittersweet feelings, among others. Some love him, while others loathe him. Ladoo’s impatience and intolerance with injustice prompted him to create works of social criticism that cry out for immediate reform and governmental intervention. Even though both of his novels are tragedies, he is able to provide some comic relief in his second book, *Yesterdays*.

Although the author does not spare any of his characters in *Yesterdays*, imprisoning everyone in their birth caste of *Janglees*, there is hope that those who read his representation of this Indo-Caribbean community will break with the confines that entrap people in an underclass and prevent them from moving upward and advancing themselves socially, intellectually and professionally. In *Yesterdays* Ladoo dispenses with the brutal violence that characterizes his first book, yet ironically, he ends up

dying from a painful, brutal beating such as the ones he so graphically illustrates in *No pain like this body*.

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TRINIDADIAN DOUGLAS AND SHIFTING IDENTITIES

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In today's complex multi-ethnic societies, the imperatives of social interaction require speakers to demonstrate a "repertoire of identity" in which "any of a multiplicity of identities may be fronted at a particular moment" (Barrett, 1999: 318). The varied contexts of human interaction promote flexibility and versatility of language use, testifying to what Barrett calls "a polyphonous, multilayered identity" which speakers construct by using "linguistic variables with indexical associations to more than one social category" (p. 318). Individuals of mixed race with at least two options of cultural allegiance are more likely than others to find themselves in situations which require of them demonstrations of a polyphonous, multilayered identity.

Trinidad's Douglas, the offspring of Indo-Trinidadian and Afro-Trinidadian unions, find themselves in precisely this complex social, cultural and linguistic situation. The complexities of their identity are reflected as much in their unclear and uncertain social positioning in a society of competing ethnic groups as in the linguistic possibilities open to them in their quotidian social interactions.

Etymologically the word Dougla is linked to *dogla* which is of Indic origin and is defined by Platts (1884) as a person of impure breed, a hybrid, a mongrel; a two-faced or deceitful person and a hypocrite (p. 534). In Bihar, Northern India, from where many Indian indentured labourers migrated to Trinidad, *dogla* still carries the meaning of a person of impure breed related specifically to the "progeny of inter-varna¹ marriage, acquiring the connotation of 'bastard', meaning illegitimate son of a prostitute, only in a secondary sense" (Reddock, 2001: 321). The term, however, in its transplanted usage by Indians in Trinidad and Guyana, is employed to designate the offspring of an Indian and an African (Creole) and originally meant "outcaste" (sic) (Malik, 1971: 20).

Malik's fieldwork in Trinidad in the 1960s unearthed the curious fact that many Indo-Trinidadian elites think that the Dougla, "being outcaste, is prone to develop criminal tendencies" (p. 20). Field research for this paper has indicated that some individuals

¹ *Varna* is the Sanskrit word for colour, which was translated by the Portuguese, who were the first Europeans to observe it, by the word *casta*, or 'pure'. The Aryans, light-skinned people with sharp features, created this distinction because they did not want to mix with the darker flat-featured people whom they had conquered. Partly on this basis they established an elaborate caste system. See Daly, 1975: 3.

think that Douglas have inherited the best physical traits from the African and the Indian but have also been cursed with their worst moral characteristics. Curiously, the individual called Dougl in Trinidad and Guyana, is in Martinique called *chappé couli*, from the French “*échappé couli* = escaped coolie”² (Alleyne, 2002: 164). Alleyne adds that this naming perspective was one that originated from the Blacks and suggested that the Dougl child “had escaped some of the flaws, both moral and physical, imputed to the Indian race” (p. 164).

Our ignorance of the fine details of social life among the indentured Indians who migrated to Trinidad between 1845 and 1917 denies us knowledge of the period during which the term Dougl was applied to first generation Indo-Africans and their offspring. In 1933, however, the term Dougl appears in mainstream creative writing as the descriptor for children born to Indian and African parents. C.A. Thomasos’ short story “The Dougl” (Sander, 1978:137-141) indicates that the use of the term Dougl to describe the offspring of Indo-African relationships had attained some currency in Port of Spain. In addition, we are also unaware of the extent to which the circumstances surrounding social and religious conventions among the parent groups led to Douglas aligning themselves to one or other group or to remaining neutral or distant from both.

The term Dougl has undergone processes of semantic expansion and amelioration to denote “all persons of mixed African and Indian descent” (Alleyne, 2002: 230). Fieldwork undertaken for this paper corroborates Alleyne’s statement. All Douglas in the sample population used the term to define themselves. For the purposes of this paper, however, Dougl is the offspring of any combination of African-descended and Indian-descended parents. These parameters are necessary to establish since there are various yardsticks used to measure Dougl identity.

A major problem in establishing a Dougl identity lies in the difficulty of determining who is a Dougl. Perception and self-perception play critical roles in assessing this. This is so because the degree of mixture is always a cause for contention. The degree of Indianness, as Rahim asserts, is the major element in the ascription of Dougl identity. This is corroborated by the fieldwork carried out for this paper. Results of interviews of the sample population suggest that individuals are referred to as Douglas based on the observable degree of Indianness in their phenotype “if they do(h)[n’t] have soft, wavy hair, you might think they still mix[ed] bu’[t] not wit[h] Indian”. There are Douglas who bear to a greater extent the distinguishing marks of their Indian heritage, but there are others who carry the physical characteristics associated with African ancestry. Age, class, education, gender, and regional location also figure prominently in perception and self-perception, and it is not certain how many of those

² Coolie, from the Tamil *Kuli*, meaning ‘hire’, was used and spread especially in the 17th century, by Europeans in India and China for ‘a native hired labourer or burden carrier’. The name was thus attached to the 18th century immigrant East Indian indentured labourers in the Caribbean, at first without stigma. The term is generally regarded as offensive and in Guyana its use in public is forbidden by law. See Allsopp, 1996: 167-168.

categorising themselves in the official censuses as 'Mixed', 'Other' or 'Not stated' may be considered to be Douglas by others, including Douglas themselves. Trinidad's hypersensitivity to colour is another determinant. Light-skinned Douglas may well escape the designation but their darker skinned counterparts – who in some cases may be their relatives – may be unable to do so.

It is also necessary to consider how Douglas perceive themselves in relation to either of the ethnic groups to which they are linked and how they in turn are perceived by those around them, particularly Afro-and Indo-Trinidadians. In fact, at any point in time Douglas can align themselves to one group or the other without claiming a separate identity. On the other hand, because of personal circumstances and experiences, Douglas may disavow either community and declare themselves Trinidadian, thus claiming a national identity as an ethnic identity, as happens in Belize for reasons of affirming allegiance to national sovereignty (Le Page & Tabouret-keller, 1985: 232-243).

Douglas identity is therefore polymorphous and adds another layered dimension to a society described by some as plural and by others as stratified. The advocates of the plural society theory claim that the different ethnic groups retain their separate spaces, mixing when necessary but not merging, while the proponents of the stratification theory hold that the society is divided along lines of socio-economic class. This has resulted in a protracted discussion which is crystallised in a volume edited by Selwyn Ryan (1991). Mapping the language use of some *Douglas* in various contexts, it is evident that in constructing their identity, Douglas draw from a pool of linguistic resources for social interaction available to them via their community.

Trinidadian English lexifier Creole (TrinEC) is an indigenous creole language that serves as the native tongue of most Trinidadians. It is an amalgam linked to the various ethnic groups who have inhabited the island at one point or another. Over time, some lexical items linked initially to a particular ethnic group have attained general currency while others have maintained a symbolic load of signalling ethnic affiliation. Lambert (1979) observes that the tendency of ethno-linguistic groups to cultivate or emphasize their own linguistic distinctiveness was actually heightened during the 1970s. This is significant because it suggests that the Black Power movement and corollary movements throughout the diaspora had the effect of conjuring up a conscious programme which impacted the linguistic and other identity-forming notions for many groups.

Alleyne (2001) theorizing on the link between ethnicity and language in a Trinidadian context, opines that affinity to a particular ethnic group can be determined by the degree of an individual's use of particular elements including, among others, their lexical choices. Therefore, a working hypothesis of this research is that Douglas ethnicity and by extension identity is expressed through lexical and phrasal choices.

In order to test this hypothesis, lexical forms used by each ethnic group to project an Afro-Trinidadian (AT) or Indo-Trinidadian (IT) identity had to be determined. This was done by identifying each group's conscious usage of an item when alternative forms were available or by their unconscious usage of a term because it was the only one they knew or to which they had been exposed. *Ceteris paribus*, Douglas' selection of lexical items should reflect their choice of a more AT or IT identity. But there are problems with this assumption because of the difficulty in recognising etymologically African words in TrinEC, which can be attributed in part to what Baksh-Soodeen (1994: 134) calls the "torturous paths of entry" into the Creole lexicon and in part to the fact that within Atlantic English Creoles Africanisms are masked (Rickford & McNair-Knox, 2006). Conversely, in her study of the relationship between linguistic, behavioural, socio-economic and cultural factors in a Trinidadian village, Rambissoon-Sperl (1980) makes a case for the lexicon being the area in which most IT markers are retained: "It follows that though Trinidad Hindi is still in use today the future prospects are that it will continue to recede and will survive only in as far as it is absorbed into the language of the island as a whole and this too mainly on the lexical level (p. 41)." It is therefore much easier to identify terms used as markers for IT ethnic identification, since etymologically African words have been so long assimilated into TrinEC that their provenance is unrecognizable and largely unquestioned.

This paper examines the linguistic strategies in general and the lexical choices in particular employed by six Douglas individuals to construct and project their identities. In order to achieve this, the paper explores the reason(s) informing the language choices of each informant, insofar as they relate to the inter-connected questions of personal and collective identity. The sample for this study consists of six individuals who were brought up in Douglas households: three males and three females. The sensitivity of the subject matter mandated the assignment of codes to each informant. These were assigned based on their geographical location and gender, such that:

AM is a male Douglas residing in a stereotypically AT community

AF is a female Douglas residing in a stereotypically AT community

IM is a male Douglas residing in a stereotypically IT community

IF is a female Douglas residing in a stereotypically IT community

NM is a male Douglas residing in a neutral community

NF is a female Douglas residing in a neutral community

A number of factors impact on the structure of networks and by extension the behaviour of the persons involved in them. Such factors include physical environment, personal ideals, physical appearance as well as social and personal experiences and influences. It is therefore necessary to explore the character of each informant's community since it may prove critical to understanding why people residing in areas

that are in close proximity to each other manifest inherently different orientations towards the same phenomena. These disparities may have a significant impact on issues of upbringing and by extension may also have an impact on the way social networks operate within the community.

IF, IM and NM reside in Couva-Tabaquite-Talparo, which with a population of some 162,779 is the most densely populated region of Trinidad. This municipality incorporates part of the former stereotypically AT county of St. George as well as all of the stereotypically IT county of Caroni and has as many as six urban centres. The fact that three out of the six informants for this study reside in this region is testimony to the inevitable mixing brought about by shared living space. This mixing, however, did not necessarily translate into merger, and communities within the region still retain their own character and unspoken protocols. **AM** and **AF** hail from Point Fortin, the smallest borough in Trinidad with a population of some 20,208 according to the census of 2011. It is situated in the southwestern coast of Trinidad some 96 kilometers from Port of Spain and 32 kilometers from San Fernando. The population of Point Fortin is predominantly AT. **NF** comes from Tunapuna which is situated in the north central part of the island. This town includes large AT and IT communities. As elsewhere in Trinidad exogamy and endogamy divide and unite the communities.

Socialization, geographic location, as well as the size, composition and character of their networks, in that order, proved to be important factors in determining the use of Indic lexical items by the informants as well as other members within their networks. The informants' first order zones (persons with whom they interact on a weekly basis and are considered meaningful to them) vary in size and composition. These variations appear to be linked to their personality traits, gender, age and the geographic location of their networks. Younger informants exhibit a more extroverted character and list more contacts within their first order zone. The female informants tend to have larger personal networks than the males. **AM** who is twenty-six years old identified some thirty-eight contacts, while **AF** who is also twenty-six named seventy-six. Forty-three year old **IM** listed twenty-two contacts, whereas forty-four year old **IF** listed thirty-one. Thirty-five year-old **NM** named a mere twelve contacts whilst twenty-eight year-old **NF** named one hundred and seventeen. These findings support the literature that states that women generally have larger network structures than do men (Antonucci & Akiyama: 737-749). As a result, *ceteris paribus*, **AF, IF** and **NF** have greater chances for exposure to all lexical items in general, and IT lexical items in particular.

Each network contained a number of clusters constituted on the basis of ties that bind including Kinship and Close Friends, Childhood connections, Schooling and Occupation. The networks of **NF** and **IM** each had four clusters, **AM** and **AF** each had three clusters; **IF** had two clusters and **NM** one cluster. Although different ties were considered to be important to the informants within their networks each one had

a cluster that centred on kinship and close friends and all except one (**NM**) placed value on contacts made during childhood. For **AM** these two types of relations (childhood and kinship/close friends) are fused into one cluster. The quality of the relations within these clusters indicates the extent to which the cluster has an impact on the linguistic behaviour of each informant as well as the extent to which the informant aligns with and hence converges to a specific group of individuals. It is important to note that although separate clusters can be identified within the network the clusters hardly ever interact in isolation, in fact, except for **IM's** occupational cluster, there is a measure of overlap where persons from one cluster share in the company of those from another cluster. As a consequence it is the networks that are investigated and used for a comparative analysis.

Generally, informants' contacts within each cluster included persons of Indian, African, Dougla, "Spanish" and Mixed descent. Mixed individuals are those persons who identify themselves as having multiple lineages. In some cases, the ethnic composition of the entire network was directly linked to the geographic positioning of the network.

One list of Indic words from a variety of semantic domains was collected from interviews of the Dougla sample informants. Another list of words was taken from questionnaires, interviews and recordings of Indo-Trinidadians between the ages of 20 and 45, who profess to consciously use their language to mark their ethnicity, from three semantic domains: 1) Kitchen and its related activities; 2) Kinship and other familial relations; and 3) Insult and taboo terms used within the IT community. These three semantic domains were chosen because Baksh-Soodeen's (1994) examination of lexical retention in TrinEC demonstrated that although there was a general decline in the use of the historically older forms, these were some of the areas where lexical retention was evident among the younger generations.

These lists were combined to serve as a yardstick for measuring the Douglas informants' alignment with and/or allegiance to their IT ancestry. While the combined list is neither expansive nor extensive, it is representative and forms a basis for inquiry into the lexical choices made wilfully or unconsciously by Douglas in specific contexts and within their network structures.

Table 1 provides a summation of the number of items identified by each informant as in use within each domain for each of their networks. The interpretation of this table requires that it be read in two ways: by row and by column. Using the row as the point of entry, the figure listed under each participant (**AM** to **NF**) indicates the number of items in use within the particular domain while the "total" represents the total number of items within the sample for said domain. For example, **AM's** network employs nine words out of the twenty-one listed in the sample under "Kitchen and related activities" and six out of fifteen included under "Kinship". The column reading provides information on the total number of words used by each network for each individual

domain as well as for all words within the sample. **NM**'s network for instance, employs a total of ten lexical items in "Kitchen and related activities", six within "Kinship", four for "Insult and taboo" and eight under "additional lexical items" which equate to twenty-eight words out of the total sample of sixty-five. The table, however, does not indicate the lexical items that overlap, that is, those items common to each network within the sample, and as such the total scores do not and cannot tally to the total number of items within the sample.

Table 1 Total number of words employed in each domain by all networks

	AM	AF	IM	IF	NM	NF	Total
Kitchen and Related	9	13	13	14	10	19	21
Kinship	6	3	13	9	6	9	15
Insult and Taboo	4	3	12	8	4	4	13
Additional Lexical Items	8	6	13	12	8	12	16
Total	27	25	51	43	28	44	65

Table 1 also allows for the observation of differences that occur among the networks situated within the three types of communities outlined by stereotypical geography within the study. Predictably, the networks of **IM** and **IF**, situated in the IT community of Couva, generally employ more Indic lexical items than the other networks while the networks of **AM** and **AF**, situated in AT Point Fortin, use the least. Interestingly, when the total scores for the number of lexical items in use by each network are examined for the informants who live in neutral communities, the results for the male informant **NM** reflect the character of the stereotypically AT network, while the results the female informant **NF** reflect the character of the stereotypically IT network. While this is in part certainly due to the greater chance of females to be exposed to larger numbers of IT lexical items, given their larger networks, it might also suggest a lower level of IT identification among Dougla men than among Dougla women.

Table 2 Total number of recorded IT lexical items employed by each informant

	AM	AF	IM	IF	NM	NF
Kitchen and Related	0	3	0	10	5	6
Kinship	0	0	0	1	1	0
Insult and Taboo	0	2	5	0	1	2
Additional	0	1	7	2	3	2
Total	0	6	12	13	10	10
% of total number of IT items in the data	0	9.2	18.5	20	15.4	15.4

The occurrence of a given lexical item in an informant's network does not, however, necessarily directly reflect that informant's production. Table 2 highlights the actual production of lexical items recorded by each informant within the network.

While the individual production results in table 2 are similar to those found for the use among entire networks in table 1, to the extent that the informants situated in the IT communities (**IM** and **IF**) produce the highest number of IT lexical items while those in the AT communities (**AM** and **AF**) produce the fewest, the totals for production are drastically lower than those recorded for general use in each network. This seems to suggest that while factors such as exposure and upbringing determined the extent to which each informant was exposed to IT lexical items, these particular factors have a much less significant influence on the actual linguistic output of the informants involved. Additionally, in spite of the dense relations existing within each network these relations do not appear to meaningfully impact the production of IT lexical items. The production of IT lexical items tends to be triggered by a combination of co-occurring factors including the situational context, the setting and the presence of participants who utilise IT lexical items.

The analysis reveals that there is no prototypical Dougla identity. In its place are series of identities existing along what can be called a continuum, the extreme points of which mark the sublimation of Douglas into their IT or AT identity while the midway point marks a position of neutrality. While issues of location, upbringing and socialisation may initially place Douglas within a particular ethnic configuration, adult (20-45) Douglas tend to adjust their position as setting, participants and location vary. As a result, the same Douglas may at times manifest an AT identity, at other times an IT identity, and at other times a neutral identity. Interestingly, when Douglas manifest an identity linked to their IT ancestry they do so by employing IT lexical items while their affinity to their AT forebears is marked by an avoidance of IT items. When Douglas appear to be neutral they exercise accommodative behaviour to either side by employing or avoiding IT lexical items as is necessary or convenient. This type of shifting might itself be a distinctive feature of Dougla identity.

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**THE RHIZOMATIC VISUAL, CULINARY AND PERFORMING ARTS OF
THE CARIBBEAN**

THE ‘WEST INDIAN’ FRONT ROOM: REFLECTIONS ON A DIASPORIC PHENOMENON

MICHAEL MCMILLAN
ARTS PRACTITIONER

“The floors are carpeted, often with the high pile carpet locally termed ‘plush’. The furniture consists of thick foam-based seats covered in a fake velvet, arranged in sets of one or often two couches, plus armchairs often providing upholstered seating...The maroon of the upholstery may be picked up in curtains, carpets, coverings for tables, artificial flowers such as roses and countless other decorations, amounting to a general ‘any colour as long as it’s maroon’ principle, or its equivalent in gold/brown arrays. Artificial flowers are extremely common, often set into elaborate arrangements with perhaps half a dozen examples within the living room. There is a buffet which is a glass-fronted cabinet filled with china and glassware. It may also have internal lining of white or maroon plush. Wall decorations will be dominated by a machine-made tapestry with a religious theme, such as the Last Supper...prints of oil paintings with gilt surrounds...Prints with a West Indian theme would very rarely be found in the normative living room.” (Miller, 1996: 136)

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Daniel Miller's description from his essay, *Fashion and Ontology in Trinidad*, echoes an iconic aesthetic found in what was known as the 'front room' that resonates throughout the African-Caribbean Diaspora: from Kingston to Toronto, from Brooklyn to Brixton, from Paramaribo to Amsterdam. Emanating from the Victorian parlour, the front room is a generic term that includes the living and sitting room as the public space in the private domestic domain, where the external world accesses the private world of the family. As an opulent shrine to 'kitsch' furniture, consumer fetish and homemade furnishings it was traditionally reserved to receive guests and visitors and a venue for life-cycle social events: christening, wedding and funeral receptions, it announced that no matter how poor your family, if the front room looked good then you were respectable.

If the front room emerged in a colonial context, how did the realities of diasporic migration, independence, post colonialism and globalisation read neo-colonialism affect shifts in its aesthetics and practices? The Caribbean has a contested past with limited sites of memory that are in a constant process of remaking and the front room is no exception. But by looking at how certain types of memory are created and embodied in the material culture of the front room, we might be able to address some of these erasures and mis-representations in the Caribbean and diasporic context.

Diaspora in this context has to be treated metaphorically as Stuart Hall suggests, "Diaspora does not refer us to those scattered tribes whose identity can only be secured in relation to some sacred homeland to which they must at all costs return..."

It is defined "not by essence or purity, but recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity: by a conception of 'identity' that lives with and through as process, the idea of difference; by hybridity". Hall also argues that identity is a performative process, continually negotiating through a "complex historical process of appropriation, compromise, subversion, masking, invention and revival". In this sense, 'Otherness' is not fixed and predetermined. Cultural identity in this formation is an, "articulation' fostered in a complex structure of diverse and contradictory, yet connected relations" (Hall, 1993: 401). Beyond the essentialising binary opposition between colonialist and anti-colonialist, he proposes a concept of cultural identity as dialectically continuous and disruptive unstable points of identification, made within the discourse of history and culture. This idea that cultural identities can be dialectically continuous and disruptive reveals a duality as double consciousness.

The front room was a contradictory space, where the efficacy of the display was sometimes more important than the authenticity of the objects such as artificial flowers, plastic pineapple ice buckets, floral patterned carpet and wallpaper that never matched and pictures of the scantily clad *Tina* next to *The Last Supper*. The dressing and maintenance of the front room reveals a form of 'impression management' as in the flexible presentation of self, which throws up issues of 'good grooming' amongst

people of African descent. It was very much my mother's room, and as a second generation, black British person from an aspirant working class family of Vincentian parentage, I have ambivalent memories of it. I must confess that growing up I was embarrassed about the front room's aesthetics as it seemed in 'bad taste' or had no taste at all, in other words it was 'kitsch' – a pejorative social code for working class culture.

But through understanding my own family history, I became proud to 'kitsch' and subsequently embraced how the front room had impacted upon my own identity. As I began to develop and curate *The West Indian Front Room* installation/exhibition I became aware how various sensorial stimuli triggered emotional responses and memories in a performative context. It was apparent that the material culture of the front room raised questions about diasporic identities, inter-generational identifications and disavowal; gendered practices in the domestic domain. Institutionally it also raised issues about mis(sed) representations, struggles over meaning and authenticity in museum/gallery culture about the legitimisation and policing of representations of the Black British experience.¹

Registered in the diasporic front room is the trope of etiquette of decorum, protocol, polite manners and proper behaviour performed as rituals of respectability, dignity and self-reserve associated with the Victorian parlour. Aesthetically, the archetypal Victorian parlour included floral patterned rugs, wallpaper, fabric curtains and upholstered chairs and sofas with antimacassar lace dollies (Victorian gentleman used Macassar hair oil) on the backs to prevent soiling. Prized ornaments and ephemera were displayed in a wooden cabinet or on a mantelpiece, ornate framed black and white photographs stood on a lace covered wooden side table or hung from a picture rail running above. And the room was lit from the ceiling or from the wall by baroque styled light fixtures.

This was the idealised parlour that the colonial elite in the Caribbean attempted to imitate as a romantic reinvention of an English home in a 'tropical' climate. Aesthetic authenticity served as a badge of status within their social milieu and reinforced a sense of imperial superiority. So they would often import British made furniture, though ironically this was usually made from wood such as mahogany, originally exported from the Caribbean. The colonial parlour installation has become a fixed image emblematic of the 'tropical picturesque' representations of the Caribbean to entice tourists and reassure them that it is "...an expanded, novel, safe yet still exciting playground and fruit-provision ground for the white visitor and distanced

¹ *The West Indian Front Room: Memories and Impressions of Black British Homes*, guest curated, Michael McMillan (London: Geffrye Museum October 2005-February 2006) This installation/exhibition was first mounted at the Wycombe Local History & Chair Museum (1999) and has since been developed in touring to the Slough Museum (1999-00), Zion Arts Centre/Black Arts Alliance (Manchester 2003), The Albany, Deptford (2004) and at the Geffrye Museum it had over 35,000 visitors. For archive material see www.thefrontroom.org.uk/

consumer.” But as Leon Wainwright points out, with “The hardship, trauma and catastrophe of trans-Atlantic transportation, and lived realities of ensuing centuries of Caribbean dwelling, ... wilfully erased from its framed ideal” (Wainwright).

Looking behind the sofa of this ‘framed ideal’ of the ‘tropical picturesque’, we find erasures that a critical reading helps to map how the parlour of the colonial elite became the diasporic front room. As a guide, reductive concepts of acculturation and assimilation fail to recognise that while colonised people do not control what emerges from the colonial culture, they do determine to varying degrees what is absorbed culturally and what it is used for. The dialectics of cultural hegemony in colonialism are made more evident in Mary Louise Pratt’s study of Creoles that have emerged at specific historical conjunctures. Here she uses the sociolinguistic notion of ‘contact languages’ and refers to ‘transculturation’ as coined by the Cuban sociologist Fernando Ortiz in developing her idea of a ‘contact zone’. “I use this term to refer to social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (Pratt 1999: 62).²

The notion of respectability inscribed in the colonial parlour resonated with an emergent aspirant black middle class in the West Indies and working class in Britain in creating their front rooms. In Richard Wilk’s book, *Home cooking in the global village: Caribbean food from buccaneers to ecotourists*, he sees respectability as a merging of time, space and culture in terms of what he calls, colonial time. Colonial time means that the past is merged with the spatial concept of isolation and the cultural dimension of tradition and custom. The three are aspects of the same phenomena, as time, distance and culture become interchangeable ways to talk about how people, spaces and places are different. Colonial time makes all kinds of cultural difference appear as natural aspects of isolation, backwardness and being stuck in the past. In the colonial system, colonial time served many important purposes, such as transforming consumer goods and furniture like a settee or much less a piano into emblems of progress. “Using these kinds of products was not a symbol of civilisation, it was itself civilised behaviour. The objects really did transform your body and make you civilised.” Regardless of its practical use, colonial material culture was essential to the colonial world in maintaining the flow of colonial time. “... And they had to learn and enjoy and relish these things, to act as if it were a privilege and an honour to be allowed to partake in the fruits of empire...” (Wilk, 160-171).

² Fernando Ortiz cited by Mary Louise Pratt was Cuban essayist, ethnomusicologist and scholar of Afro-Cuban culture.

The West Indian

In the early 1960s, both my parents arrived in England from St. Vincent & the Grenadines and the networks that developed amongst migrants from the same town, village, island, country along with safety in numbers and cultural familiarity affected where families settled. For example, Luton and High Wycombe had many Vincentians; Slough – Anguillans; Brixton and Birmingham – Jamaicans; Paddington – Dominicans and St. Lucians; Leeds – Kittians. Apart from the intra-island contact, there was also inter-island engagement culturally, politically and socially with other West Indian migrants from a region that was geo-politically fragmented along European colonial territorial lines. Part of The West Indian Federation's political collapse was a proto-nationalist chauvinism between different Caribbean countries: big island versus 'smallie' island. In Britain society where West Indian migrants were visibly invisible minorities, a West Indian identity emerged out of solidarity to resist racism that impacted upon and responded to major cultural political shifts mediated by the Civil Rights, Black Power and anti-colonial independence movements.

Migration had generated these social, political cultural networks that constituted an emerging West Indian community and provided the means by which women could share domestic practises, aesthetic ideas and desires for consumer fetish in dressing of their front rooms. Many did find work as soon as they arrived. Finding somewhere to live was a different story. The experience of racism in the rented accommodation sector is a painful memory of the one room cramped and squalid conditions many of my parents' generation had to endure. As families and spouses arrived from the Caribbean, more space was needed but many struggled to find a loan or mortgage. Consequently, the 'Partner Hand'/SuSu, an informal localised saving scheme shared between a small group was used raise a deposit as down payment on a house. Whether in flats or houses, the West Indian front room as a product of diasporic migration began to take shape.

The framing of arrival and ambition

In his essay *Reconstruction work* Stuart Hall looks at images of Post-War black settlement, such as Picture Post's 1956 pictorial essay on migration to England: *Thirty thousand colour problems*. The documentary realism of these images, represents these black subjects as 'social problems' waiting to happen, which echoes a colonialist construction of the 'innocent simpleton', too slow for the fast ways of the advanced modern world. The reality is that, "they are probably from a city, like Kingston, as big and swinging in its poverty and style as any small colonial capital" (Hall, 1984: 4).

Hall, who came to England from Jamaica as a young man, notes that they had dignity and respectability packed deep in their suitcases, they were formally dressed as a sign of self-respect; with pressed dresses, hats at an angle in a 'universally jaunty cocky' style, in preparation for whatever was to happen next. For these immigrants, coming

from the colonies, they saw themselves as British citizens and through education, sometimes knew more about English culture than the English themselves. They inherited a puritanical Victorian ethos, so eloquently alluded to in C.L.R. James's critique of cricket, *Beyond a boundary*, where first impressions mattered in dress. To wear the best garments on special occasions such as attending church, was part of this sartorial principle, and travelling to a distant foreign land was no exception. "Edwardian portraiture and the codes of the formal photograph, a formal icon in the domestic gallery of memories, was as common in poor but respectable homes in Kingston as it was in Kingston-upon-Thames" (James: 4). Style, self respect and respectability were inscribed in one's appearance, the same as in the 'High Street' photo-portraits, where we might find photos of "...the young woman with the gloves and handbag, holding up or being held up by the basket of artificial flowers. The well-dressed young man with the clip-on fountain pens, talking on a phone which is not connected to anything, but sitting on top of a mock-Greek half-column straight from the disused basement of the British Museum." (James: 5)

Frozen in time, these photos composed in artificial studio environments, neither home or work, were how they imagined themselves. A reconstructing out of the subject as document was sent 'back home' to kinfolk and real and desired spouses, in the form photos and letters that often omitted telling them about signs in windows saying "*No Irish, No Dogs, No Coloureds*" while searching for accommodation. There is a structure of 'presences' in photographs, but also 'absences'; the 'unsaid, or unsayable' against what is represented. The erased and invisible narratives of these images are revealed in Hall's comment.

"These people have just survived the longest, hardest journey in their lives...they have torn themselves up by their roots, saved up what for them, considering the annual average wage, is a colossal sum, paid to the steamship company travelling incognito under some assumed Panamanian flag. Half the family is left behind and nobody knows when they will ever be together again. They have just burnt their boats in the determination to carve out a better life for them and their children." (Hall, 1984: 4)

Though they had to daily negotiate the covert and overt vagaries of racism, their ever positive faces, says so much about what is in the frame, but also what is beyond the frame. At some point both my parents had their original black and white passport photos enlarged, hand colour painted, reframed and proudly displayed in their front room. Looking more closely at their and other photographs similarly reproduced, it is evident that light brown flesh tone paint was the predominant colour used in their various makeovers. It is unclear whether this was their choice or simply what was available, but it is a reconstructing out of the subject's ethnic features that plays among the legacy of a racial hierarchy based on a 'pigmentocracy', instituted in plantation societies (Mercer, 1994: 103).

The frame was just as important as the photograph and the front room provides a stage for the display of certain types of reconstructed and reimagined memory, such as censured family portraiture whether ancestral or contemporary. The formal *mise en scene* of the front room is also a site of photographic production providing a safe, controlled space for family portraiture. In *The West Indian Front Room* exhibition we reproduced large prints of photographs by Vanley Burke, Maxine Walker and Neil Kenlock of family and subjects in their living rooms. And in the *Van Huis Uit* exhibition in The Netherlands, there were ten large prints of different migrant family portraits taken by Ting Chan with ‘kitsch’ ornate brass-effect frames.³ Performatively, both exhibitions evoked emotional responses through sensorial recognition, identification even ambivalence for visitors about what they saw, touched, heard and even smelt that triggered a kaleidoscopic body of memories. The dialectic of how the subjects of the front room were represented and how they reconstructed themselves sheds light on the complex practises and processes in dressing this space.

Representations of the front room

Representations of the ‘West Indian’ front room either tend to neutralise it as a site of intergenerational contestation such as in sentimentalised heritage orientated spaces or to over simplify that conflict.⁴ Two events marked a shift in the front room from the trope of formality to the informality of modernity: the arrival of television and 2nd generation migrant descended children becoming teenagers. Before colour television, a transparent green plastic covering could be stuck onto black and white television screens to obtain something beyond black and white, though all the hues were green. And three moments signified television in the West Indian front room: firstly *The black & white minstrel show*, which at its height had over 18 million viewers, but which was eventually banned from the BBC in 1978 after a long anti-racist campaign; the second was the American-produced epic slave drama series *Roots*, based on Alex Haley’s best-selling novel about his African ancestors, which broke viewing records worldwide and resonated with the changing political cultural landscape of British society.⁵

And in the front room as communal family space, the third moment was where *The Fosters*, attempted to reassure viewers, that black families in sitcoms were just as

¹⁴ *Van Huis Uit: The Living Room of Migrants in The Netherlands*, guest curated, (Imagine IC, Amsterdam, January- May 2007) (OBT Midden Brabant Bibliotheek-Central Library, Tilburg, May-August 2007) (Kosmopolis-Stefanus Church, Utrecht, September-October 2008).

⁴ The Grange Museum of Community History, London features a Victorian parlour, Edwardian drapers shop, and displays of domestic equipment from the Victorian era to the 1950's as well as furniture and paintings and local history through the memories of residents. For a number of years it also featured the installation of ‘West Indian’ front room.

⁵ *The Black & White Minstrel Show*, producer. George Inns (BBC June 1958-July 1978) & *Roots*, producer, Stan Margulies (ABC, transmission dates: January 1977-September 1978, Cast included: LeVar Burton, Leslie Uggams, Ben Vereen, Avery Brooks and Kate Mulgrew). See also Haley, 1976.

‘normal’ as white ones, by sanitising cultural and racial difference.⁶ Inscribed in the representation of black experience on British TV, was a race relations agenda about assimilation and so the front room, as emblematic motif, came to signify ‘West Indian’ parents as conservative, upstanding, god fearing citizens, as opposed to their children (read male inscribed ‘black youth’) who came to be represented as problematic deviants. In a number of plays by black writers, the front room became a site of contested cultural identities and race politics. The tone of Caryl Phillips’s description of the main set in his play, *Strange fruit*, suggests this ambivalent relationship.

“The action takes place in the front room of the Marshall’s terraced house in one of England’s inner city areas. Whilst the district is not a ghetto it is hardly suburbia. The room is cramped but comfortable and tidy...a cabinet full of crockery that has never been, and never will be used...In the centre of the display is a plate commemorating the Queen’s Silver Jubilee. In the centre of the room is an imitation black leather settee with orange/yellow cushions...As to the surroundings: the wallpaper is tasteless, and on the wall hang the usual trinkets... As I said the room is cramped, even claustrophobic, but tidy.” (Phillips: 7)

In the Obaala Arts Collective’s *From generation to generation: the installation* (The Black Art Gallery, London 1985), there is “...a realistic simulation of the respective living rooms of two generations.” Two rooms are constructed and dressed, like a stage set, with the first room symbolic of a ‘typical’ living room of West Indian parents: “a female mannequin is poised over an ironing board, the iron flex connected to the light bulb socket above ... opposite, another mannequin, male, dressed in a British Rail uniform and sitting in an armchair with a radio in his lap.” (Francis: 41). Reached by a dark passage, the second room is by contrast, alive with music, books and a canvas in the shape of the African continent, stretched on a black frame on which is inscribed the names of African heroes: Patrice Lumumba, Walter Rodney, Amilcar Cabral, Kwame Nkrumah. There are two mannequins: a male dressed in a tracksuit and a female in a batik frock. The domesticated room of the ‘older generation’ suggests a quaint and naive image fixed in the past, while the undomesticated room of the ‘younger generation’ is highly cultured and politicised. Ironically, here a domestic tradition is disavowed for the reconstruction of a contemporary domestic space. In setting a context, the artists’ notes said of African-Caribbean parents, that...

“... their general attitudes, towards their children’s behaviour (was) (they should be seen and not heard); to the language they used (and attempted to use)

⁶ *The Fosters*, dir. John Donley & Kurt Taylor (London: London Weekend Television, transmission dates: 9th April- 2nd July 1976, 1st series, 16th April - 9th July 1977, 2nd series, Cast: Sharon Rosita, Lenny Henry, Isabelle Lucas, Norman Beaton, Lawrie Mark, Carmen Munro).

especially when addressing their children, tried hard to follow the adage ‘when in Rome – do as the Romans do’ and sought to polish up their ‘bad talking’ and speak ‘the Queen’s English’”. (Francis: 41)

In Errol Francis’ critique of this portrayal, he sees an over-domestication of the older generation in the idea that West Indian parents wanted their children to be ‘seen and not heard’, because it echoes a well worn stereotype that blames black families for their own oppression by enforcing draconian discipline in the home. This simplistic representation of the older generation negates their activism in labour struggles; they set up voluntary welfare organisations and mounted protests about the inferior education of their children in the British school system. Therefore, as Francis asks, “Can we accept the characterisation of our parents as virtually illiterate, save the Bible and correspondence courses?” (Francis: 41)

Francis wonders how on the basis of this caricature, the younger ‘second generation’ were able to keep alive patois/creole traditions from the Caribbean if these had really been suppressed in England. This suppression also occurred in the Caribbean, therefore the question is not whether, but how, where and by whom patois/creole read ‘bad talking’ was suppressed, hidden and used. The cultural hegemony of colonialism reflected in the ‘Orientalist knowledge’, coded the ‘Other’s language as bastardised, pidgin and uncivilised. Said, 1978). It is this psychic inferiorisation of ‘Nation Language’, which has “provided a systematic framework for the political analysis of racial hegemonies at the level of black subjectivity” (Fanon, 1993: 37). It is the duality of the archetypal ‘speaky spokey’, who spoke or (attempted to use) the ‘Queen’s English’, better than the Queen. The proverb of the older generation that, ‘when in Rome – do as the Romans do’, can now take on a double meaning in our discussion of how inter-generational identifications are signified in the representation of the front room.

The tropicity of maroon

In framing the diasporic front room as a ‘transcultural contact zone’ we need to interrogate some key figurations of its aesthetics, practices and ideology, not as an imitation of white bias and ideals of beauty, but rather a creolisation where “...there is no such thing as a pure point of origin” (Hebdige: 10). Part of this analysis involves translating the performance of respectability as the practice of ‘good grooming’ and moving beyond the ‘colonial time’ of the British West Indies to the post-colonial or relatively post-independent Anglophone Caribbean. In this context, we can reinterpret the ‘high-pitched repetition’ of tropical tropes – ‘the framed ideal of the tropical picturesque’ not as shameful kitsch aesthetics but a tactful response to everyday realities of the diaspora. Krista A. Thompson argues in *An eye for the tropics: tourism, photography, and framing the Caribbean picturesque* that

“...in a world that ‘underdeveloped’ the Anglophone Caribbean, tropicalization in the contemporary Caribbean maybe viewed as a strategy employed by postcolonial governments to capitalise precisely on the ‘overdeveloped’ world’s dreams of tropical to realise their own national dreams and global aspirations.” (Thompson: 262-263)

Tropicality can therefore be a tactical identity that in the context of the diasporic front room is contingent on the desire to affirm a sense of order and social aspiration through the aesthetics of the ‘tropical picturesque’. Tropicality in the domestic interior gives pleasure as a counter to the harsh realities of the external world. And what is not often acknowledged is how Post-War black settlers struggled to acquire a front room and how displacement, exile and alienation affected the meaning of that space in terms of ‘arrival’ and ‘ambition’. The front room could be an ostentatious display of wealth through material reality, but it was also a treasuring for tomorrow of dreams that had been deferred. In his essay, *Aspiration and attitude...reflections on black Britain in the nineties*, Hall uses ‘frontlines/backyards’ as a metaphor in the context of exploring the meanings of an emergent black British identity. “In the public realm, frontlines are the politicised edge between black culture and white culture; backyards are where some less confrontational, more informal, more complicated, private negotiations might take place...” (Hall, 1998: 38)

The front room is a metaphorical ‘frontline’, because through its aesthetics and domestic practices, it displays a subtle ‘politicised edge between black and white culture’. This ‘edge’ is a performance of private ‘backyard’ imagined and reconstructed narratives, mediated by desire, status, difference, race, class, gender and generation. “Maroon is a colour which is red but not red, but it is more Englishanese, North Americanese, Europeanese, I have never been there (England) but I believe they use a lot of this reddish off-reddish in their upholstery” (Miller, 1994: 214).

Within the Caribbean diaspora a West Indian home can usually be identified by its exterior decoration, which often gives a sense of its interior. The brickwork might be covered with pebbledash, the pointing might be outlined in white or painted in bright non-primary colours such as aqua blue, orange-yellow or even maroon. The gate and front wall might be similarly covered with perhaps cockerel garden ornaments, potted plants and flowers adorning windowsills and hanging from the porch. Coming through the front door of a ‘West Indian’ home in Britain, there might be a maroon coloured passage carpet with heavy floral patterns covered by a clear plastic ‘runway’. These patterns symbolised the thick, lush tropical vegetation of ‘back home’. Insurgent Africans, the spilt blood of Jesus Christ, the West Indian cricket team’s colour, maroon has many meanings, and more prosaically it hides dirt well. It’s ambivalence as a word invites a rethinking of the concept of difference, as put forward by Stuart Hall in his usage of Jacques Derrida’s anomalous ‘a’ in ‘*differance*’, which challenges any fixed meaning and representation of difference. This ‘strategic and arbitrary’

conception enables a rethinking of the positioning and repositioning of Caribbean diasporic identities, suggested by Aimé Césaire's and Léopold Senghor's metaphor: *Présence Africaine*, *Présence Européenne* and more ambiguously, *Présence Américaine*. "The dialogue of power and resistance, of refusal and recognition, with and against *Présence Européenne* is almost as complex as the 'dialogue' with Africa. In terms of popular cultural life, it is nowhere to be found in its pure, pristine state." (Hall, 1993: 400)

'Good grooming' as performance does not reveal all there is to know about black subjectivity, but it does reveal the mythic nature of black popular culture, as a theatre of popular desires. "Popular culture carries that affirmative ring because of the prominence of the word 'popular'" (Hall, 1992: 21). Popular culture always has its base in the experiences, the pleasures, the memories, and the traditions of the people. What Mikhail Bakhtin calls the 'the vulgar' – the popular, the informal, the underside, the grotesque is always treated warily by the dominant tradition (Bakhtin, 1986). Cultural hegemony as Gramsci argued is made, lost and struggled over, just as Carnival was appropriated and reconstructed to subvert and transgress the power relations between master and slave (Gramsci, 1971). The unpacking of the aesthetics and cultural practices of the front room reflects a blurring of boundaries between 'high' and 'low' culture, between taste and style, which connects to the "dialogic interventions of diasporic, creolizing cultures" (Mercer, 1991: 57).

The hoarding of 'nice things'

To unpack the complex subjective negotiations around identities, consumer desires and ontology practised in the front room, Daniel Miller proposes a duality in two related concepts: the *transcendent* and the *transient*. The setting for his anthropological research is the oil boom in Trinidad during the 1970's, which transformed the lives of the poor, wealthy and *nouveau riche* alike. Materially, this short-lived boom found its most manifest expression in people's homes, cars and clothes (Miller, 1996: 137). Semiotically, in the diasporic vernacular, the *transcendent* has an equivalence in the practice of 'good grooming' as a register of respectability as discussed earlier that alludes to the notion of 'colonial time' as a civilising process as suggested by Wilk.

The *transient*, however is registered in *reputation* that in the Caribbean drew on African antecedents to value public performances of speech, music, dance, sexual display and prowess. We could see reputation as local and respectability as foreign or the former as masculine and the latter feminine. This sense of ontological empowerment could be applied to the rest of the Caribbean, when we consider the trope of being 'more British than the British' as exemplified for example in the archetypal 'speaky spokey' persona, who spoke or attempted to speak English better than the Queen. As adjectives, verbs and nouns *follow-fashion* or *never see, come see*

and *poppy-show* or *extra* serve as descriptions of consumer fetish and desire in black popular culture.

As modes of expression, the transcendent signifies a desire for conventional form in “artificial things which are viewed as long-lasting, and things covered over which are seen as cherished for the future.” Whereas the transient is concerned with the expression of style as a “highly personalised and self-controlled expression of a particular aesthetic”. The dialectic of the *transcendent* and the *transient*, is that fashion can be an agreement to conform and to struggle as “a symbol of transience and disconformities” (Miller, 1996: 137).

The interplay between transcendent and transient sheds light on the contradictory nature of the front room, as a dialogue between being seen to conform to conventions in fashion; certain standards of taste; dealing with the realities of everyday life and finding one’s own style. The frisson of consumer fetish is not necessarily what women see in the shop front window, but perhaps it in a context which illuminates its aesthetic value, such as in another woman’s home.

By applying Miller’s duality to the front room a paradox emerges, which is that while the composition of the front room expresses personal taste that testifies to our social, cultural, political and historical identities, its materiality reflects collectively shared ideas about aesthetics and practices in the domestic domain. There maybe a strategic desire for authenticity, but the difference between what the front room should look like and what it really looks like depends practically on what resources are available. In other words, making do tactically as an everyday practice.

Colonial education was rudimentary and limited and for those whose parents could not afford to send their daughters on to further education, training in sewing, domestic science and crocheting (a form of knitting thread with a hooked needle propagated by the missionaries) became a valid alternative vocation. In the Caribbean the *Dorcas Club* (based in the local church) there was a gendered intergenerational sharing of sewing, dressmaking, knitting and crochet skills. And like quilting groups in the United States, the *Dorcas Club* offered mutual support.⁷ Though crocheting had largely disappeared in Post-War Britain, West Indian women revived these skills using it entrepreneurially to supplement their income and through elaborate colourful patterns they reappropriated crochet and creolised it. The decorative appearance of sculpted starched crochet dollies would often enhance the lavishness of an array of ornaments from ‘blow glass’ fish to vases of artificial flowers. Furniture, ornaments and soft furnishings were ‘cherished for the future’ as acquiring them often involved working longer hours, personal sacrifice to save, financial discipline to maintain payments for hire purchase (H.P.) goods or collecting hundreds if not thousands of

⁷ Rose Sinclair – Notes from her PhD research into crochet, gender and race (Goldsmiths College, London-2006).

Green Shield stamps exchanged as vouchers for goods that were chosen from a catalogue. The economics of the front room's material culture generated a range of innovative craft techniques, such as artificial flowers made from stretching recycled stockings stained with food colourings over sculpted coat hanger wire or stitching together carpet remnants to create a unique patchwork.

These domestic pragmatics extended to clear plastic covering over sofa upholstery or the 'runway'/passage carpet. From the 1970's onwards when intra-diasporic travel became more widely accessible, these North American domestic practices suddenly became in vogue. Windows draped by elaborate lace net and pleated curtains of rich colourful fabrics and colours was another form of covering, though having the curtain's best side facing outwards could be seen as covering up – 'dressing up the street' or 'just for show' – what the home didn't have. Curtains announced respectability and maintained privacy providing the ability to see and not be seen. At Easter and Christmas, rituals such as 'Spring cleaning' brought renewal throughout the home, where curtains were taken down, washed and replaced.

Sensorial memories

The smell of *Windolene* used cleaned to windows triggers memories of those 'Spring cleaning' moments, but also suggests that embodied in the materiality of the front room is a sensory landscape that also includes sound, touch, visuals and taste. The paraffin heater used kerosene fuel and provided a mobile and versatile form of domestic heating that could be used to cook on or heat up the hot iron comb used to straighten hair. At school, it was easy to tell which girls had used a hot iron comb the night before, from their shiny and stiff hair or from the burns on the back of their necks. Unless it was lit properly or used blue paraffin, it would smoke with black toxic fumes and its acrid smell was virtually impossible to remove. Consequently, the 'proper' fragrance of the front room was created with air freshener products. In school it was evident which families had not 'progressed', because their children's clothes reeked of burnt paraffin oil. Added to sensorial ambivalence about the paraffin heater are the traumatic memories of it seducing children to its warmth or fascinating them by its power, only to burn them or cause an all too common fatal fire.

West Indian migrants were often not welcome in English run churches and consequently they founded their own churches or used the front room as a space to hold bible and prayer meetings. The front room became a site where West Indians could express their religiosity through pictures, homilies and ornaments. Religious prints depicting the life of Jesus Christ were *de rigueur* and classic amongst them was *The last supper*. Homilies on plaques, plates and scrolls had biblical quotes such as Psalm 23 – ("The Lord is my shepherd...") or phrases such as "Jesus is the Head of this home". They were good luck charms in a home aware of demonised African-based religions such as Voodoo (Haiti), Pocomania (Jamaica), Winti (Suriname),

Shakerism (St Vincent) and Santeria (Cuba & Netherlands Antilles). Juxtaposed beside them might be *Tina* by J. H. Lynch, a print of a woman staring provocatively, with lips slightly parted and bare shouldered. After the Second World War shops like Woolworth's sold large numbers of these colourful and sentimental or 'exotic' prints such as the pseudo-surrealist *Wings of love* by Stephen Pearson or *The hay wain* by John Constable. They were affordable and livened up the homes of a population fed up with austerity. Many West Indians adopted this style of English prints for similar reasons, but they put them together with other things, in different ways, than would be found in English working-class front rooms.

Souvenirs from trips to seaside towns such as Margate, Blackpool, and Great Yarmouth collected by predominantly female black church congregations, projected the image of a seasoned traveller. Decorative plates, straw bags and ornaments with the name of an island painted, stitched or embossed on them denoted a sophisticated worldliness, even though these may have been brought back by a friend. The black velvet wall scroll (it was actually made from velour not velvet) with a tourist map of a Caribbean island were reminders of 'back home' and embodied a sense of pride and belonging. This was later replaced by flat varnished wooden clocks carved in the shape of the same island. And when Cassius Clay changed his name to Muhammad Ali, he came to symbolise the popularisation of black figures from the civil rights and black power movements. As such, his portrait would be framed and captioned, just like that of Dr. Martin Luther King and his family. All these juxtapositions were usually mounted on floral patterned wallpaper reminiscent of the colourful vegetation in the Caribbean, though the really sophisticated look was baroque velvet flock wall-coverings in maroon. In the Caribbean there wasn't much demand for wallpaper, but in lower income homes, the walls of front room/living room spaces might be covered with newspaper and magazine clippings that conveyed dreams of consumer fetish. The advent of cable television broadcast from the United States only served to reinforce desires for commodities and glamour, in the perception of the 'foreign' as the 'Other'.

Often excluded from pubs and clubs, many West Indian migrants would entertain themselves in the front room and central to this was the prized *Blue-Spot* (after popular models made by the German manufacturer *Blaupunkt*) radiogram. Its turntable needle armature's movement regulated how vinyl records were dropped and played, and imported music could provide a spiritual escape and memories of 'back home'. Sundays were reserved for the country and western crooner Jim Reeves and other religious inspired music. Known as 'Gentleman Jim', he recorded over 400 songs, "from traditional Country to pop, from Afrikaans folk songs to international standards, from novelty numbers to duets, from narrations to secular songs, from seasonal offerings to waltzes, from his own big hits to his covers of the hits of

others.”⁸ Reeves was reappropriated by the ‘older generation’ though he is still popular across the diaspora. The reason maybe that he typically sang about transcending the trials and tribulations of everyday life in recurring themes of loneliness, love, infidelity and loss that echo the Hymns, Spirituals and Gospel of the black Christian Church, which sang of the “intense desire and yearning to transcend the misery of oppression” (Mercer & Julien, 1994: 199).

Normally, access to the front room was restricted for children unless it involved the weekend cleaning ritual or being paraded in front of a stranger who would often comment on how big they had grown. Children often became waiters, bringing over the drinks trolley with the plastic pineapple ice bucket, though accessing glasses in the drinks cabinet was off bounds as only the mother was allowed to open it. With its glass door and shelves and possibly a light inside, the drinks cabinet had no other function than to store and display rarely used lavish glass and chinaware. The side panelling was invariably decorative, sometimes with buttoned cloth material or with clock on top that rarely kept the right time.

Iconic amongst the drinks favoured by many West Indian women was *Babycham*, *Cherry B* or *Stones Ginger Wine*. There were also homemade beverages such as punches made with condensed milk and spices (known as *milk & stout* or *Guinness punch*) with pineapple or carrot; or with seaweed to make *Irish Moss*. Stem ginger was used to make ginger beer, Mauby bark for *Mauby* and the hibiscus flower was soaked and drained to make *sorrel*, which was drunk at Christmas. For an added kick, a bit of rum was mixed in. Food wasn’t normally eaten in the front room, but *Black Cake* made with minced fruit soaked in rum and black wine might be offered to guests there. . For connoisseurs the quality of black cake depended on its moisture and how well the minced fruit had been soaked. Other snacks included coconut drops or coconut tart, sweet potato pudding and the obligatory peanuts. As the chatting *commess* (gossip) warmed up with scandals, secrets and stories: “You hear Miss Smart die?” “Sugar?” [Diabetes] “Pressure as well” [High blood pressure] children were often sent on some spurious errand or were simply asked to leave the room.

Ah room fe she self

The making of the front room signifies on one level the black woman’s aspirant mobility, through her financial independence from men. It was the fruits of her labour, “through the slog of long, remorseless and difficult work” on show in the front room and the associated gendered practices in the domestic domain that contributed to the narrative of post-war black settlement (Hall, 1998: 42).

In the dressing and maintenance of the front room, it was women who were judged on the basis of ‘good grooming’ in the domestic domain. Washing, cleaning and cooking

⁸ Steve Morewood - sleeve notes in ‘*Jim Reeves: The Ultimate Collection*’ (BMG Entertainment International UK & Ireland Ltd 1996) Ballads.

rice and peas, amongst other Caribbean dishes were other elements of ‘good grooming’. These practises, along with crocheting and ‘Spring cleaning’ rituals formed part of a moral code, which fused religion, hygiene and the Protestant Work ethic: ‘Cleanliness as next to godliness’ and ‘y the sweat of your brow, thou shall eat bread’. This ethos would find expression aesthetically, in the presentation of the home and self, where order meant beauty.

This was not a simple imitation of white bias and ideals of beauty, but rather the consequences of having to negotiate dominant ideologies and regimes of power, which objectified race in the realm of the domestic. As Anne McClintock points out, the domestic was a construction in colonialism to maintain hegemony over the division of labour at home and the subordinate ‘Other’ abroad. In the representation of the domestic and popular culture, the black subject has either been erased out or stereotyped as an object of servitude, caricature, fear and desire. The first adverts for soap for instance, used the ethnic signifier of skin colour, in depicting black people as unclean and dirty, which was a code for savage and uncivilised. Inscribed in the use of soap, was the maintenance of Christian civilised values, as an antidote to moral chaos and disorder (McClintock, 1994).

Black women didn’t exist in the colour supplement advertising of kitchen and other domestic commodities. Her (un)-domestic representation in popular culture was that of the ‘black mama’ of Aunt Jemina pancakes and other exoticised objects in colonial construction of domesticity (McClintock, 1994). In reply, Maxine Walker’s series of images, *Auntie Linda’s Front Room* (1987), restages the familiar terrain of the Sunday colour supplements. Her starting point is to claim “a woman’s room of her own” as an allusion to Virginia Woolf’s *A room of one’s own*, as a means of interrogating the photographic document which frames individual identity and experience in terms of material objectivity (Woolf, 1977). The series plays with human presence, just as in the regular supplement feature, the documentary image claims to represent all that makes the subject individual, by putting under public scrutiny the material evidence of private life. Walker though, is suggesting that material reality remains incoherent and ambivalent as the sum of individual fragments, until they are invested with specific and subjective meaning. With Auntie Linda’s presence, objects of functional utility and ornamental decoration, which surround her as she sits on the edge of her settee, hands calmly placed together on her lap, suggest an order and coherence of her own. The image is transformed from reality into representation, through the layering upon layering of memories and experiences as fragments, resisting any complete interpretation. Ultimately the framing excludes as much as it contains (Tawadros, 1992: 90).

The practice of buying to ‘put down’ and hoarding ‘nice things’ in the front room made it a museum of archived memories. As the lives of West Indian parents became

increasing complex the close material arrangement was a metaphor that expressed their desires for the extended family and community to be close. But as children become parents and grandparents themselves, they saw the front room ambivalently as 'hoarding' for a better tomorrow that never came: deferred dreams.

The proverb that 'my son will be my son until he marries a wife, and my daughter will be my daughter for the rest of her life' highlights the notion of mother daughter relationships in the legacy of the front room. Many grown-up daughters, my sisters included, have negotiated and attempted to impose their own consumer desires in their attempts at 'upgrading' the aesthetics of their mothers' front rooms. This has often been a source of tension between mothers and daughters because what is at stake in this dialogue is defining gendered intergenerational identifications and disavowals about womanhood and practices in the domestic domain. And from responses to *The West Indian Front Room* exhibition, it is evident that while many daughters may disavow their mothers' domestic aesthetics, they have unconsciously imitated similar styles and practices in dressing and maintaining their own living rooms, and the rest of their homes. In a post-colonial context, the front room deserves further study because it raises questions about modernity and migrant aesthetics, the process of decolonisation and the subjective desire to redefine oneself through material culture in the home.

Remittances and the 'Returnee'

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Returning where we started, to understand how the front room/living room in the Caribbean developed aesthetically after the hiatus of migration to the diaspora, we have to look at remittances sent home by relatives abroad. It is well documented that remittances from the developed to the developing world far outweigh international aid. And if we at look many contemporary living rooms in the Caribbean, we find material sent in 'barrels' and parcels from the loved ones overseas.

An often ignored aspect of the West Indian migrant narrative to Britain is the experience of 'Returnee's': those 1st generation migrants who are after a period of time living and working in the UK returned 'back home' to the Caribbean. In fact, there is a temporal phenomenon associated with the experience of the returnees in that the longer that they have lived and worked in Britain and therefore the longer they have remained away from their home of origin, the more difficult the readjustment to a culture and society that has changed during their absence. Moreover, the Returnees have themselves changed, having transculturally absorbed a British identity and an English culture in their everyday lives. It is often said that indigenous Caribbean people can identify someone from their island, village and community who has been away through subtle shifts in their language, pronunciation and idioms, not to mention customs and everyday practices. This has a particular poignancy in a diasporic context

because the Caribbean is part of the developing world and as such there is still a popular desire is to go 'ah foreign' and experience life in the developed world.

On a subjective level, the folkloric myth of *Johnny just come*, the tale of someone who returns home from a period of time in the colonial centre is still relevant. The returnee may come back to the community where they grew up, with local people all eager to see how their prodigal son/daughter has changed signified by dress, mannerisms and language. In Franz Fanon's *Black skin, white masks*, he recounts a story where the returnee sees an old man using a garden tool and cannot remember its name or use. The old man who is not easily fooled drops the garden tool on the returnee's foot who suddenly remembers its name and use (Fanon, 1967).

Consequently, there is a common perception that returnees return with patronising attitudes and it is inevitable that conflict arises because of difference in terms of presumed acculturation and identity. From the returnee's perspective there is also a sense of alienation from the culture of their birth and ambivalence with what it now represents for them. Moreover, the returnee's position may be similar to that of a tourist, because of the impossibility of reconnecting with a culture that may no longer exist. Yet there is a nostalgic desire to reconstruct the past in terms of tradition, customs and practices, as it provides a sense of belonging. even though this maybe artificial.

One of the most powerful symbolic expressions of returnees is through material culture and their display of it. It is almost expected from the people left behind that the more time a returnee has been away, the more they should have to show for it. Hence, the narrative of returnees packing up all that they have accumulated as immigrants (often in a sea container) and shipping it 'back home' to be reconstructed in a home that they have either built or bought that represents materially in terms of status what they have achieved in their time away. The returnee perception is that through this display of material wealth they will acquire a higher status from that which they had attained when they left, thereby allowing them to reposition themselves in local community/society. But this can be a pejorative interpretation of a returnee's motives for returning 'back home', which can be just as varied and practical as their reasons for leaving for Britain or elsewhere in the first place i.e. better opportunities, health, family, etc.

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RECIPES FOR NATIONAL CULTURE IN GUADELOUPE AND MARTINIQUE

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French colonialism in Guadeloupe and Martinique rendered local cuisine inferior. Like the “handicrafts” Frantz Fanon describes in *The wretched of the earth*, what could be seen of native cuisine became under colonialism “solidifie[d] into a formalism which is more and more stereotyped”, and like all national culture, “reduced to its dregs” (Fanon, 1986: 286).

De Quérillac’s (1931) *Les bonnes recettes de Chloé Mondésir* offers a particularly blatant example of colonialist cookbook writing, claiming to document “the simple and honest food that let us know and appreciate Chloé Mondésir, an adorable Capresse with golden sapodilla skin, sparkling finery, and precious jewelery”¹ while at the same time warning that “Every coin has a tail; Chloe, jealous, is vindictive. ‘*Padon pas ke guéri bosse*’ she says [pardons do not heal the wound]. And so you can see her sometimes on moonlit nights leaning over a black cauldron where strange brews boil. Her brow furrowed, her eyes sparkling, she murmurs the mysterious incantations thanks to which the perfect philter will know how to prevent or to cure the infidelity of her lover.” De Noter’s *La Bonne cuisine aux colonies: Asie-Afrique-Amérique* (also 1931) exemplifies a more tempered combination of paternalistic animalization and idealization that characterizes the French stance in regards to its colonies and what I will call the culinary colonialism of most French Caribbean cookbooks published through to the 1970s. Though De Noter begins his preface with the qualification that “this useful book does not have the least literary pretention” his words echo the “luxury, calm, et voluptuousness” of Baudelaire’s *Invitation au voyage* as he describes his subject as “colonial, or rather exotic, culinary art, that our cooks, in their pride as masters, term ‘savage Gastronomy’ because chemistry plays no role, in the countries, blessed with sun, where these dishes are born and where everything that grows, thrives, is sowed and reaped almost without care, forms the patrimony of our colonial brothers” (p. xiii).

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¹ All translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated.

Can Guadeloupean and Martinican cookbooks, this paper asks, counter French culinary colonialism? Can Guadeloupean and Martinican cookbooks convey vibrant, innovative articulations of local tradition that come from and speak to “the people” and “[give] rise to a new rhythm of life”? (p. 240). Can they offer recipes for national culture?

My analysis will focus on the prefaces and introductions of representative cookbooks and look briefly at one representative recipe, *boudin créole*.² I examine three aspects of each book: the perpetuation of or resistance to colonial rhetoric, the stated and/or implied audience, and the articulation of dynamic culinary art. In this way, I consider the colonial or anticolonial positioning and the articulation of national culture in Fanonian terms, although I also consider what these cookbooks have to tell us about evolving notions of nationhood.

But first, a thorny question: What exactly qualifies a cookbook as “Caribbean” or “local”? Which leads to more, difficult and oft-repeated, questions about Caribbean authorship and readership: Does a cookbook have to be written by a Caribbean “subject” in order to be Caribbean? How do we determine Caribbean subjectivity? Is there a local audience to be addressed? In other words, what Guadeloupean or Martinican would need or use a cookbook?

Cookbooks as a genre fall into an exacerbated version of the debate about local audience that runs throughout Caribbean writing. In literary circles, the debate plays out primarily in questions about writing in Créole versus writing in French. A reductive version of the complex problem is this: a Caribbean audience alone would not and could not support the sale of books necessary to make publication and a writer’s life feasible. Caribbean writing must take on addressing outside as well as inside audiences. The key questions, then, are: How does it address these necessarily multiple audiences? Does it include local audiences in its direct address, even if it also includes others? Does it pander to and repeat stale stereotypes of the Caribbean in its form and content, or does it innovate? It is tempting to say that the case of the cookbook is special because local cooks don’t need cookbooks, and to a certain degree that may be true, but if the cookbooks are vibrant and exciting they will speak to the same local audiences that will buy Caribbean literature, crafts, and artwork.

André Nègre, author of *Les Antilles et la Guyane à travers leur cuisine*, was a close associate of several other French-born gastronomists who made their homes in Guadeloupe and Martinique and wrote similar cookbooks.³ Nègre’s 1970 book asserts the importance of gastronomy in national culture and the existence of Antillean

² In a longer piece, I will also consider calalou, accra, colombo, and coupe z’habitants and look at glossaries, artwork, organization and range of recipes.

³ Ary Ebroïn, author of the 1972 *La Cuisine Créole*, and André Veille, author of the 1975 *Da Mathilde*, 325 *recettes de cuisine créole*, belonged, with Nègre, to Rôtisseur clubs. Nègre’s book contains several pages of advertisements for Veille’s restaurants and hotels and lists Ebroïn’s book in its glossary.

gastronomy.⁴ At the same time, Nègre establishes a cultural hierarchy where “On the base of French cuisine, in other words on almost perfect principles, [Antillian cuisine] has been able to combine Carib memories, the roughness of the buccaneers, the brilliant strength of the Blacks ripped from Africa, the delicacy of *hindou* dishes. But above all in this sensual climate, in the vegetal exuberance fed by a strong sap, Antillean gastronomy has known how to use and to marry perfectly the strong tastes and the strongest smells of the most varied spices” (p. 11). With his orientalist and colonialist rhetoric, Nègre follows so many well intentioned others propagating the dominant discourses of French colonialism. Nègre’s formulation of his intention to “fix, once and for all, the old local customs in ‘black and white’ if we do not want them to be completely forgotten a few decades from now” conveys not the shift of a dynamic oral and practical culture into an emerging written one, but the final capture of an already ossified tradition (p. 17). If Nègre’s book succeeds in praising and preserving Antillean cuisine to a certain degree, it is in the manner of the colonialists who, according to Fanon, “become the defenders of the native style” (p. 242) in order to prevent its evolution, it is for the benefit of tourists who want to preserve local color rather than for the revitalization of national culture.

The Martinique and Guadeloupe volumes in the *L’inventaire du patrimoine culinaire de la France* series of the late 1990s and Christiane Roy-Camille & Annick Marie’s (1999) *Les meilleures recettes de la cuisine antillaise*, offer an important recent variation on Nègre’s position, with a rather different form of address to audiences on and off the islands, and a different articulation of the preservationist intention. Roy-Camille and Marie’s introduction speaks to “tourists who, every year, come in greater numbers to seek in the French Antilles sun and a change of pace, are more interested in Creole cuisine, and with it in the true culture of these islands” (p. 7), but also to “the inhabitants of Martinique and Guadeloupe” who “should recognize themselves without difficulty” as well as a third audience, Caribbeans living abroad: “We would also like for this modest book to serve as a link to Antillians who have come to live in the Metropole (p. 7). Prefaced as an extension of the *Patrimoine culinaire* series, which in the 1990s compiled information on local products and dishes from all of France’s regions, *Les meilleures recettes* shares their achievements: “By rescuing from dim memory old recipes that were in danger of disappearing forever with the changing times, they have completed a work of memory for the entire Martinican society. Future generations will thus hold intact the originality of the products that established the reputation of the Martinican patrimony” (Martinique: 7) and their goals “We hope that the reader will find as much pleasure in the (re)discovery of these true gastronomic treasures as we have had in exhuming them from still lively

⁴“Gastronomy is part of the Art of Living; it is an important element of the esthetic of life, the Antilles and Guyana, who know this, have thus created their own Gastronomy, made up of elements of the diverse civilizations that have come together here, and from local culinary creations” (p. 14).

underlying memories. These variations on tradition and gastronomy can be infinitely modified and promise to remind you of many forgotten flavors” (Guadeloupe: 7).

Like Nègre’s, these books perform the ethnographic work of documenting traditional recipes, but the formulation of that work conveys a very different project: here traditional recipes belong to living and creative memory that once set down in writing will continue to evolve. The fantasy of the exhumation, of the ethnographic/colonial resurrection and rendering in signs perhaps lives on, but readers and cooks who use these recipes can be like Fanon’s storytellers who “used to relate inert episodes” but “now bring them alive and introduce into them modifications which are increasingly fundamental” (Fanon, 2010: 1442). However, while these books articulate a national culture for the “Martinican patrimony” and the “Guadeloupean patrimony”, respectively, they do so under the auspices of the “French patrimony” to which the former are subsumed, so that when they refer to “the Metropole” it can only be one, and it cannot be on the islands. That these books share nearly identical prefaces with all of the books in the series and that little if any mention is made of the role of French colonialism in the history of the islands sets them up as parallel to other French regions, a project that as much as it is equalizing in the sense of establishing “*égalité et fraternité*” between Martinique, Guadeloupe, and the other French departments, eschews Martinican and Guadeloupean “*liberté*” or the lack thereof.⁵

If the *Patrimoine culinaire* cookbooks are tied up in a neocolonial nation-building project where France presents Guadeloupe and Martinique to themselves and to the French as French, the extension of French colonialism into departmentalization also allows Guadeloupeans and Martinicans to speak from and to the Metropole in new ways. Marie-Magdeleine Carbet belongs to the generation of Martinican writers who lived through the transition from colony to department and who, from both Martinique and France, created a body of work that, through its exploration of the problematics of cultural identity in the Antilles, established what can be called a national literature of the Antilles. Carbet’s numerous novels, short stories, children’s stories, poems, and essays explore in particular the complex interplay of race and gender in Martinican society and in the lives of Martinicans living in France.⁶

In 1978, Carbet published *La cuisine des îles ou le bon manger antillais*. Carbet’s preface addresses an audience living in France, and her language smacks of culinary colonialism, but it certainly sees Antillean cooking as living memory and evolving present: “In Guadeloupe and Martinique countless traditions of the good old days continue vivaciously. In particular, the French one of good eating. Adapted to the climate, of course. In other words, cuisine strong in flavor and smell; hospitality

⁵ The practice of a people who “imagine themselves as a nation [...] despite the lack of a strong movement to create a sovereign state” is one of the subjects of Jorge Duany’s *Nation on the move: the construction of cultural identities in Puerto Rico and the diaspora* (p. 7).

⁶ For discussion of Carbet’s literary works, see E. Anthony Hurley.

generous as the tropical land and light” (p. 9). Perhaps, as E. Anthony Hurley finds in Carbet’s poetry, the recipes serve not as the articulation of a national identification or culture that precedes the writing, but as the vehicle through which Carbet explores and establishes their possibility and wrestles with her own ambivalent position as a Martinican living in France. The idealization of the Caribbean “tropical light” can be read as more nostalgia than exoticism. The naming of the French tradition of “good eating” as that which is continued in the islands might not so much prioritize France as the source of all culinary tradition as put it on a par with other traditions kept alive on the islands. That the words gastronomy and culinary are not used in relation to French tradition, and that it is described as “adapted to the climate” render it one of the many elements that make up the creole mix.

Carbet certainly addresses a French audience, but also Antillians living in France: “Today, the revitalization of stores and markets allows almost anyone, questions of money aside, to eat the products of his or her soil – Antillians first and foremost” (pp. 11-12). That she refers to Antillians without asserting her belonging in that group and that she refers to the Antilles as “there” rather than “here” might make it so that when she addresses herself to “you” elsewhere in the introduction she means both French-French and Antillian French, two groups to which she feels an ambivalent sense of belonging. And when she suggests modifications like buying *boudin créole* at a butcher’s shop, she may not be cow-towing to French cooks but supporting Antillean butchers in France and encouraging Antillean cooks in France to recreate as easily and as often as possible their national culinary culture. While there has not been the same outpouring of Francophone Caribbean cookbooks as that which accompanied independence in the Anglophone Caribbean – there has been no independence for Martinique and Guadeloupe – the twenty-first century has seen a few cookbooks join, and extend, Carbet’s work.⁷

Stéphanie Ovide’s 2002 *French Caribbean cuisine* holds the distinction of a preface by the grand dame of Guadeloupean literature, Maryse Condé, that compares cooking to writing and painting and that claims in no uncertain terms the creative dynamism of Guadeloupean and Martinican cuisine and refuses French culinary and political superiority. But Ovide’s book is written in English, and even Condé’s preface addresses a North American audience. If this cookbook is an articulation of national culture, it is not in any way directed at a national audience, not even one living in France. Ovide might belong to a new generation of transnational Caribbeans who articulate a “Caribbean of the mind” or what Benedict Anderson calls “long-distance nationalism”, and who prioritize regional, pan-Caribbean or diaspora affiliations over island-specific or colonial-linguistic ones. But there is no evidence of that in Ovide’s introduction to *French Caribbean cuisine*, or in those of other recent Caribbean

⁷ For further discussion of cookbooks in the Anglophone Caribbean, see Lynn Marie Houston: 28.

Diaspora cookbooks like Myriam Lothér's 2010 *La cuisine antillaise de ma grand-mère*.

Ovide's introduction to the Appetizers section, starting with "The Creole *apéritif* (the time for pre-dinner drinks and snacks) is directly inspired by French culinary tradition and culture" might illustrate that phase of colonization where, in Fanon's words, "the intellectual throws himself in a frenzied fashion into the frantic acquisition of the culture of the occupying power and takes every opportunity to unfavorably criticize his own national culture, or else takes refuge in setting out and substantiating the claims of that culture in a way that is passionate but rapidly becomes unproductive" (Fanon, 2010: 1440). Perhaps, however, as Condé writes, Ovide's recipes themselves succeed in being neither "a collection of grandmother's recipes" nor "tourist-oriented, ready-made and superficial" but rather "elaborate and accessible at the same time. [...] draw[ing] their originality from family secrets [...], the fruit of encounters with local master chefs or [...] the outcome of personal research. They are rooted in modernity. They do not break with the best traditions" (p. 12). Such would be the recipes for national culture.

And how much does anyone, especially if they are familiar with the food and even the recipes it contains, actually read the introductions to cookbooks? Indeed, the cookbook that seems most directly written from and addressed to a local audience is the one that has neither author nor introduction. The little 2009 *Les fameuses recettes de la cuisine antillaise* does not include a glossary or an explanation of Antillean products or spices as do all of the other cookbooks. *Les fameuses recettes de la cuisine antillaise* also does not bother to explain how to "desalinate cod" like many of the others. And it includes one thing absent in any of the other cookbooks: a note for each recipe about the difficulty and the cost. The cost calculations clearly relate to local markets in Guadeloupe and Martinique, and the concern with cost addresses an audience doing quotidian home cooking rather than one conducting exotic experiments or reminiscing about holidays in the tropics.

Perhaps *les fameuses recettes* initiates the final stage in Fanon's outline for the free state, and with a national cookbook addressed to a local audience the time for a free and independent Martinique and Guadeloupe will finally have arrived. *Les fameuses recettes* is certainly an important book, but I think it fills in rather than replaces a new kind of national culture that Carbet, Ovide, and Lothér's books convey.

The recipes for *boudin créole* offer a case in point. "*Boudin créole*", like *calalou* and other staple traditional dishes, appears in every cookbook written before the early 1970s. The recipes for *boudin créole* are long and complex. Carbet's recipe, however, gives only a few general remarks about what makes a good *boudin créole* and tells how to cook ones that you have bought, Ovide mentions *boudin créole* only in passing, Lothér leaves it out altogether, and *Les fameuses recettes* includes a simple recipe with no ingredient list or measurements. These signal cultural vibrancy in

Fanonian terms, and also the extension and reconceptualization of national culture. Staple traditional dishes, as well as traditional methods of passing down recipes, are so alive and well, *Les fameuses recettes* does not need to go into great detail about how exactly to make *boudin créole*.

At the same time, national culinary culture is adapting to commercialization and commodification and is continuing *créolization* under the guises of reclamation and recombination, import and export. As *boudin créole* becomes less frequent in Antillean cookbooks, new dishes appear. Carbet, Ovide, and Lothier claim as their own some dishes that were once patently French, like “Babeth’s Lentil Soup” (Ovide: 56), and develop unique creations at once “worldly” and “local” like “Alain’s Poyo and Codfish” (Ovide: 116), “Ginger caramelized goat” (Lothier: 88), or “Honey vanilla prawns” (Lothier: 115) that can and will be cooked around the world by tourists who become the economic base for national recoveries, and by Caribbean peoples for whom writing and reading cookbooks are simultaneously acts of deterritorialization and reterritorialization.

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GRENADA'S TRADITIONAL MAS: THEATRE, HISTORY, RELIGION

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A confluence of European and West African beliefs in an island environment is the basis for the religiocultural characters discussed in this article – a flamboyant pierrot called the ShortKnee, the darker Vecco (a figure very similar to the Haitian Baron Samedi which artist Jean-Michel Basquiat used in many of his works), and the Jab Jab or Devil Mas. These characters which make up the traditional annual masquerade of Grenada's carnival, were created post-Emancipation by a creolised population to reconnect with an ancestral familiar. From a visual art perspective, through original and reinterpreted artwork, this article discusses the importance of theatre, history and religion in the emergence of these characters, and their place in contemporary Grenadian art.

On the morning of March 18, 1649 Jacques-Dyiel du Parquet's expedition fleet dropped anchor in the horseshoe bay of Grenada's Carenage. Within a week, the first town, Fort Annunciation, was founded on a landspit on the edge of the adjacent freshwater lagoon. Half a century later this town was abandoned for a better location on the western side of the bay, the beginnings of present day Town of Saint George. The landspit sank some time in the 1800s (Steele, 2003).

Grenada's traditional mas follows in the footsteps of historical antecedents – West African Gelede and Egungun masquerades and the European genres of *Commedia dell'arte* and religious Passion Plays originally performed in the streets – to amuse spectators and supplement the local economy. French settlers imported masked pagentry as part of their pre-Lenten Carnevale to La Grenade (the island's name under French rule from 1651 to 1763). Masking, an integral part of African religious culture, withstood the horrors of the Middle Passage, and a significant number of the people brought to this island developed a special Christian interpretation based on surviving elements of African spirituality (Thompson, 2010; McDaniel, 1998; Warner-Lewis, 1991). Adoption and adaptation allowed African slaves of diverse backgrounds to preserve and nurture African traditions that would later become recognised as an important part of Grenadian culture, threads of a complex memory tapestry woven to

access the power of the ancestral world in the absence of a single African nation to rally behind (Steele, 2003).



ShortKnee-Vecco confrontation; ICON 2011

The ShortKnee is a symbol of a cohesive cultural identity evolved from several Yorùbá stronghold villages of Grenada. The costume names the character, and the name dates back to the 1920s and refers to double-width pants worn gathered at the knees, as knee breeches or culottes worn instead of full-length trousers *sans culottes* (Taylor, 2009; Soboul, 1972). Troupes of thirty or more players are each disguised in a West African-influenced restyled French Pierrot costume constructed from a total of six and a half yards of a collage of heavily patterned fabrics. The costume comprises a white towel hood, a painted wire mesh mask, a sleeveless *tabarde* or tunic embellished with mirrors, a blouse with double length sleeves fastened at the wrists, and the knee breeches. Dark stockings, ankle bells, white shoes and a bottle of white talcum powder top it all off. Completely concealed from head to toe (hood, mask, tunic, blouse, pants, socks, shoes), each ShortKnee player represents the embodiment of African ancestral power, as in Egungun masquerade (Babayemi, 1980). Players procession in waves, with rhythmic foot stomping, chanting, whistles and ankle-belled feet hitting the streets. The use of white powder acts both as performance gimmick, and as ritual representation of Orisha worship (Bascom, 1993). As they approach a village or crossroads, the ShortKnee parade circles in a manner observed among the Yorùbá peoples of Africa, in the belief that circularity brings peace and healing. (Thompson). The ShortKnee are said to roll into a place – as opposed to walking –

possibly derived in part from the Yorùbá verb to parade, *yide*, which includes the verb *yi*, meaning to roll (Taylor).

Early Emancipation festivities allowed the newly-freed to dress in costumes made from found clothing and other objects, bushes and leaves, household and agricultural implements, and celebrate in the streets, from as early as daybreak or *jour ouvert*. The practice of *jour ouvert* 174 years later, is still the standard opening of the annual Grenada carnival, referencing this traditional way of celebrating. The Jab Jabs, descendants of the original devil mas portrayals, the Jab Molassie, are the first to appear...and in recent times, to dominate. As with many street performances, the audience is encouraged to extend gratuities to honour the performers for their work. Gratuities in the Grenada carnival context however, though not obligatory, ensure that patrons will not get (too) daubed, greased or powdered as part of the carnival experience, as this verse from a Jab Jab song suggests – “Gi' Jab a coppa, To pay 'e passage, To go back to hell!” (Payne, 1990)



Faces of the Jab

Molasses holds fragments of memory from the plantation era – both in our West African food retentions and its use as a viscid costume for a particular traditional carnival masquerade. To contain uncontrolled burning of sugarcane fields, slave gangs

from surrounding properties were most likely mustered to the sound of horns, conch shells and whips. Post Emancipation, burnt sugarcane (French *cannes brulées*) anglicised as ‘canboulay’, is perhaps the event which gave rise to the Jab Molassie, the Molasses Devil, setting the stage for an annual roasting of the dual authority underpinning slavery-religion and the law.

The original Jabs drenched their near-naked bodies garlanded in chains or thick rope, with molasses, freedom symbol and revenge – robbing the profits of the estate and using a blackened blackskinned body to speak out against society’s refusal to acknowledge their involvement in and contributions to the agricultural and industrial production of sugar (Aching, 2002). But if sugar was ‘green gold’, then molasses surely was ‘black gold’ – then and now, the prohibitive cost of molasses has required that adjustments be made. As a result, Jab Jabs, as the entire genre is now referred to, are covered in either dark oil and grease, or coloured muds or body paint of white, red, green, yellow and blue, sporting a chamberpot or similar headwear adorned with cattle horns. In the Yorùbá Culture the cowhead and other horned figures symbolise power and strength of the ancestors’ spirits, thus the wearer of a horned headress becomes a ‘horned embodiment of power’ (Pencheon, 2000).

Impersonation of ancestral spirits is usually connected with festivals surrounding agricultural activities – similar in concept to activities typical of the Grenada plantation setting, from which the Jab Molassie came. A whip or stick, an occasional live snake, a pitchfork and a rope tail complete the costume. Whistles, conch shells and drummings add to the confusion of the masquerade’s defiant stance against plantation life. Grenadian group Moss International’s 1991 hit song ‘Jambalesse Rule’ – speaks to the Jab Molassie rising from the ashes of the canboulay to take charge of their future: “... remember we tradition, for this camboulay jamabalesee ruling this time...”

Religious belief motivates the production of art to express faith. For example, Grenada’s Amerindian rock art (erroneously referred to as Carib Stones) provided artistic transmission of religiocultural knowledge from South America to this island in its pre-history. So too this religiocultural transmission appears in the costuming and identity of several characters of Grenada’s Traditional Mas, including the devil figures in the complex Jab Jab portrayals and the Orisha spiritual tradition referenced in the use of the ritually important color white in the ShortKnee’s head covering, shoes and talcum powder (Bascom, 1993). Evil spirits are warded off with chest mirrors which function as charged sacred objects. Of the two Vecco types, one is based on the garments of hooded Catholic priests, while the other is based on a Voudou figure with particular links to magic, ancestor worship and death. Both figures wear a painted cross on the front of their costumes.

When the 2011 carnival theme ‘Uniquely Rooted in our Rich Ancestral Traditions. Spicemas: Home of 100,000 Jab Jabs’ raised public outcry against Jab Jabs, the

Spicemas carnival website description “Blackened with stale molasses, tar, grease, creosote or mud, and wearing little more than their horned helmets, these masqueraders in previous times set out to terrify onlookers with their grotesque appearance and repulsive dances” did little to defuse the controversy (SpiceIslander Talkshop, 2011). In the process, other elements of our ‘religion-based-history’ traditional mas came under fire. The Vecco, as well as the use of live snakes, dark and coloured substances, and white powder were vilified as being a form of Obeah, a West African practice of folk medicine and religion found throughout the Caribbean since the time of slavery.



Forward the Line. ICON 2011

In 1825, the Consolidated Slave Act made Obeah, witchcraft and any pretense at communication with the Devil and other evil spirits illegal and punishable by death or transportation. Obeah is still illegal under Section 143(1) of the current Grenada Criminal Code as an offence against Public Order, Health and Morality punishable with imprisonment. The principal carnival regulation in force is the Carnival Regulation Act, CAP 41 of 1917. This and several subsidiary rules speak to punishments of imprisonment, caning and monetary fines which seem contrary to the celebration of traditional carnival. Included in the Act are prohibitions against: (i) appearing in costume likely to ridicule any practiced religion (see the Christian symbols on several costumes); (ii) spraying, smearing, or daubing persons with any substance (ShortKnee’s powder, Jabs’ oil and paint); (iii) wearing masks (almost all players do so); (iv) carrying whips or sticks; (v) wearing spiked footwear; etc. The Act

further states that during the carnival no person shall ‘play the masque known as jab jab or vie cour’, ie Vecco.

Despite lengthy British rule, Grenada maintained its French rootedness. Attraction to mystical elements in French religious rituals has become part of our creolised faith complex that draws amply from known African traditional religions, strong African connections and cultural memory (Murrell, 2010). Expressive offshoots present in the Vecco, Jab Jabs, and ShortKnee characters (among others) represent hybrid exemplars of this phenomenon. Seeking to make illegal in part or in sum any of these religious offshoots, may run counter to the Freedoms of Expression and of Religion enshrined in the Grenada Constitution.



Guyave Vecco, After Basquiat: ICON 2011

The word Vecco is a reduction of the French words *vieux croix* (translated as ‘old cross’). The Vecco figure types are masked and based on either a priest/monk figure or an undertaker. The Vecco mask is either a whitened face or a skeleton-type mask representative of death. There have been Roman Catholic priests and chapels on this island since the first settlement was established – Du Parquet’s expedition included at least one Franciscan Capuchin monk. Much later, Dominican priests established missions as well. Their standard long hooded garments with wide sleeves are the genesis of several variants of hooded and fringed Vecco costumes in solid colours, brown and white, black and white, red and black, red and white, purple and orange, blue and orange, purple and yellow, and other complementary combinations.

The Vecco undertakers are figures very similar to the top-hatted Baron Samedi of Haitian Voudou tradition, also known as Baron La Croix or lord of the cross, one of a family of spirits that embody the powers of death, represented as a mortician. Both figure-types carry whips, sticks. En masse, they parade in chorus to pronounced stomping of heavily-spiked and cobbled footwear. Originally garbed in either all white (deemed the High Priest), all black or white and black, over the years, allowances for

color have been made and the undertakers are now colored similarly to their hooded Vecco counterparts – maintaining tradition while making the masquerade more of a carnival spectacle. Further artistic adaptations of this character include combinations of Jab Jab headwear and ShortKnee type masks.

In the 1980s, Jean-Michel Basquiat used Baron Samedi references in several artworks reflecting his Haitian background (Brooklyn Museum, 2005). These include *The Guilt of Gold Teeth*, 1982; *Brother's Sausage*, 1983; *Aboriginal*, 1984; *Wine of Babylon*, 1984; *After Puno*, 1987; *The Dingoes that Park their Brains with their Gum*, 1988 and *In Irony of the Negro Policeman*, 1981. In these examples, the Baron Samedi figure is coloured either black or white and wears a tall hat, both elements associated with death and the dead in Voudou (Braziel, 2008). Ironically, he also created two works similar to the Jab Jabs – *Devil*, 1982 and *Pink Devil*, 1984.

My Basquiat-inspired works – *Gouyave Vecco*, and *Jab 'pon Jab run from Sun* – are based on Grenada's Vecco and Jab Jab performers. The other works included in this article are taken from my 2011 exhibition, 'ICON: ShortKnee as Art', where I inserted the Grenada ShortKnee into a series of works by western artists who used the Pierrot as their muse, in a bid to highlight the importance of an indigenous character as an art object/subject. Several of the works show interaction between Veccos, the ShortKnee, and the Jab Jab, as well as the cross-pollination of the costuming.



Jab 'pon Jab run from Sun – after Basquiat

Basquiat's work examined the legacy of the colonial enterprise and his relationship to that legacy, confronting New York art challenge number one – transforming himself and his heritage into something new ... and named (Thompson). My Traditional Mas oeuvre is an ongoing project about 'what Grenadian art is', twisting the conventional dialogue about Grenadian cultural identity through carnival masquerade. This ensemble has benefitted from several influences, including: (i) a 190-year old turnstile of Franco-Anglo one-upmanship to corner the insatiable market for slave-grown

products; (ii) the general structure of the transatlantic slave trade which concentrated peoples from broad regions into limited African coast ports from which ships sailed and their subsequent movement between colonies and plantations, including slave smuggling and illegal exchange, and (iii) Grenada becoming a centre for Yorùbá cultural practices in the New World between 1843 and 1865 when more than 6000 ‘late to arrive’ Yorùbá, brought to Grenada as indentured servants, enriched and displaced other West African traditions (Warner-Lewis 1991, McDaniel 1998).

Despite a shared regional trajectory, Grenada is the only island with this unique combination of traditional portrayals of mas based on our plantation history (Phillip, 2011). Without due acknowledgement, valorization, and attention, and without exploration of this uniqueness, if we are not careful, several other characters may also be criminalized and classified as ‘threats to public order, health, and morality’, such as: (i) Pizané (from the French *pisse en lit*, ‘bedwetter’) masked men wearing transparent women’s nightgowns with attached visible red (menstrual) cloths and carrying rum-filled chamber pots; (ii) Snakesmen – men in buccannier-type costume sporting snakes around their necks; and (iii) Moko Jumbies – eighteen-foot tribal spirits on stilts. Each deserves exploration as a visual art subject in its own right.

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CAN THE MIDNIGHT ROBBER SLAM?

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While many familiar with Trinidad and Tobago (TT) Carnival may have some idea of who the Midnight Robber is, far fewer probably know that an emerging generation of TT spoken word artistes has transposed this Carnival character to the slam poetry stage. But can the Midnight Robber slam? What are the aesthetic and socio-cultural implications for Carnival and for spoken word poetry when this transposition occurs? Below, I outline some of the most immediate concerns related to the poetic, performative and festive similarities and divergences of the two forms, and reflect on their implications for Caribbean artistic traditions more broadly.

Who is the Midnight Robber?

A quintessential badass of TT Carnival, the Midnight Robber is at once revered and feared for his devilish “robber talk”. This autochthonous TT masque, or traditional character, first emerged in Carnivals of the early 1900s deploying an unmatched performative bravado through outlandish costume influenced by US cowboy imagery. Mobilizing dire threats and braggadocio about his impressive genealogy to hold up spectators, the Midnight Robber’s verbal barrage is crafted to intimidate. His sharp tongue is used to accost Carnival spectators and get them to give up some cash. Prevalent in Carnivals from the early to mid-twentieth century with bands numbering from thirty to forty members, the Midnight Robber, along with many traditional mas’ characters, had almost disappeared in the shifting Carnival ecology of the 1960s with the advent of fancy or pretty mas’ practices. The Midnight Robber resurfaced energetically in popular Carnival imagery in Peter Minshall’s 1980 acclaimed *Danse Macabre* Band, whose main character, a giant Midnight Robber skeleton, was crowned King of Carnival. Inspired both by Minshall’s band and his memories of Midnight Robbers from the Carnivals of his youth, cultural activist Brian Honoré led much of the efforts to more thoroughly revive the character in Carnivals thereafter. Founded in the 1990s and led by Honoré until his death in 2005, the *Mystery Raiders* Midnight Robber Band features Robbers who weave contemporary social and political commentary into traditional robber talk and can still be seen parading the streets of Port-of-Spain at Carnival time.

Who is the Slamming Robber?

Yet the Robber's revival is not limited to Carnival practices. A contemporary generation of TT spoken word artistes has also enthusiastically revived the Robber tradition for the spoken word and slam poetry stage. Spoken word poetry – a longstanding tradition in Afro-diasporic oral practices – and one of its many derivatives, slam poetry, has experienced a recent revival among Trinbagonian youth. Many currently practicing TT spoken word poets began to actively work in the form when slam poetry “reached” this current generation through televised broadcasts of *DEF Poetry Jam* in 2004. While performance poetry has long been practiced throughout the Caribbean and in TT as well, since the 1990s, popular slam competition circuits in the United States have catapulted this contemporary form of spoken word to commercialized popularity. Slam poetry is competitive spoken word: poetry judged by an audience of peers, often by an official panel of judges. Since the mid-2000s, the HBO television series *DEF Poetry Jam* and *Brave New Voices* have lent spoken word increased weight in global youth culture and widely popularized slam poetry among Trinbagonian youth. In their revival of the Robber to the slam poetry stage, spoken word poets seek to highlight and memorialize autochthonous Trinbagonian traditions of wordplay while simultaneously interrogating the “pop” vibe of what they consider commercialized Carnival practices and the commodification of culture more generally. These Slamming Robbers therefore transpose the ethos of the Carnival Robber to the spoken word stage in rehearsed poetic competition. But, can the Midnight Robber slam?

Robber a/symmetries

Spoken word and Carnival Robber are obviously similar forms in that both are based on competitive word play and contained within structured performative forums. But their significant differences also immediately surface. In their collective rampage, the Slamming Robbers employ a range of concerns and techniques that address features of the Carnival character but also signal critical departures from the Carnival Robber.

First and most urgently is the Robber's performance space. The Slamming Robber is produced for and delivered outside of Carnival in a spoken word venue. This is reflected most obviously in the structural composition of spoken word robber talk, which is written as poetry and generally adheres to metered rhyming couplets. As spoken word poetry, these pieces re-construct and simulate the aspects of Robber talk each poet particularly values. The spoken word Robber's content additionally reflects its performance space in the ways it is directed specifically to a spoken word forum. This content interprets the Carnival Robber's purpose – to threaten and avenge – through a generational lens enmeshed in current TT spoken word and Trinbagonian culture. Specific lines of poetry indicate that these pieces are directed to a particular spoken word community of peers and not to a generalized, intergenerational audience of Carnival spectators.

This leads to a second major difference: audience interaction. Carnival Robbers perform both impromptu and rehearsed banter between robbers, directed threats to spectators, and individual Robber speeches before the NCBA, and the best Robber is ultimately decided by the rewards he or she receives. While the “all out robber battle” vibe of these spoken word performances reflects one of the Carnival Robber’s purposes to excel in villainous bravado and out-do other Robbers, they are ultimately directed to a seated, passive public. In this sense, they shed little blood – they elicit no cash or trophies from spectators or judges. Yet another major departure is the spoken word Robber’s use of costume and props, which differs substantially from the much-adorned Carnival Robber, described by the Mystery Raiders website as “a cross between Cowboy and Zorro who wears an outlandishly BIG hat, colourful cape, a mock pistol, gloves and a very loud whistle.”

These significant divergences in construction and practice situate the Carnival and Slamming Robbers within very different performance environments. While Carnival Robber’s talk is interactive, impromptu, and street-based, the Slamming Robber performs a stage-centered monologue. Carnival Robber’s talk urges and depends on spectator participation for its own development within a highly dynamic and constantly shifting festive environment; Slamming Robber’s talk is carefully constructed to deliver a pre-constructed message to an audience whose passive participation does not alter or determine the direction of the poetry.

Removed from the festive space in which they deliberately craft challenges, re-presented Carnival practices may expose fissures in the continuity of their aesthetic, socio-cultural and contestatory functions. In this way, the authenticity of Carnival reenactments and the validity of their re-presentations are often called into question. As Milla Riggio (1998) posits, “there is always the question of how a revival mode, with its tinges of artificiality, conjoins the spontaneous celebratory mode of Carnival” (p. 19). The constitution and promotion of revived autochthonous forms through deliberate recreation or practice in spaces where they do not originate (the slam poetry stage) immediately raises questions about the contestatory function of the Slamming Robber. Removed from the festive space where they craft challenges, re-presented Carnival practices perform both literally and figuratively in very different ways from their originals. The character of the Midnight Robber has been variously read as a continuation of West African oral practices, a challenge to US imperialism and a fiercely independent manifestation that takes to the streets to decry colonial oppression through vicious word slinging. While the Slamming Robber similarly serves a contestatory function in its direct challenge to written poetry and insistence on the oral and performative import of poetic interpretations, his/her dramatic recreation on the spoken word stage arguably alters the purpose of the Midnight Robber’s Carnival maraud.

The decision to revive and/or transpose also raises questions regarding how and why a form is chosen for revival. Why the decision to perpetuate “dying” Carnival traditions beyond the Carnival space, and why the Robber? In his critique of Carnival preservation politics, Philip Scher (2002) argues that the representations of Carnival defined and promoted as “authentic” and “traditional” by scholarly, preservationist, and nation-building projects are not representative of the numeric majority of carnival participants, who play pretty or fancy mas’ with big bands. Signaling representations such as the Midnight Robber whose revivals are deliberately promoted by state agencies (such as the NCBA), Scher argues that insistence on these forms “as universal expressions not of a specific class and racial independence from Colonial oppressors, but as an expression of independence and resistance that all Trinidadians might share” (p. 471) universalizes a specifically black, working class version of Carnival identity. Thus, in the way the Midnight Robber is consciously revived by spoken word artists as a “dying tradition”, Scher’s critique would prompt us to ask: whose dying tradition? What relevance does this character have for a Trinbagonian population broadly conceived across racial, gender, class, sexual and ethnic identifications? And thus in its revival, whose traditions are being transposed?

So, can the Midnight Robber slam?

Can this traditional mas’ character be effectively removed from the Carnival space where it was created and transposed to a spoken word stage? In my reading: of course! Although their performance spaces and techniques differ significantly, I read Slamming Robbers as a generational response to the performative function of their predecessor. By its very title, a Slamming Robber signals immediate imbrications with and departures from the original: it is not a Carnival Midnight Robber, nor is it trying to be. Linked through the practice of competitive word play, both forms are aligned with similar concerns and impulses: to show off, to dazzle, to critique, to diss, to herald, and to do so before a community of spectators who participate in judging these practices. As the Carnival Robber before him/her, the Slamming Robber engages Afro-Caribbean practices of wordsmithing in the spirit of Roger Abrahams’ so-called West Indian Man-of-Words, whose “verbal arsenal” enacts a broad range of strategies and techniques (1983: xv). Armed with a contemporary arsenal, the Slamming Robber deploys intellectual and colloquial vocabulary across formal and informal poetic registers, incorporating autochthonous (Carnival) and extra-regional (slam) practices. The Slamming Robber brings a contemporary spin to the Midnight Robber’s wordsmithing, enacting the performative ethos of the Robber – bravado and intimidation, fierce verbal jabs directed at competitors – through the contemporary cultural practice of slam. Wuest’s declaration that the “secret and reactive ambivalence” of the pre-independence Robber’s mockery, which spoke of the desire for “self-determination and free creative expression under colonial rule” (Wuest,

1990: 52) has lost its relevance may well be true. The Slamming Robber has re-versed this self-determination and free creative expression and radically shifted their practices to a spoken word stage. A re-versed incantation of Robber performative practices, ethos and spirit, the spoken word Robber talks a new talk and walks a new walk; his and her rhythms, threats and vibe call not on pre-independence Carnival's challenges to order, but rather, to the contestatory practice of spoken word as an alternative poetic expression from a decidedly TT perspective and aesthetic orientation. Through performance poetry, Slamming Robbers become agents who can dialogue with autochthonous cultural traditions, their historical significance and contemporary relevance. The Slamming Robber is therefore a deliberate re-presentation of the Carnival Robber that builds on and transgresses elemental aspects of the mas' character in both performative technique and content. In their compositional structure, delivery, commentary and references, spoken word Robbers are crafted as slam poetry that mobilize the Carnival Robber's referential significance and techniques within an extra-Carnival performance space. The underlying philosophical cadence of this effort deploys the autochthonous cultural tradition of the Midnight Robber as both critical window through which to reflect on social histories (by highlighting its development in Carnival practices) and the vehicle through which to mobilize its meanings (through re-presentation in the contemporary practice of spoken word as artistic expressive form).

Such a transgression in itself also speaks to the ways in which the Caribbean's genealogy of artistic traditions is in continual revision. Grounded in a long history of Caribbean oral practices yet variously influenced by the cultural matrices of multiple geographic locations, the Slamming Robber engages and departs from highly localized, regional and extra-regional registers. This complexly inter-informed constitution exposes the intersections of localized Trinbagonian performative and globalized poetic registers at work in the revival. In their departures from defining elements of the Carnival Midnight Robber, Slamming Robbers embody the ways contemporary TT spoken word practices are revisionary re-versals of Caribbean poetics. Largely oriented towards raising social and cultural consciousness, TT spoken word practices engage and build on local (Carnival characters), regional (Afro-diasporic traditions of competitive word play), and extra-regional (US slam and global youth culture) traditions at various levels, fueling an invigorating poetry movement situated within a matrix of these influences that in conjunction re-verse the artistic expressions of a generation. Through this reading, the Robber is a palimpsest, a vessel through which performative impulse employs a range of strategies to practice the art of wordsmithing and social critique, self-defense and defiance, performative bravado and carefully crafted verse. In this reading, the Robber is a form in continuous revival.

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UNPACKING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PAN FRATERNITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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Over the last decade, female pan pioneers and their protégés such as Daisy James McClean, Norma Calender, Gemma Worrel-Sealey, Hazel Henley, Rufina Thomas, Eva John, Merle Albino de Coteau, Franka Headley, Dr. Dawn Batson, Dr. Pat Bishop and Jocelyn Pierre, just to name a few, have led the transformation of women's role in pan as player, arranger, composer, business woman, tuner, conductor and educator. The steelpan movement is undergoing a change in its demographics where women are now becoming major contenders within the pan music fraternity. This metamorphosis is taking place in many facets of the music industry in Trinidad and Tobago. Within recent times the role of women has widened in other festival activity within the twin-island economy such as Carnival where most of the revellers are female, in Calypso Competitions where a fair number of women now take part and have an equal chance at winning e.g. Kareen Asche winning the TT\$2 million first prize in 2011 and female Soca performers like Destra, Faye-Ann and Sanell Dempster who have ruled the roost for many years.

This article attempts to provide an overview of the voices and lived experiences of a sub-set of pan women within the pan fraternity of Trinidad and Tobago by giving insight into the new breed of woman who has learnt from the rich tradition of those mentioned above. The basic underpinning premise for this work follows in the tradition of Dowd (2005) and Martin (1995) who position music as a mode of interaction that expresses and constitutes social relations (whether they are subcultures, organisations, classes or nations) and that embodies cultural assumptions regarding these relations. This means that the socio-cultural context is essential to understanding what music can enable and do.

The steeldrum or steelpan speaks to the struggle of the people of Trinidad and Tobago through slavery, decolonisation and independence. Steelpan historian Felix Blake (1995) proffers an analysis of the socio-cultural context for the instrument's development. In particular he alludes to the links between pan, drumming and African cultural resistance and the Canboulay Riots experience which is emblematic of the social disturbances associated with nineteenth century Carnival. According to Dudley

(2002; 2004; 2008) at the Port-of-Spain Carnival of 1881, neighbourhood stick-fighting bands joined together drumming and singing to defend themselves against a police attack and the ever increasing restrictions on Carnival performances. Three years later in 1884, the colonial legislature passed the Peace Preservation Ordinance, which among other things restricted drumming during Carnival. Subsequent to that the drums were replaced during Carnival by an ensemble of bamboo stamping tubes called tamboo bamboo, and it was out of these bamboo ensembles that the steelband emerged around 1940.

Following Trinidad and Tobago's independence from Britain in 1962, the newly-minted national administration sought to change the image of the 'pan-men' in the fraternity and by extension the wider society. This group of musicians who were formally ostracised in society began to receive official invitations to participate and to perform at social and state functions. Corporate sponsorship was also encouraged to provide the bands with funds to purchase drums, and to pay for arrangers, tuners and uniforms. This resulted in more long term collaborations between corporate sponsors and pan-bands which gave rise to the Amoco Renegades, Coca Cola Desperadoes, WITCO Desperadoes, Pan Am North Star, Shell Invaders, and Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) Starlift. This new fangled partnership across class lines paved the way for an enhanced relationship between the upper and the lower classes which led to the erasure of the stigma previously associated with the steelpan lifestyle, and fostered its acceptance by the wider community.

Although the principal focus of this paper is the new role which women are playing in the steelpan fraternity, homage must be paid to the male pioneers of this art form, whose struggle lay the groundwork for a renewed perspective and respect for the national music of Trinidad and Tobago. Winston 'Spree' Simon has been credited with creating the first 'melody pan' which carried eight pitches. This was the first pan that could accommodate an entire melody. Ellie Mannette has the distinct legacy of being the first to wrap the playing sticks with rubber (which softened the attack and produced a more refined tone). He was also the first to sink the surface of a pan into its now characteristic concave shape (this allowed for more pitches to be placed on the playing surface). Anthony Williams invented the 'spider web pan' which was designed in a cycle of fourths and fifths. (Pans with intervallic formulas are easier to tune and produce a higher quality sound). This layout is now the most popular and accepted design for tenor lead pans. Williams was the first in steel pan history to use large 55 gallon drums as starting material for the pans, a tradition that continues to this day. Bertie Marshall was responsible for inventing the double tenor pan. To his credit as well, he recognized the negative effects which the sun had on steel pan and was the first to place canopies over the instruments when they were played outdoors.

As social outcasts, Panmen have been considered noise-makers, violent men, rabble-rousers, vagabonds, and "badjohns". According to Merle Albino-De Coteau in her

2005 thesis entitled *The women's contribution to the steelpan movement*, society is not to be totally blamed for these epithets, since the panmen were notorious for their roguery. Thus it was frowned upon for women to become involved in the steelpan movement. Nevertheless there were women who fought against all the odds and made a significant contribution to the steelpan movement. By the early 1950s women from all around Trinidad became involved in steelpan performances.

Daisy James-McClean, the founder of Harlem Syncopators, made her early entry into pan playing when she joined her brother, Calypsonian Brother Mudada in the band Casablanca (from Belmont) when she was only six years old, thus earning recognition as the first woman to accompany a Calypsonian and play at a Dimanche Gras Show on the eve of Carnival. Norma Callender was known for giving performances as a member of the Hill60 Steelband (Behind the Bridge). Gemma Worrell-Sealey was a member of the Chase Manhattan Savoy's (Laventille) and gained notoriety as a solo performer. Rufina Thomas and Eva John hailed from the East of Trinidad and were members of the Metronomes (Tunapuna). Marjorie-Headley-Mosely was a regular performer with the Nightingales' (Tunapuna). Moving from member to band creator Hazel Henley defied tradition and started Girl Pat, historically one of the most successful girl groups (see *Steelpan history and development; The organisation of the pan movement*).

Given the changing roles of women in the popular music space both locally and internationally, it is neither surprising nor coincidental that women are now active participants in the steelpan fraternity in Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, the reality of the changing demographics of Caribbean societies, where women make up a larger percentage of the population, proportionally more women are being represented in a number of previously male-dominated spheres. Gender bias is becoming less and less of an issue in the popular music arena, as we see soca and calypso spaces opening up to women, with Karen Asche winning the Calypso Crown at the 2011 Dimanche Gras show and Destra Garcia and Faye-Ann Lyons having remarkable success at the Soca Monarch and Road March Competitions over the years.

All of the steelpan orchestras now have female pannists and the major bands have come to depend heavily on female pan-players, as they increasingly out-number men as disciplined players in the panyards. The road to victory is paved with drive, determination, discipline and commitment to hours and hours of practice. Given that women generally seem to show more of these qualities than men, steelband leaders and drill masters/mistresses have increasingly relied on female players to ensure victory at the various pan competitions.

Tia DeNora (2000), a leading sociologist who addresses musical meaning and individual identity, notes that individuals construct an identity (a "me") by using music to mark and document important aspects of their lives via a deliberate meaning-making process. She states that people use "a range of strategies through which music

is mobilized as a resource for producing the scenes, routines, assumptions and occasions that constitute ‘social life’” that is, people use music to give meaning to themselves and their world. Many scholars like Bohman (1999) concur with DeNora when they argue that music is embedded in social life and social relations. We can thus trace the shifting identities of women in the pan fraternity as pan music began to become more and more of a meaning-making vehicle for them as they socialised more and more around panyards and panmen.

In 2012 I conducted several interviews with members of the new generation of female pannists including Chantal Esdelle (composer, performer), Natasha Joseph (composer, arranger, performer, drill-mistress), Avis Bruce (composer, arranger, performer, drill-mistress), Michelle Huggins-Watts (composer, arranger) and Keisha Codrington (composer, arranger, performer). Most of these pan-women report that their main role models have been “the men” in pan in Trinidad and Tobago. Even though these women may have been protégés of Boogie, Ken Professor Philmore, Clive Bradley and Robert Greenidge, they all assured me that female stalwarts like Pat Bishop and Merle Albino-de Coteau left indelible marks on them as well.

In the interviews, these women mentioned some of the challenges that they face as females in pan. They reported that they are still not respected as women, because some men believe that women cannot play as well as men, they are often paid less than men for similar quantity and quality of work, older men in the pan fraternity believe that they should not take instruction from female drill-mistresses, and little consideration is given to the fact that as sole caregivers their family life is negatively affected due to long hours of practise in the panyard.

Music and its meanings inform people quite profoundly about who they are. Women who have decided to make their life’s vocation one of being involved in the pan fraternity, whether by playing/performing, composing, arranging, drilling, lecturing or continuing to support from the sidelines, have all re-assessed themselves and their identities through the music. As individuals they have chosen to re-assign positive identities to themselves as pan-women, which are antithetical to the previous identities ascribed to women in pan as “jaggabats, whores, prostitutes or just-no-good women”. Today’s pan woman has a new uplifting sense of herself which has produced a generational shift in the perception of women in pan. These new individual identities are laying the groundwork for new group identities and communities of practice where pan-women have begun to acknowledge, support and promote one another’s talents and strengths. The new identity of the woman in pan has arrived.

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NOSTALGIA IN GUYANESE ART AND LITERATURE

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Like all other people, Guyanese invent particular cultural forms to reflect their relationship to the past. Among Guyanese, the term ‘lang time’ is an established shorthand way of indicating the past. The persistence of memory is captured in a well-known national folk song which goes like this:

Small days is still on me mind

Small days was good good time

The popular Tradewinds band, which has made a name for itself by insightfully identifying, celebrating and making lighthearted fun of Guyanese and Caribbean traits, has a very popular song that memorialises childhood:

I remember still and I always will

Time cannot erase boyhood days

Even the “bad ol’ days” are remembered. Another well-known Guyanese folk song has the chorus:

Dis time na lang time, dis time na lang time

Dis na deh before time

Lang time had am dutty dam

Now you gat am concrete road

Lang time gat am ol’ ol’ man

Now you gat am young young bai

Songs play a big role in the capturing of nostalgia in Guyana. Among all ethnic groups, ‘oldies’ music is popular. Many Guyanese East Indians cherish the songs from the old Bollywood movies. Special programmes dedicated to playing these songs of long ago are a perennial feature of local radio and television programming. Bollywood movies and songs are popular links back to India.

In the Guyanese writing from the 1980s onwards we find the production of histories, biographies and fictionalised biographies alongside the usual fiction and poetry. It is not surprising that the past is an important element in these works since in many cases, they are written by Guyanese who live outside of Guyana, so that ‘looking back’ is an almost necessary part of their perspective. On the other hand, it is possible to see

nostalgia even in the works of those who have remained in Guyana, suggesting that there is more to 'looking back' than simple dislocation in time and place would imply. The concept of nostalgia that I am pursuing does not refer to sentimentality. Unlike sentimentality which is a feeling for a particular time or way of life, the application of nostalgia as an investigative tool relates feeling to time as an evaluation of values. Unlike memory, which recalls actual experience, nostalgia points to spaces of longing and desire, and so, nostalgia has the power to reveal fault lines in experience and bring values into question. Memory and nostalgia, however, are not necessarily separable, since nostalgic moments also involve memory (Su, 2005: 2).

In 1688, nostalgia was initially conceived of as a brain disease by young Swiss doctor, Johannes Hofer, but by the early 20th century, the term came to describe a psychiatric or psychosomatic disorder. By the end of the 20th century, it had gained its contemporary meaning of 'sentimental longing'. Since the 1990s, the concept of nostalgia has increasingly been applied by cultural studies critics as a way of examining cultural change (Hutcheon, 1998). Sedikides et al. (2004: 202) note that nostalgia has progressively come to be regarded as a "positive experience ...which has an affective structure and fulfils crucial functions". According to Scanlan,

"In current criticism [...] nostalgia as warning, as pejorative marker of certain historical changes, has given way to nostalgia as a more ambivalent, more engaged, critical frame. Now, nostalgia may be a style or design or narrative that serves to comment on how memory works. Rather than an end reaction to yearning, it is understood as a technique for provoking a secondary reaction."

Nostalgia can thus be used to investigate the diasporic writings of Caribbean people, and indeed, the very nature of Caribbean societies which are built on the foundations of displacement and relocation. Nostalgia, applied as a critical perspective, may therefore be a useful approach to the investigation of the art produced by Caribbean people at home and abroad. In this paper, through illustrations from Guyanese literature and art, I will demonstrate various ways in which nostalgia plays a role in the Guyanese imaginary.

Often, in situations of change, social problems emerge, resulting from spaces of doubt within people (those who lose their sense of direction) and among people (those whose old values clash with the new values of others). One result of such situations might be a nostalgia that fixes upon and elevates the lost values of the past. Boym (2001: 22) calls this type of nostalgia *restorative nostalgia*, which creates a utopian vision of the past, questioning the notion of progress, and thereby undermining narratives of "progress". Crucially, Legg (2004: 99) notes that such utopianism can also have dystopian consequences as the nostalgic person adopts or sanctions coercive tactics to maintain their utopian vision.

The short stories of Rooplall Monar (1989; 1992; 1994) focus on the descendants of the East Indian indentured immigrants in a moment of change, when old values come

under pressure from newer ones. He examines on the lives of these people as they moved from the logies of the backdam (sugar estate) to the organised villages of the housing scheme, which had better roads, electricity, running water, houses built up off the ground, radios, cinemas, books, education, and most of all, different relationships among people.

The most transparent form of nostalgia is seen in “Big people story” from the collection *High house and radio* (1992) where the unnamed narrator reflects on his boyhood days. The entire story is taken up in reverie which wanders from incident to incident in the narrator’s life. The narrator – who could be Monar himself – covers a range of positive themes: concepts of family, manners, equality, community, boyhood pranks. But the story also includes of rum-drinking, dire poverty, religious prejudice, and quarrels. These, however, are not questioned. All is told evenly, in a nostalgic tone without authorial judgement.

In the story “Infidel” from the same collection, the main character longs for the old days: “A wish the old days could come back, never mind things was bad and condition in estate was not good. But people been live closer like one family...was respect fo you papa and mama, and no piss-in-tail small boy mixing with big man. Never.” (p. 63) Here the character longs for the closer human relationships of the older ways of living, as well as for social order, where everybody knew their place. These things are valued more than economic progress, thus invoking an implicit critique of contemporary society.

We also see the effects of nostalgia in *Janjhat* (1989), Monar’s only published novel, where the mother of Big Bye and her group friends represent the old values, and recently married Big Bye and his wife Data represent the new. His mother and her friends hold on to their traditional beliefs from India, which they “grasped as something living and still whole” and which “they were proud to call their own” (p. 57). She insists that her daughter-in-law must be a pure, good Hindu girl. This includes not only her status as a virgin, but also her obedience to her mother-in-law, the way she dresses, and the way she carries herself. Data’s personal virtues of thrift, good sense, industry, piety and personal integrity are all subsumed by her mother-in-law under the nostalgic vision of Hindu female purity. The novel is about the clash between the two women and Data emerges as a motivator of change while the mother-in-law’s nostalgia is revealed as a set of hardened values which are coercively enforced on others.

Monar does not discount ancestral values – the character of Data shows that elements of the nostalgic past can continue – she is religious, a good daughter, and a good daughter in law – but he questions the kind of nostalgia that straight-jackets cultural vitality and becomes a dead hand in the present. He shows how nostalgia can produce tyranny and counter progress towards humanistic ideals.

In *The last English plantation* Jan Shinebourne (1988) focuses on the tension between the present and the past in order to question the connections between personhood and land, history, and belonging. The novel is set in a time of change, when the plantation system was coming to an end. Pressures were being exerted by the workers and by the growing local political leadership, and people who had been removed from their former homes were about to suffer further displacement.

As a young girl, the main character June is also going through changes in her own private world. Apart from trying to make sense of the political and social changes around her, she has just graduated from primary school and is about to go to secondary school. This change would mean travelling from her estate home to the township, New Amsterdam, where she would meet new people. Early in the novel, as she contemplates going to her new school, June lies in bed nostalgically reflecting on her former schoolmates:

“She used to enjoy hearing the teacher read the names because they had a music and rhythm she liked which the English words of their lessons did not have.” (p. 31) When her mother interrupts her reverie, June remains sad and lonely for the rest of the day.

As the society around her rushes forward and as June herself rushes forward into adulthood, going to a new school, encountering snobbism, problems of social identification, new language, new landscapes, nostalgia pulls her towards certain things that she is not consciously aware of but which she feels, such as East Indian names and the endless openness of the backdam landscape: “You could walk and walk and the land would never end and the sky would stretch further and further away from you – that was how walking in the backdam felt.” (p. 33)

This is the kind of nostalgia that Boym calls *reflective nostalgia*, where time and space are broken and fragmented. June’s moments of crisis – the traumas in her young life – produce such reflective nostalgia, where she stands outside of her contemporary time and place. In times when she is in a troubled state, June has a heightened awareness of, and a nostalgic feeling for, the landscape around her, even though she is still within it. June’s inner being recognises that everything around her is already, in a sense, in the past. Even though she has not left it as yet, she can experience nostalgia for the landscape, she can feel nostalgia for what she knows will inevitably be left behind. The effect of this is to produce a feeling of belonging and not belonging, of being absent in the present. Nostalgia thereby evokes *imaginative possession*. It connotes life in changing societies as a landscape of dreams, and in this way nostalgia can produce a truer possession of place than in actual life: June sees the landscape much more clearly when it becomes part of her imaginative longing. While time and the other persons around her relentlessly move forward, June deepens her appreciation of the place which is fast becoming her past.

Literary nostalgia may also be a deliberate practice. In his “Preface” to his book *Walk good Guyana boy*, Bernard Heydorn (1994) declares that “I wrote these stories to

preserve some of the things I cherish about Guyana...I wrote with nostalgia for my birth place, for the unborn, for the living and the dead. I believe that ...the lessons of the past are a guide to the future..." Heydorn uses a straightforward episodic form which recounts incidents, all of which taken together form the life history of the main character Stephen Sleighton, but it is likely that the story is a barely-disguised personal recollection of the life and times of pre-independence Guyana from 1945 to 1963.

Heydorn does attempt to give some narrative shape to this work, opening it with the birth of Stephen, and closing it with his death, and stringing the episodes along in the form of a life story. However, the various episodes in the novel are really vignettes of various aspects of British Guianese life in the suburbs of Georgetown and New Amsterdam, Berbice. Each chapter recollects details from memory and paints a picture of the emerging Guyanese society. The entire book serves as a socio-historical chronicle of the working class Portuguese experience in Guyana. There is no interrogation of the past, no evaluation of the experiences of Stephen and his family, no stated or implied scale of values, or contrast of characters or ways of life. The authorial voice does not approve or disapprove of characters, events or situations. The vicissitudes of the Sleighton family are presented in a more humorous than critical manner. The events and incidents recounted, however, are of the type that would evoke memories among Guyanese of a certain age about times past.

Heydorn's work can be seen as an example of *authorial nostalgia*. In *Walk good Guyana boy* the writer invites others to share remembered values. It suggests a community life, a quality of life that others may recall in their own particular details and compare with life in contemporary times. The didactic function of the book, then, is delivered through the reader's engagement in the nostalgic scenes it presents. Recollection of memory therefore serves a moral and political function.

In other cases, authorial nostalgia may be more implicit and perhaps not even consciously utilized by the author him or herself. In *The last English plantation* there is evidence that Shinebourne betrays implicit identification with the character and with certain values in such a manner as to accomplish the same thing as Heydorn: the writing into history of an evanescent past. One could see in her omniscient descriptions a nostalgia that produces a hidden, intimate, psychological identification with place and time. This type of nostalgia is more subtle than that experienced by June, and it is deployed across the novel. It is seen in the way Shinebourne lingers over some details where otherwise the action is described in transparent terms that move the plot along. These lingering descriptions are not important to the movement of the plot or the setting of a scene, but they evoke time and place and a certain kind of living that had its own ordinary rituals that are now lost. A good example of this is when she takes care in describing the lighting of a gas lamp, elevating the humble activity to an important ritual: "She lit the Tilley lamp. First, she released the pressure

from the chamber, then checked the level of the fuel, then changed the wick carefully. She pumped new air into the chamber, lit the wick, feeding it carefully with the mixture of air and fuel.” (p. 106)

Similarly, she spends over two hundred words in one long paragraph of her short novel to describe June dressing to go to school. In other cases, she recalls the names of the buses – *Sinbad*, *Maharajah*, *Sheik of Araby*, *Zorro* – the behavior of the drivers and conductors and the activities of the people preparing to go to work. In another case, she describes with precision the details of ordinary things: “The sink was a large wooden window box which she had to lean over. Two enamel buckets of water stood at the ready, along with the bars of Zex soap, Vim and wire scrubbers” (p. 13). This authorial nostalgia is well-integrated into the novel, and it is only when we focus on them that we see how they stand out in the general narrative and add an element of subtle persuasion. Such authorial moments combine with June’s nostalgia to form a moral frame for the reader, so it could be argued that the author is – consciously and unconsciously – using nostalgia ideologically. The lingering authorial descriptions cast a different light over the landscape, one that infuses it with special significance and elevates the description to a strategic element of coercion.

I use the term “reconstructive nostalgia”, as different from Boym’s “restorative nostalgia”, to describe the use of nostalgia to construct a largely undocumented past. In the cases discussed below, the artists would have had no real experience of the past that they recreate in their artwork. Nevertheless, they reach back into the past to reconstruct it with a nostalgic perfection. It is interesting that these works were all produced by Guyanese of Amerindian descent. Across the Caribbean, Amerindians have been a people who have historically suffered extensive, debilitating marginalisation and historical erasure. Restorative nostalgia serves to reconstruct and rehabilitate a past and self-concept that have been eroded by history, politics and social circumstances. Such reconstruction serves a psychological purpose, and is necessary for contemporary survival and progress.

Restorative nostalgia is seen in the paintings of the late Amerindian artist Stephanie Correia. Primarily a ceramist, Correia also produced series of drawings and paintings in which she created pictorial images of Amerindian history. These drawings and paintings serve a powerful purpose of reclaiming a period of Amerindian glory. One of her most nostalgic paintings is *Kabakaburi music*, a work of pure nostalgia. In this painting, Correia blends people, pottery, life and landscape into a powerful symbol. The painting shows someone listening to the land, cradling a large pot which is like a repository of culture, or like a baby or womb, which all suggest new life.

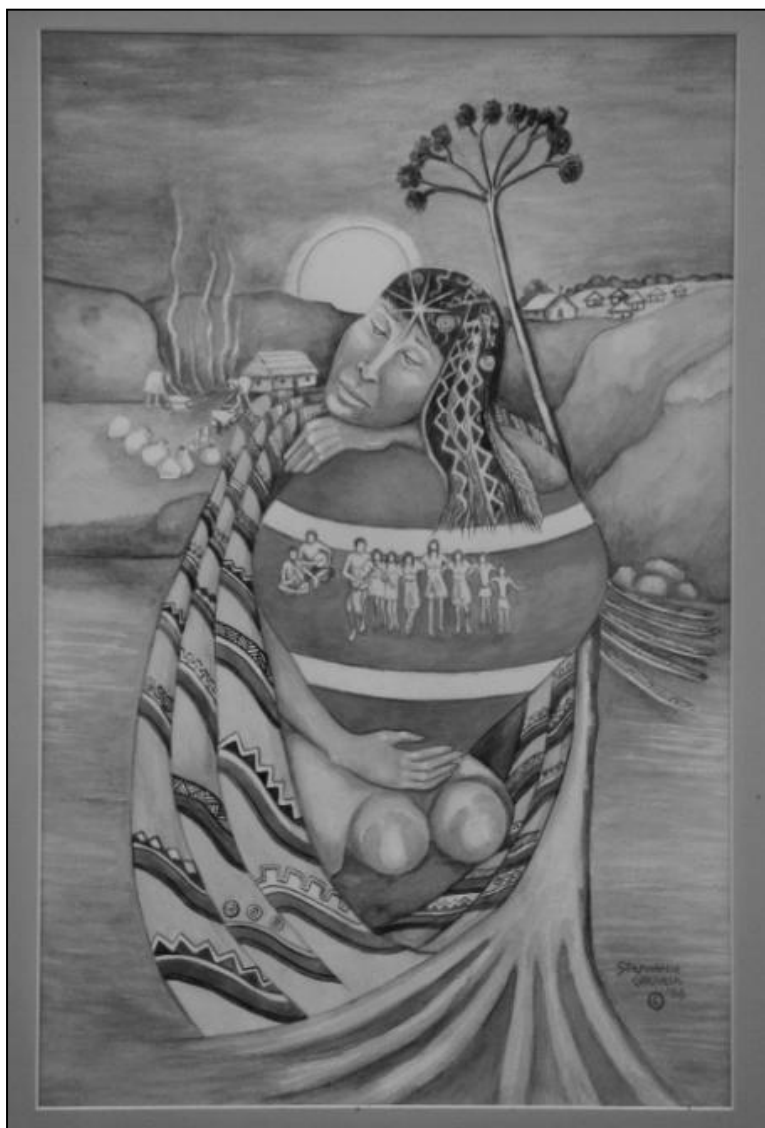


Figure 1 Stephanie Correa:
Kabakaburi music, 1996

The act of listening to the land and cradling the pot/baby/womb suggests the link of past and future in a present that is attuned to an ancestral memory. Correa uses a flat, vertical arrangement of space which suggests the layers of time. A tree with its roots at the bottom of the picture (the deepest layers of time) rises up through the painting to blossom in the sky where a sun rises, confirming the fertility of the link between past and future.

Similarly but in a more direct manner, George Tancredo, an Amerindian artist who works in balata, also recalls

an Amerindian past. His assemblage of balata figures in the National Collection, significantly entitled *A Dream of my ancestors and the past*, is a panorama of Amerindian community life. This work retrieves the memory of a fully-functioning community with its connections at every different level. It is an image of an imagined past, but what is also important is that it envisions the community as a viable, live, organic unit with its people functioning at different levels, from ordinary men and women and children to *piaimen* and women, celebratory dancers and even Kanaima. Tancredo's nostalgia for his heritage is memory of activity, and the wholeness of a community. Here, depiction of heritage is depiction of work and play. Memory is of community, not individuals. All of these activities of the village take place within the simultaneous timeframe of the dream.



Figure 2 George Tancredo, *Dream of my ancestors and of my past*, 1996 (detail)

In much the same way, the paintings of the late Eddie Fredericks capture scenes of Amerindian life. They are executed in a naïve version of the traditional European realist manner, with each work capturing a slice of Amerindian life. Each painting is devoted to a specific activity – hunting, farming, logging and so on – without repetition. In this way his work is similar in effect and purpose to Tancredo's, giving us a painted version of the activities which Tancredo modelled in his sculpture. His naïve style recaptures a sense of peace, cooperation and innocence which could be products of the artist's imagination, and so fit into the nostalgia of perfection. The details of each scene have the lucid effect of nostalgia, dwelling on particularities which are faithfully recorded: the different trees, the architecture and engineering of the buildings, the scaffolding used for felling trees, the curled contours and edges of woodskin canoes, the weave of basket work. In this way, each painting is an act of preservation, and his oeuvre as a whole is a veritable museum.



Figure 3 Eddie Fredericks, *Cutting logs*, 1967

As with the work of Tancredo, there is no individuality in the people portrayed. Instead, they are all portrayed in terms of their function as members of a community. Community is the emphasis of the work in both Tancredo and Fredericks, and community is depicted through work and activity. The communities are validated by the activities of the members and the clear social organisation that is depicted.

What is important to note about all of these Amerindian artists is that they do not focus on the contemporary life of Amerindians, and they do not deal with the many social, economic or cultural and human issues that Amerindians in Guyana face. At least, they do not appear to do so. But if the images they have created are read through the context of nostalgia, a different interpretation becomes apparent. Nostalgia allows these artists to put present conditions into sharp relief through their depictions of an Amerindian history of harmony, community and strength. The importance of such depictions must be understood in the context of the historical marginalisation and underdevelopment of Amerindians and the cultural intrusions which continues to plague their communities. Nostalgia allows these Amerindian artists to reclaim a sense of self and history that restores pride and dignity. This is nostalgia that does not involve direct political action but which can still serve as a powerful cultural and political catalyst.

This article demonstrates how nostalgia as a critical concept offers a promising avenue of insight into the imaginings and positionings of Guyanese artists. Through the perspective of nostalgia we can interrogate deeper purposes, show unconscious identification with time and place and critically question the dominant concepts and activities in the life of a society. Whether it is used to recall a way of life that has been eclipsed, or used to reassert lost values, nostalgia allows Guyanese artists to examine spaces of historical, cultural, social and psychological fracture, and to juxtapose and re-assess values. Nostalgia in Guyanese art and literature is not only used to revive memories of colonialism, slavery, indentureship, independence or migration, but also to produce new frames of reference for the present.

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THE MIDDLE PASSAGE IN TWO INSTANCES OF POETRY AND FILM: DAVID DABYDEEN'S HISTORICAL POEM *TURNER* AND GUY DESLAURIERS'S DOCUDRAMA *THE MIDDLE PASSAGE*

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Nearly two centuries after it was banned by the major European hegemons, the transatlantic slave trade was finally declared a 'crime against humanity' at the 2001 United Nations Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa. However, after much debate only a final declaration containing a "brief and vague statement on reparations" was issued (Harms: 59). According to the BBC (2001), the declaration turned toward the issues of history and remembrance insisting upon the fact that "remembering the crimes [...] of the past [and] condemning its racist tragedies [...] are essential elements [...] for the creation of societies based on justice, equality and solidarity" (cited in Harms, endnote 4, p. 329). Pro- and anti-abolitionists had filtered the pulsating but fragmented voices of the enslaved men and women in a myriad of chronicles and recollections of historical pasts. The realities behind these historical accounts have mutated into distinctive and renewed narrative forms through the visual, literary, and performing arts that unveil, reconsider, and preserve the experience and voices of the enslaved. These representative arts are thus vehicles of deconstruction and reconstruction through which African, Caribbean, and other artists retell history under a new system of creative and evocative address.

In particular, and as Natalie Zemon Davis points out, the terrors of the voyage, or Middle Passage, from West Africa to the Antilles are documented in narratives such as Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting narrative*, Tafawa Balewa's *Shaihu Umar*, in poetry as in Amiri Baraka's *So the king sold the farmer* or Derek Walcott's Book 3 of *Omeros* (Davis: 79), and in such films as Haile Gerima's *Sankofa*, Steven Spielberg's *Amistad*, and *Roots* adapted for TV from Alex Haley's seminal work *Roots: the saga of an American family*, to name a few.

Among these creative works, David Dabydeen's historical poem *Turner* (1995) and Guy Deslauriers's poetic docudrama *The middle passage* (2001) are exceptional examples of riveting representations of the physical and mental strife experienced aboard the slave ships. Both are particularly effective in their use of pictorial and

sensorial imagery. I will briefly survey and draw a parallel between a few sections of both lyrical depiction and cinematic re-enactment aboard the ship, for the latter, and beneath the water, for the former, where the maritime graveyard of the Middle Passage is the locus of eventual and glorious resurrection.

David Dabydeen's poem *Turner* was inspired by Joseph Mallord William Turner's Romantic landscape painting entitled *Slavers throwing overboard the dead and dying—typhoon coming on* (1840). The painting is a representation of a ship facing a storm while the enslaved Africans struggle with submerged heads in the foreground of the hellish and turbulent – though interpreted as sublime by John Rushkin – seascape. Dabydeen thus concentrates his effort to give a voice to the drowned and forgotten Africans who just end up as a “footnote”, an “afterthought” or “something tossed overboard”, as he asserts in his Preface to the lyrics (p. 7). “Turner” the character in the poem, stands both for a stillborn African child *and* the ship's captain and slave trader: a paradigm of colonial binary oppositions exerting perpetual struggle of hegemonic identity and hierarchy. Similarly, *The middle passage* is an elegiac rendition, an arresting cinematic achievement, and a visual diary. Both *Turner* and *The middle passage* describe what Natalie Zemon Davis suggested about other slave trade films such as *Amistad*: an uninterrupted elegy of “trauma and the memory of trauma” (p. 69).

Turner starts with the resounding voice of an enslaved female. It is the first and deepest cry of a woman giving birth:

Stillborn from all the signs. First a woman sobs
Above the creak of timbers and the cleaving
Of the sea, sobs from the depths of true
Hurt and grief, as you will never hear
But from woman giving birth, . . . (I, 1-5)

Sarah Fulford suggests that “the stillborn slave child is pulled into the New World through the watery passage of the Atlantic only to be born into a living death” (p. 1). In the film, the first cry is subtly imbued in the first images and voice-over narration of an enslaved African male who reminisces about the perilous voyage. However, we never see him on the screen because in the eyes of the slave traders he is *a voiceless nobody in every enslaved passenger*. In the eyes of the audience he is *every enslaved passenger voiced in one body*: that is, the metonymic multiplicity of African peoples in one voice. Therefore, as a cinematic technique that foretells this transgressed multiplicity, Deslauriers first selects close up and medium shots focusing on the Africans' faces and bodies—at times as if fragmented into a juxtaposition of hands, legs, ankles and feet shackled under continuous and straight edits or cuts conveying harshness, desperation, and even as a metaphor of fragmentation and pretended obliteration of languages and cultures of a multifaceted and rich Africa.

Sound, editing and cinematography work together to retell the account, as David Bordwell once emphasized, “both show[ing] and tell[ing]” through images (quoted in Davis: 7), one of them being a slave ship rushing toward the Caribbean. Likewise, through what may be termed a *cinematic device in poetry*, Dabydeen gives us an underwater shot (or low angle view) looking up to the surface of the tumultuous waves as one of many slave cargo ships cruises by:

I had forgotten the years, now wakened
By the creature that washed towards me.
Yet another ship passed, familiar sails stretched
Upon racks of wind, ropes taut against spars. (VII, 1-4)

Dabydeen describes the ship as a sea monster lurking across the Atlantic waters. Moreover, the stillborn beneath the sea contemplates these cruising vessels on the surface of the Passage while underwater “[c]hests of silver” (XII, 2), “swords with gleaming handles” (3), “but with years grown rusty” (4), colonists’ treasures, also rush past him carried away by Atlantic undercurrents. These interpretations are indeed enthralling renditions of hell above and hell below, renderings of memories and traumas that only the minds and souls of the true protagonists could chronicle. Hayden White states that historiography is based on “historical imagination” with its “deep structural content, which is generally poetic”. Again, *Turner* and *The Middle Passage* deconstruct, redefine, and represent history through the voices of enslaved humans.

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Next, as the docudrama develops, the camera now favors the Africans as if their “fragmentation” in the hands of the traders has instead united them into one body, one nation as they huddle in their assigned compartments. The realistic soundtrack (diegetic sound) is almost distorted creating a ghostly echo effect. In *Turner* we find a gripping parallel as the stillborn compares the slaves’ dilemma to a farmer’s supervision of cattle in the African village:

...like my father
Counting beads at the end of each day,
Reckoning which calf was left abandoned
In the savannah,...
He [Turner] checks that we are parceled
In equal lots, men divided from women,
Chained in fours and children subtracted
From mothers. (XII, 35-42)

In the film the camera dollies past them one by one creating a visual effect in which each person – chained, lying down sideways and placed behind one another – becomes the image of a collectivity formed by individuals belonging to different

tribes. The camera movement reinforces a sense of repetition, not only of restrained necks and heads, but also of the unending round-trips performed by slave merchants across of the Middle Passage. Turner, the stillborn, also confirms the repetitive cycle and continuous flow of enslaved men and women through the centuries when claiming: “I have known them all, briefly, / I have always known them, year after year/ From different sunken ships” (IV, 31-33).

Turner’s images of “[p]estilence, death, rats that carry plague” (XI, 21) are also re-enacted in the film. Rats caress passengers’ feet while an African female lies down sideways slowly regurgitating what her upset stomach and anguished soul cannot tolerate anymore. It is a grisly image contained within the claustrophobic medium shot that frames her closely to the eye of the camera and the audience. In addition, the stillborn in *Turner* has known the mothers that perished in the Atlantic, just as slaves in Deslauriers’s re-enactment have known each other while sharing their “unspoken” fear in the claustrophobic proximity of the lower deck.

Finally, whether a written or cinematic text or a reassessment of historical remembrance, the retelling and continuity of history is always imperative. It is through the conception of the world around them by “producing images” that these artists remember and present a crucial time in history, and as such this process of “seeing” becomes a process of the (re)construction of historical experience. Irving Howe, contemplating issues of history and literature, proclaimed that “history makes, history unmakes, the novel” (Howe: 1390). It is proper then to assert that *Turner* and *The Middle Passage*, among other creative works in the visual and performing arts, make and unmake history with insight, value, and significance as they confront, consider and reflect through the pens and lenses that continue to voice the vicissitudes and hopes of those who continue to take part in a glorious resurrection through the visual, literary, and performing arts.

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**LINGUISTICS AND THE RHIZOMATIC CULTURES OF
THE CARIBBEAN**

LINGUISTIC DOMAINS AND CONTROVERSIES: A FIREWALL AGAINST ANGLICISMS IN PUERTO RICO

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In one of the small towns in the interior of the island I came across a commercial establishment with a sign that read 'Agapito's Bar.' Why did you do that Agapito? [I asked] ... Is it that you feel better when you say it in a language that is not your own?
Governor Luis Muñoz Marín 1951 (translated and reported in Nash, 1970: 232)

Although economic and cultural contact between Spanish-speaking Puerto Ricans and English-speaking North Americans began as early as the 17th century (Pousada, 1999; Santana, 1972), Americanization through the English language became official policy when the US took over the island in 1898. Resistance to this policy began early, and controversies surrounding language use continued through the term of the first Puerto Rican elected governor of the island, Muñoz Marín, quoted above. Because more than 100 years later the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is still a territory of the United States (neither independence nor US statehood advocates have won a majority in any election), what is known locally as the language debate continues.

Whereas linguists have long argued that the influence of the English language on Puerto Rican Spanish extends to areas such as word order constraints (e.g. Gili Gaya, 1965), what is most salient to the average Puerto Rican is without a doubt the inroads that English vocabulary has made into the Spanish lexicon. Although Puerto Rico's situation is unique, concern over encroaching anglicisms can, of course, be found worldwide. Moreover, much of the global language debate focuses on particular domains such as the concerns of a Russian educator reported in Kaplan & Baldauf (1997: 233-235). Noting the introduction of English slang words into Russian teenage culture, Dr. Nina Razinkina explains that her real concern is the growing use of English terminology in professional publications dealing with newer branches of science. In fact, there have been an increasing number of articles, books and blogs decrying the incursion of English in the natural sciences, the social sciences, and especially information technology (IT). Ironically, many of these complaints are written in English by speakers of other languages (see for example Ammon, 2001; Ortiz, 2011; Trap-Jensen, 2013).

That the professional vocabulary of Puerto Rican Spanish speakers was becoming mixed with English-derived words has long been noted (e.g. Mellado de Hunter, 1981). However, the twenty-first century explosion of IT could bring about what those who subscribe to the notion of English as a killer language (e.g. Nettle & Romaine, 2000) might consider a lethal combination: technological terminology and teenage slang, domains considered separately by academics such as Razinkina just over a decade ago.

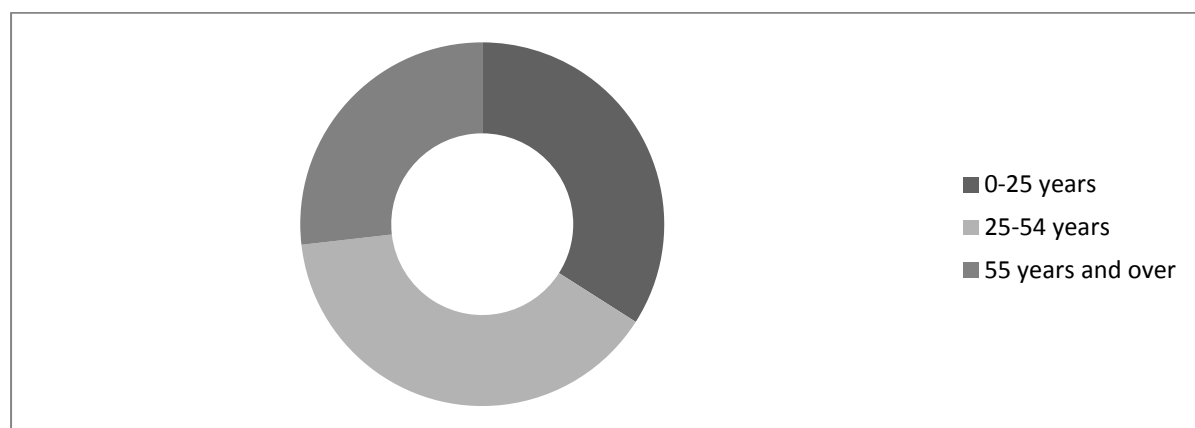
Wolfram and Schilling-Estes (2006: 72) attest to both the motivation and power of young speakers:

“Slang items are also often cultivated in the context of close-knit peer groups...

This is one reason why teenagers and college students, with their emphasis on peer-group relationships, are often the primary source of new slang terms.”

The use of IT anglicisms such as the noun and verb *el chat* and *chatear* appear to function like in-group slang for Puerto Rican youth. I can attest anecdotally to the fact that many of my middle-aged Spanish-speaking peers learned these words from their children and even grandchildren who were the ones who introduced them to Internet chatting and social networking sites like Facebook.

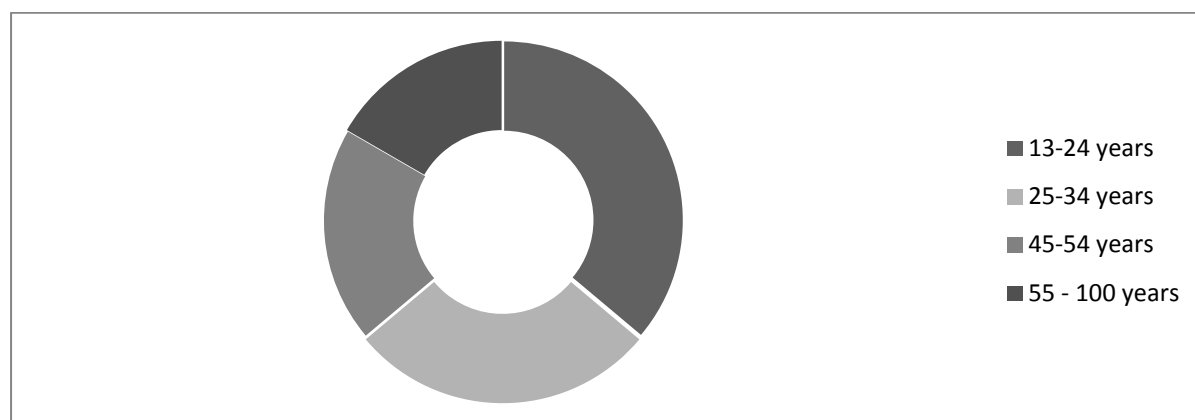
Chart 1 Puerto Rico Demographic Profile 2013



Source: Adapted from www.indexmundi.com/puerto_rico/demographics_profile.htm.

Puerto Rican demographics do not favor youth to the extent found in Arabic-speaking countries in which young people and IT influenced the Arab Spring of 2010, as well as in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa where youth are now in a majority (See Albuyeh, 2013 forthcoming). Nonetheless with 34% of the population under 25, young people are a significant sector of the general population of Puerto Rico and represent a majority of the users of sites such as Facebook.

Chart 2 Age Distribution of Facebook Users in Puerto Rico



Source: Adapted from www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/puerto-rico

Spanish-language Internet sites such as “*El Chat – El mejor sistema de chat y amigos en español*” [The Chat – The best way to access [lit. system of] chat and friends in Spanish] (www.elchat.com) illustrate how integrated into Spanish social networking these anglicisms are.¹ Spanish worldwide is an important language for Internet use and ranks even higher in Facebook usage as the charts below show. Thus, IT anglicisms have the potential of spreading to millions of Spanish speakers.

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Table 1 Language Usage on the Internet and Facebook

INTERNET (2011 EST.)		FACEBOOK (2010 EST.)	
English	565,004,126	English	213,237,080
Chinese	509,965,013	Spanish	61,209,600
Spanish	164,968,742	French	23,504,300

Source: www.internet.worldstats.com

Facebook Gold www.insidefacebook.com

In the Spanish-speaking world, Internet and Facebook “penetration”, the percent of users, has grown as the 2012 figures show.

¹ Earlier Puerto Rican forms *el chata* and *chatear*, not derived from English, referred to cock-fighting, boxing, etc. (Vaquero & Morales, 2005). For the IT English borrowing see Morales, 2009a.

Table 2 Internet and Facebook Statistics: Spain and Latin America

COUNTRY	POPULATION (2012 EST.)	INTERNET USERS (2012 EST.)	% POPULATION (PENETRATION)	FACEBOOK (2012 EST.)	%POP.
Spain	47,042,984	31,606,233	67.2%	17,590,500	37.4%
*Puerto Rico	3,690,923	1,771,643	48.0%	1,291,160	35.0%
Cuba	11,075,244	2,572,779	23.2%	n/a	
Dominican Republic	10,190,453	4,643,393	45.6%	2,793,220	27.4%
Costa Rica	4,636,348	2,000,000	43.1%	1,889,620	40.7%
El Salvador	6,090,646	1,491,480	24.5%	1,491,480	24.5%
Guatemala	14,099,032	2,280,000	16.2%	2,104,160	15.0%
Honduras	8,296,693	1,319,174	15.9%	1,213,800	14.6%
Mexico	114,975,406	42,000,000	36.5%	38,463,860	33.4%
Nicaragua	5,727,707	783,800	13.7%	783,800	13.7%
Panama	3,510,045	1,503,441	42.8%	1,014,160	28.8%
Argentina	42,192,494	28,000,000	66.4%	20,048,100	47.5%
Bolivia	10,290,003	3,087,000	30.0%	1,753,060	17.0%
Chile	17,067,369	10,000,000	58.6%	9,687,720	56.7%
Colombia	45,239,079	26,936,343	59.5%	17,322,000	38.2%
Ecuador	15,223,680	6,663,558	43.8%	4,970,680	32.6%
Paraguay	6,541,591	1,563,440	23.9%	1,214,080	18.5%
Peru	29,549,517	10,785,573	36.5%	9,351,460	31.6%
Uruguay	3,316,328	1,855,000	55.9%	1,646,740	49.6%
Venezuela	29,497,483	12,097,156	41.0%	9,766,540	33.1%

Source: Adapted from www.internetworldstats.com

In the geographic and political interface of Spanish and English, academics and citizens voice consternation over the “threat” of one language to the other. For example, in the US, states which border Mexico appear most likely to elect politicians who decry the threat the Spanish language poses to English (See e.g. the PBS series “Do You Speak American?” accessible on YouTube). In Puerto Rico members of the Academia Puertorriqueña de la Lengua Española (Puerto Rican Academy of the Spanish Language) partly take the long view that many anglicisms are inevitable. “No

podemos vivir sin anglicismos” [We can’t live without anglicisms] admitted retired University of Puerto Rico (UPR) professor and linguist Amparo Morales, in an interview (www.fundeu.es/noticia/no-podemos-vivir-sin-anglicismos-2456/). And while Dr. Morales stated that one of the functions of her approximately 3500-item 2009 *Diccionario de anglicismos actuales: fotografía desde el Internet* [Dictionary of current anglicisms: photograph from the Internet] is to offer Spanish-language alternatives, she then acknowledged that this can be difficult when it comes to the domain of technology: “*No siempre hay tiempo para hacer las adaptaciones, especialmente con la tecnología, cuando ya está usando el anglicismo*” [There isn’t always time to make the adaptations, especially with technology, when an anglicism is already being used] (All translations by the author). Nonetheless, Dr. Morales has asserted that this is a responsibility of the Spanish Language Academies: “*La Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española intenta detectar a tiempo los extranjerismos, especialmente los del lenguaje técnico, y proveer alternativas que faciliten la uniformidad en la comunicación*” (Morales, 2009b: 6). [The Association of the Academies of the Spanish Language endeavors to detect in time foreign words, especially those from technical language, and provide alternatives which facilitate consistency in communication.]

The current head of the Puerto Rican Academy, José Luis Vega, former Dean of Humanities of the UPR, sees Puerto Rico as the frontline in the defense of the Spanish language against English:

“El Inglés de Estados Unidos por su poder científico, técnico, económico, cultural y político presta palabras a todos los idiomas del mundo. La lengua española no es la excepción, pero en su ámbito, Puerto Rico, por su particular relación política con los Estados Unidos, ha sido la primera frontera del idioma. Ha sido también tamiz y laboratorio, y en muchos aspectos, ejemplo. Este diccionario muestra la magnitud del influjo de la lengua inglesa en la nuestra, pero también muestra la magnitud de nuestra resistencia, los productos de nuestra creatividad semántica y morfológica y la reciedumbre del vernáculo insular. Todos los hispanohablantes, incluidos los españoles podrán mirarse en el espejo de estas páginas y reconocerse en su lección.” (Vega, 2010: 10).

[The English of the United States, because of its scientific, technical, economic, cultural and political power, loans words to all of the languages of the world. The Spanish language is no exception, but within its sphere [lit. ambit] Puerto Rico, because of its special political relationship with the United States, has been the first frontier of language. It has also been the filter [lit. sieve] and laboratory, and in many aspects, an example. This dictionary shows

the magnitude of the influence of the English language on our own, but it also shows the magnitude of our resistance, the products of our semantic and morphological creativity and the vigor of our island vernacular. All Spanish speakers, including Spaniards, will be able to see themselves in the mirror of these pages and recognize themselves in the lesson to be learned therein]

I am not sure that it is any consolation to my friends and colleagues in the Academy, but English-speaking academics have also been tracking loanwords from Spanish since Harold W. Bentley published his 251 page *Dictionary of Spanish Terms in English* in 1932. More recently, Garland Cannon (1994: 1) states that a CD-ROM retrieval of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) in 1989 “turned up almost 6000 main entries with a Spanish etymology.”²

Nonetheless, English is currently the global donor language, and as Fischer and Pułacaewska (2008) point out, the rising influx of borrowed English words has resulted in the unprecedented production of dictionaries of anglicisms in various languages. Notable for being a comparative work is Manfred Görlach’s 2001 *Dictionary of European anglicisms*, which records the usage of anglicisms across sixteen European languages.

However, although the production of such dictionaries proceeds more quickly nowadays than in 1857 when the Philological Society (the English version of an Academy) began work on the venerable OED, the rising influence of the Internet ensures that no published dictionary can be as up-to-date as an Internet source (nor instantly accessed through one’s iPhone). Therefore, numerous online dictionaries of anglicisms have also sprung up. Two such for Spanish speakers are www.anglicismos.com and www.anglodir.com

In fact, from Spain to Latin America, the respective Academies of the Spanish Language have also been exploiting the wide reach of Spanish on the Internet and Facebook. The Puerto Rican Academy (www.academiapr.org), with some 1000 “friends” on Facebook offers links to its online publication, *Dilo*, which discusses language issues, including anglicisms, and to sites such as the Royal Academy’s *Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas* (www.rae.es.dpd) which answers doubts about Spanish word usage.

² Note that borrowed words from both Spanish and English may have other source languages. For example, although the immediate source of the English word *hurricane* is Spanish, the Spanish *huracán* is a borrowing from Taíno. Although the Spanish word *kinder* comes from the English *kindergarten*, the English word is a borrowing from German (Vaquero & Morales, 2005; OED 2012 online edition). Moreover, borrowing is not necessarily unidirectional. For example, English borrowed *barbecue* from Spanish *barbacoa* which was borrowed from Taíno; in the late 20th century, Spanish subsequently borrowed the word *barbecue* back from English (Albuyeh, 2012).

The IT concept of *firewall* is pertinent here. Translated as *contrafuego*, literally “against fire”, the Spanish term seems to have originally entered the language from Puerto Rico according to the Royal Academy (www.rae.es/drae/) in the sense of the North American use of *firebreak* from the 1930’s (OED); however, nowadays *contrafuego* has taken on the more recent IT meaning. The *firewall*, or *contrafuego*, of today is less of a wall and more of a filter which attempts to selectively block unauthorized access to a system while permitting ongoing communication.

In the 1950’s the humble word *bar* gave a Puerto Rican governor pause, and ever since issues of identity and the use of anglicisms have only continued to spread throughout the Spanish-speaking world and well beyond. Prescriptive direction of language evolution is, as I believe it should be, only ever partially successful (Let the people speak!). Yet, in the ongoing debate over Spanish and English within the context of the complex considerations of culture, heritage, self-determination and linguistic pride in Puerto Rico, the Puerto Rican Academy is pursuing a “firewall” approach to language which is to be commended.

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DEFINING THE LIMITS: MAKING JUDGEMENTS ABOUT BARBADIAN LANGUAGE

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It is widely believed among linguists that native speakers instinctively know what is correct and acceptable in their language and what is not. What linguists disagree on is whether or not these are one and the same. This article examines the judgements Barbadians make about the words of their variety of English and the process by which they arrive at these judgements. When Barbadian speakers make judgements about Barbadian English, they consider lexical items in terms of their context of use and these contexts are in turn measured against the notion of formality. Being able to conceive of the item as a concrete item, linked to the language of a particular person or situation seems critical in making judgements about the lexical items.

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Based on preconceived notions most people believe that there is a right and a wrong way of using language. Invariably, what is correct and acceptable seems inextricable from what is grammatical. How valid is this perception? Noam Chomsky (1965) distinguishes the concept of “grammaticality” from “acceptability”. He postulates that the native speaker has tacit knowledge of the rule system of his language. This tacit knowledge is the “grammar” of the language and will “generate all and only the grammatical sentences of a language.” This knowledge Chomsky calls “competence”. He contrasts this notion with “performance”. Performance refers to “what people actually say or understand to be said on a given occasion.” For Chomsky, while competence underlies and is reflected, though imperfectly, in performance, these concepts can be separated. He believes that, “acceptability belongs to the study of performance, whereas, grammaticalness belongs to the study of competence” (p.11). He believes this distinction is similar to that made by Ferdinand de Saussure between language as a system, *la langue*, and language in its actual use, *la parole*.

Chomsky (1965) uses the term “acceptable” to refer to “utterances that are perfectly natural and immediately comprehensible without paper-and-pencil analysis and in no way bizarre or outlandish” (p.10). He cautions, however, not to confuse the notions of “acceptable” and “grammatical”. Chomsky sees acceptability as a matter of degree along various dimensions as is grammaticalness but these scales do not coincide. Grammaticalness is only one of the

factors involved in determining acceptability. He proposes, "Obviously, acceptability will be a matter of degree, along various dimensions . . . The more acceptable sentences are those that are more likely to be produced, more easily understood, less clumsy, and in some sense natural. The unacceptable sentences one would tend to avoid and replace with more acceptable variants, wherever possible, in actual discourse" (pp.10-11).

The native speaker's competence gives him/her the ability to make judgements about whether structures in the language are well-formed or grammatical. These judgements, however, are system-specific since what may be considered ungrammatical according to the rules operating in one language system may be considered perfectly grammatical and well-formed in another system. Chomsky theorises, therefore, that sentences are acceptable (or perhaps acceptable under particular circumstances) if they are suitable, appropriate, adequate, to the purpose at hand . . ." (p.11).

This suggests that acceptability is linked to a context. Levelt et al. (1977) point out that when they questioned informants as to how they made judgements on acceptability, the informants explained, "I try to imagine a situation in which the phrase or sentence can be said" (p. 89). Levelt et al. refer to this as the informants' tendency to use "imagery" in answering questions of grammaticality or acceptability. They further propose that informants try to find a "cognitive, preferably visual, context in which the sentence could make sense" (p. 89).

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In his study Collins (1981) posits that acceptability "is generally regarded as a speaker's overt reaction to a linguistic form which reflects, sometimes directly, but sometimes quite indirectly, the grammaticality of the form, that is, its status with respect to the speaker's linguistic competence" (p. 15). Therefore, Collins agrees that acceptability requires a continuum from the most to the least acceptable. Unlike Chomsky, however, Collins believes that grammaticality, "implies a binary decision on what should be included in or excluded from the data accounted for by grammatical rules" (p. 15). Collins accepts that "a grammar which is to make accurate predictions must incorporate the concept of acceptability" (p. 15). Halliday (1978) argues, to the contrary, that no distinction should be drawn between what is grammatical and what is acceptable. Quirk and Svartvik (1966) also see these concepts as indistinguishable. As far as they are concerned, grammaticalness is a concept involving two interrelated concepts or processes. One must first establish what is grammatical and then one must determine native-speaker reaction in respect of it.

The present researcher accepts Chomsky's distinction between performance and competence. As a result, the research reported on in this article is primarily concerned with performance, that is, with the actual language used. It aims to evaluate the acceptability of idioms or sayings in functional contexts in Barbados. For this purpose, "acceptable" will be taken to refer to expressions which are judged to be natural and understandable at all levels

of communication. Although it is accepted that grammaticality may be one of the underlying criteria operating in making such choices or evaluations, this will not be an area of major concern in this work.

Acceptability may be determined by sociological and psychological as well as linguistic factors. Dykema (1939) in an early attempt to define criteria for correctness in American English postulated that since language fulfills a number of functions, there is a standard of acceptability for each function and criteria for determining the standards. He believed that “much of the confusion in discussions of correctness may be attributed to failure to restrict the application of these criteria to their appropriate functions” (p. 616). In his opinion, when language functions solely as a means of communication, the standard of acceptability is comprehensibility. Therefore profanity, obscenity, blasphemy – all have their standards of acceptability and most people understand pretty well how to observe those standards. In other words, acceptability varies with usage.

Bartsch (1987) also subscribes to the view that acceptability depends on more than grammaticalness. She suggests that factors such as the social status of participants involved in the discourse, the participants’ relationship to the situation and the speakers’ assumptions are all important in determining acceptability. Under the linguistic factors, she lists criteria such as: “is the word formed according to the patterns of word formation of the language, that is, out of existing roots, stems, affixes, etcetera; is the context of its use sufficient to supply enough information about what its content can be; is it a word of a language with some prestige, or of a language known at least to the leaders of the group which would have to accept it first (in the case of a loan word); is it a word from a native dialect which is spoken by people who play a role outside their native region in areas where the standard or neighbouring dialects are used; is there a need for a new word, or is there already a word which performs the task of the new word well enough and without stigmatization?” (p. 17).

According to Dykema (1939), the only absolute standard of correctness in language is the hearer’s or reader’s sense of linguistic propriety; only that is correct which is felt or believed to be correct (p. 618). In his opinion, “mere rules of correctness cannot be relied upon. Every individual must develop sensitivity to what is linguistically appropriate to each situation. And to do this he [sic] must be conscious of the several functions of language” (p. 618). This seems to suggest that a consensus rather than individual judgements is a more reliable instrument and that we also need to understand the process by which persons make their judgements about language to gain an insight into the norms that define a language community.

Allsopp, in devising criteria for acceptability in Caribbean language for a workshop held in Barbados in 1970 in which secondary school teachers drawn from the Eastern Caribbean participated, arrived at the tentative conclusion that: a lexical item is accepted if it is

universally understood or understandable; there is no equally efficient Standard English synonym in the context; it is not socially unpermitted; it is unambiguous; and it has or can be given an accepted spelling.

A number of dialects of English were brought to the Caribbean by the colonists in the early days of colonization. This was before language standards had been established or disseminated in England. The colonists in the island continued to look to the metropole to set their standards, even though, as happened with American English, many new words and expressions were introduced into the language because of the new conditions and practices in the new colony. As Webster noted for American English, many British English words which no had no relevance to life in the colony became extinct. Likewise, many words that had become extinct in England continued to enjoy current use in the British West Indian colonies. The varieties of English spoken in the Caribbean were influenced considerably by the backgrounds and the first languages of the people who spoke them. Particular circumstances on individual islands produced varieties that could be identified as their particular varieties of English. For example, it is possible to distinguish Jamaican English from Trinidadian or Barbadian English. Haynes (1973) reports that “when asked in 1972 to rate their own English vis-à-vis that of Britain, other West Indian territories, and other countries, [Barbadians and Guyanese] indicated that their respective local varieties were about the best” (p. 213). She further points out that such is the nature of Caribbean English that “Caribbean English on the International scene often has a standard surface manifestation, but is nonetheless misunderstood” (p. 211). Until the establishment of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) in 1972, British English continued unchallenged as the norm for spoken and written English in the Caribbean.

For years, the only concessions made to the existence of lexical items which were not part of British English were a number of glossaries coming out of Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada and the United States Virgin Islands. In 1967, Frederick Cassidy and Robert LePage published the first regional dictionary, the *Dictionary of Jamaican English*. The *Dictionary of Bahamian English* followed this in 1982. However, as early as 1967, Richard Allsopp recalls, there were calls from the Caribbean Association of Headmasters and Headmistresses for The University of the West Indies to produce a list of lexical items in each territory and to circulate them to schools for the guidance of teachers (Allsopp, 1996: xx).

There was clearly a need to determine what lexical items could be seen as “acceptable” at the level of formal Caribbean English. Allsopp (1972) in investigating the problem of acceptability in Caribbean Creolized English concludes that educated persons in the Caribbean face few at the phonological level since they tend to follow the segmental

systems of Homeland British Standard English. The same, he thinks, holds true at the syntactic level. In his view, it is at the level of the lexicon that the educated Caribbean writer “feels and recognizes ...that he has problems for which British and American solutions do not and cannot exist” (p. 194). Allsopp (1972) proposes that we consider the accepted usage of literate Caribbean speakers as Formal English in an effort to rid ourselves of the stigma of social elitism attached to the concept of “standard languages” (p. 198). Caribbean Formal English would therefore comprise words and word usage contributed by each English-speaking territory – the task remains to determine the contribution of each local territory to Formal Caribbean English. Allsopp (1996) defines Caribbean Standard English as “the literate English of educated nationals of Caribbean territories and their spoken English such as is considered natural in formal social contexts. There being many such territories, each with its own recognizable ‘standard’, Caribbean Standard English would be the total body of regional lexicon and usage . . . (p. lvi).” This paper is concerned with the recognisable ‘standard’ language of Barbados as one of those distinct standards which constitute Caribbean English. It may be evident at times that some of what is discussed as Barbadian may have wider currency as part of Caribbean English, but this does not detract from its legitimacy as part of Barbadian English also.

In this study, a judgement test was used to elicit judgements on lexical items. The test consisted of one hundred lexical items, categorized according to function and structure. The twenty-eight idiomatic, thirty-four morphological and thirty-eight semantic items were presented in the form of a questionnaire. The items were presented in context and respondents were asked to indicate whether they thought the underlined expression was: (a) acceptable in formal writing and speech; (b) acceptable in formal speech but not in writing; (c) acceptable in informal writing and speech; (d) acceptable in informal speech but not in informal writing; or (e) totally unacceptable in the speech of educated persons. In each case, they were required to make a snap judgement, rather than give a studied response, and encouraged not to review their items with a view to “correcting” them.

The following definitions were given to make the categories clear: formal writing and speech = reports, books, newspapers; formal speech = public addresses, lectures; informal writing = casual letters to friends; informal speech = conversation between friends. In an attempt to elicit data on the criteria which respondents use, perhaps unconsciously, to help them determine acceptability, a separate task was added to the judgement test. This task required respondents to “take a few moments to reflect on the process you used to decide on a category for each statement.” They were then required to write a short explanation of the process in the space provided. This work focused on the twenty-eight idiomatic items. All of the items were found to occur in the language of educated Barbadians, having been taken

from newspapers, students' scripts, recordings of parliamentary debates, radio programmes and The Barbados Hansard, the official record of speeches made in the House of Assembly. According to Cowie, Mackin and McCaig (1983), idiomaticity can be seen as a continuum with "pure" idioms at one end and word combinations at the other. Pure idioms can be seen as "the end-point of a process by which word combinations first establish themselves through constant re-use, then undergo figurative extension and finally petrify or congeal" (p. xii). Those items classified as idiomatic include pure idioms as well as figurative idioms and restricted collocations.

Two hundred persons were randomly selected from across a number of career groups. One hundred were teachers at primary or secondary schools, lecturers at the Barbados Community College or The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus. The respondents taught a variety of subjects and no attempt was made to control for subject taught. All of them were Barbadians. The remaining persons were journalists, librarians, creative writers and university students. Ninety-three completed questionnaires were returned from 32 male and 61 female respondents.

Of the twenty-eight items categorized as idiomatic, only four of them were judged acceptable at the formal level. Three of these items are part of British and American English and are used with the same meanings; they are therefore not listed in the *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* (DCEU). The expression "more in the mortar besides the pestle", meaning that the situation is more complicated or interesting than one might think at first, is a common expression in Barbados even though it is not listed in the DCEU. All the other items were judged acceptable at the informal level. Five of the items accepted at the informal level are part of informal British/American English. These include the expressions "to knock the stuffings out of somebody"; "to duck something", "to deal with somebody"; "like it or lump it" and "to be in a (tight) spot". Because these items are a part of British/American English, they are not included in the DCEU. None of the items was considered unacceptable by a majority.

Of those expressions judged acceptable at the informal level, there are some which the DCEU labels as Anti-formal. Allsopp notes that the use of such items signals a deliberate attempt to erase social distance. Such use can signal an intention to be playfully humorous or to offend. Items such as "gone through the eddoes", "knocking dog" and the similitude "like peas" are seen as an attempt to bridge the social gap by being humorous. However, the use of idioms like "yard fowl" and "to wash your mouth on somebody" often represents an attempt to insult.

Of the 28 items¹⁹ were judged acceptable by both males and females at the informal level. The idioms "have a field day" and "lock horns with somebody" were judged acceptable at the formal level by both males and females. These two were also control

items. The other control item “like it or lump it” was judged acceptable at the informal level. This is in keeping with accepted usage in other communities.

The saying, “more in the mortar than the pestle” was judged acceptable at the formal level by 64% of the male respondents; the female respondents were divided 41% at the formal level and 49% at the informal level. The other 10% seemed unable to make a judgment. However, none of the respondents rejected this item as unacceptable. On the other hand, 51% of the females accepted “to knock something” at the formal level whereas only 43% of the males judged it acceptable at the formal level. Those items which were judged acceptable at the informal level show acceptance across the range of usage, from formal to unacceptable. Judgments across age groups was fairly consistent with similar results obtained from all age groups. The over 50s, however, were the most decisive in their judgments with greater numbers voting with the trend than in the lower three age groups.

Educated females in Barbados tend to be less resolute in their judgements about acceptability than educated males. Even though as a group males and females judged the same items in the same way, males usually committed themselves more decisively to the acceptance or rejection of individual items. This was especially so for items which both males and females accepted as a whole or rejected as a whole. So, when there is no disparity in choice concerning the acceptability of an item, a greater percentage of men accept the item than do women. However, when an item is not judged acceptable by the entire group, men tend to be more conservative with their acceptance than women. The women were more likely than the men to judge an item as acceptable, even though they felt that others might not agree with their judgement. This has implications for classroom teaching and the implementation of Barbadian standards of language use. It may suggest that male teachers are more likely to reject items if they are unsure of their status, while female teachers may be more likely to rely on their own instincts and accept the items.

It is generally accepted that women use more standard features in their language than men. This study was not designed to indicate whether or not this is so among educated Barbadians, but perhaps because women are more familiar with and use more standard features, they feel more confident in making decisions regarding acceptability. This is clearly an area which can engender much more research.

As part of the judgement test, respondents were asked to reflect on and describe the process by which they arrived at their judgements. An examination of the responses suggests that respondents needed to imagine a context in which a particular item is used in order to help them make judgements about its acceptability. They needed to create a context not only in terms of the occasion on which the item might be used, but they also tried to imagine the person who might use it and the audience to whom the person might

be speaking. One respondent writes that she made judgements by “allocating the words to a speaker”, and then placing the words and the speaker within a context to determine appropriateness.” Another person notes that he imagined “the context in which the underlined words were used, by whom they were used, and the intended audience.”

Some respondents found a context by deciding whether they thought that they would hear or had heard the item used as a part of Standard English or as a part of Bajan ‘dialect’. One respondent explains, “Before I labeled each sentence according to the categories assigned, I (i) examined the underlined words in order to determine if it was a word used within our dialect, within Standard English or was a literary device; (ii) tried to recall or imagine if I did/would see/hear sentences used within the various contexts outlined.” Another writes, “statements were categorized according to when and where I heard them being used – whether in the local news on television, or newspapers; international news, debates, people talking to each other and using some of the statements to describe situations that they experienced.”

Another important criterion which respondents used was whether or not there was a Standard English equivalent for a term that they knew to be Bajan. Most persons felt that “the use of language in the Caribbean context must consider (a) the cultural, (b) social, (c) historical and economic environment of the region”. A respondent explained, “They are certain expressions and words that are peculiar to some Caribbean islands. Some of these words/statements are perfectly acceptable in formal speech or writing especially when communicating with our natives.” Another respondent reiterates this point, “Caribbean or other sayings, proverbs, adages, maxims, etcetera were considered suitable for formal speech and writing.”

Educated Barbadians seem to have clear ideas of a hierarchy of acceptability regarding language use in the community. The levels of the hierarchy are based on social situation. Items can therefore be judged acceptable at the formal level and at the informal level. These levels, however, are further divided into speech and writing; the spoken element is seen as less formal than the written in each case. Items may be judged acceptable at the level of speech but not considered formal enough for writing. However, acceptance at the formal level presupposes acceptance at the informal levels below it in the hierarchy.

The context in which an expression is used and its inherent association with “educatedness” or lack thereof are clear criteria in determining whether or not an item is seen as an acceptable part of educated Barbadian English. Items are seen in terms of their context of use and these contexts are in turn measured against the notion of formality. Being able to conceive of a particular item as a concrete entity, linked to the language of a particular person or situation seems critical in making judgements about it. Barbadians consider

whether they have heard other Barbadians whom they consider educated using the terms or expressions and the situation in which they were used. For example, if they are used in parliament or in public addresses by persons such as the Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados or the Governor General, then they consider the items to be an acceptable part of the language of educated Barbadians. The formality level with which the item is associated is important in determining acceptability. At the formal level of writing and speech, items which are ungrammatical are clearly unacceptable. However, as we move down the formality scale, grammaticality seems to become less important and understandability becomes a more useful method of determining whether or not an item is accepted. This practice of associating the usage of educated persons with “standard” usage is not unique to Barbados, even those countries with Language Academies defer to the usage of the educated in determining the “best” variety for carrying out the business of the country.

This study has demonstrated that educated Barbadians, as a group, share a set of common criteria for determining acceptability in language. Most of them believe that Barbadian usage deserves to be respected and accepted as a part of a more general effort towards a positive national identity and the empowerment of Barbadians through the use of their nation language. However, for the most part, their judgements are influenced by their prejudices and preconceived notions of what is Barbadian. The importance of Barbadian Standard English as a medium of wider communication cannot be overemphasised, especially in the context of the world as a rapidly expanding global village. It is thus incumbent on those who hold state power to take this from the level of an academic exercise to a government-endorsed and supported project which redounds to the benefit of all Barbadians. It can no longer be left up to the whims and fancies of individual teachers to accept or reject elements of Barbadian English. It is important that the government considers acceptability in Barbadian English as a national project with national significance.

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MAROONS, *MARRONAGE* AND THE QUESTION OF AGENCY ON THE PART OF MARGINALIZED PEOPLES IN THE EMERGENCE OF THE ATLANTIC CREOLES

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There appears to be a general consensus as to what constitutes a maroon, for the metaphor that comes to most people's minds is that of an African descended slave who escaped captivity. The aim of this investigation is to attempt to reconceptualize the concepts of *maroon* and *marronage*, in addition to examining myths regarding the marginal role of the maroons in the emergence of creole languages and cultures, their lack of agency, as well as their lack of contact with other Indigenous-, European-, and African-descended peoples. It is my contention that the 'true' story of the *maroons* and *marronage* has been silenced by historical writing about the Caribbean, in which the propagation of dominant discourses of power, economics, race, and gender have served to minimize or completely erase maroons' considerable accomplishments and agency.

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In 1790, John Gabriel Stedman submitted his personal written account of his military campaigns against Maroon guerrillas in 18th century Suriname and of his "marriage" to a slave named Joanna to a publisher in Europe, who almost completely rewrote each sentence. Stedman complained that the version was "spoilt, good for nothing and full of nonsense". He therefore burned all 2,000 copies of his book. The book was finally published in 1796; however, this version transformed Stedman's relatively sympathetic and humanizing treatment of maroons into a diatribe that reinforced all of the prejudices of the time.

Stedman was neither an abolitionist, nor was he in favor of slavery. He was simply "in the middle of the road" (Price, 1996), which is what makes his work important. He speaks out against the inhuman conditions wrought by slavery, the need for reform, and speaks of social justice. Moreover, he criticizes religion, and constantly compares African slaves to European men and women, as equals. The rewriting of Stedman's book clearly shows how editors and others who have power over the written word systematically silence all voices that in any way question the dominant discourses that marginalize and demonize maroons.

In an influential book, Chaudenson (2001) sees attempts to dispel these myths as glorifying the maroons, and therefore he reinforces the mythology that maroons played an insignificant role in shaping Caribbean languages and cultures, rejecting any notion of a “maroon countersociety”. Unfortunately, the types of facts and locations that Chaudenson prefers to focus on in his work are precisely those which minimize any positive agency on the part of maroons. It is significant that Chaudenson bases his ideas on the French settler colonies of the Indian Ocean in the 18th and 19th centuries, rather than on Caribbean pre-plantation and plantation colonies from the 16th to 18th centuries.

Traditionally, Maroons are defined as people: (1) who are of African descent; (2) who live in mountains, swamps, dense bush, or other inaccessible areas; (3) who have escaped permanently from slavery; (4) who play a marginal role in the politics and economics of the territories in which they live; (5) who have little contact with outsiders; and (6) whose lives are defined in opposition to the plantation. However, I question these assumptions in order to demonstrate how dominant discourses effectively limit the role of marginalized people in the shaping of the Creole languages and cultures of the Caribbean.

The term *maroon* itself was actually first used to refer to runaway slaves of Indigenous, not-African descent. In the early colonial period, people of Indigenous, African, and European descent were not only **all** subject to similar forms of forced labor, but from 1492 onward, **all** began actively resisting and running away from their masters. What are traditionally defined as maroon communities in the Americas, more often than not started out as communities of Indigenous peoples who had either escaped slavery themselves and/or who welcomed escaped laborers of African and European descent into their societies, as did the Garífuna and the Seminole. Roberts (2008) calls the many colonial era societies which were beyond the reach of colonial control “raw” societies. I and the other members of the Research Group on the agency of marginalized peoples in the emergence of Creole languages at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus prefer to refer to them as *sociétés de cohabitation* (Faraclas et al., 2008). In these *sociétés de cohabitation* that typified the earliest sustained contact between peoples of European, African, and Indigenous descent in the Atlantic and Pacific, people of European descent did NOT predominate politically, economically, culturally, linguistically, or numerically. Roberts sees these societies as key sites for the emergence and propagation of the creole cultures and languages of the Americas.

Marronage was not exceptional or limited in time and space. It was reported everywhere in the Caribbean and from the earliest periods: In the Spanish colonies, *marronage* was widespread in Hispaniola from 1502 onwards and was found in all Spanish colonies of the Greater Caribbean established thereafter. Under the English,

marronage occurred as early as 1598 in Virginia, in St. Kitts by the 1630s, in Barbados by the 1640s, and everywhere else in the English and later British Caribbean. In the French colonies *marronage* is reported as early as the 1630s in St. Kitts, the 1640s in Martinique and Guadeloupe and eventually everywhere else in the French Caribbean. In Santo Domingo, the Guianas, Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica and Dominica maroon communities included thousands and outlasted slavery itself. Smaller groupings were found in Barbados in the 1650s, Antigua up to the 1730s, St. Croix in the 1770s, and the Bahamas in 1823.

Marronage was not restricted to land or to plantations. The two groups of laborers who most actively opposed the establishment of colonial rule and capitalist economics in the Caribbean were the *pirates* (i.e. sailors who resisted the labor discipline of the ship) and *maroons* (i.e. slaves who resisted the labor discipline of the plantation). During the 16th and 17th centuries, marginalized peoples including buccaneers, pirates, and maroons of different ethnicities united behind common political and economic agendas, and played an indispensable part in shaping the creolized cultures and languages of the Americas. Linebaugh & Rediker (2007) state that: “pirate ships acted as floating multiethnic maroon communities”.

In addition to maritime *marronage*, Hall (1992) asserts that as the towns grew, they attracted an increasing number of vessels from distant ports, thus augmenting the possibilities for urban *marronage*. Thus, a maroon presence was not restricted to remote or rural areas. In 1664 African runaway slaves sought refuge in New York City among Native Americans, freed slaves, or on the ships at the docks there. According to Oldendorp (1777), in 18th century St. Thomas and St. Croix, freed African descended people living in the towns harbored many maroons, and maroons from the countryside had regular contact with non-maroons both in towns and at weekend markets.

This investigation further demonstrates that maroons were not marginal economically or culturally. The political, economic, and cultural impact of *marronage* although rarely discussed, cannot be denied. Maroon resistance played a pivotal role in: (1) the abandonment of Portuguese and Dutch attempts to establish agro-industrial plantations in mainland West Africa, in favor of NE Brazil; (2) the abandonment of Dutch and Sephardic attempts to establish capitalist sugar production in NE Brazil, in favor of the Caribbean; (3) the defeat of the Spanish in the Lesser Antilles and the Guianas, in favor of the Dutch, English, and French; (4) the conquest, settlement and bankrolling of English Jamaica and French St. Domingue; and (5) the eventual abolition of slavery in Haiti, Jamaica, the Guianas, and the rest of the region.

In Dutch Suriname, maroon groups with distinct identities such as the Saramacca and Matawai came into existence. However, it was not until around 1728 when the maroons began systematic attacks on the plantations (Stedman, 1988). As a result,

many planters abandoned their plantations and left for Paramaribo. In an attempt to neutralize the threat of the Maroons and stop the constant flight of slaves, colonial authorities enlisted 500 volunteers to patrol the plantations and to subjugate the raiding Maroons (Stedman, 1988). During the first century of their existence, the maroons had not only defended their liberty, but nearly brought about the shutdown of the local plantation economy. Groot (cited in St. Hilaire, 2002) contends, “the Surinamese Maroons, more than any other African-American population, negotiated with remarkable strength their participation in the emerging world order” (p. 115). Thus, peace treaties were successfully executed between the Dutch and the Ndjuka in 1760, the Saramacca in 1762 and the Matawai in 1767.

We need to move beyond the myth that *marronage* meant a permanent break with colonial society, to begin to appreciate the feminized forms of resistance that established and maintained the spaces and networks that made *marronage* a pervasive feature of the colonial landscape. While *grand marronage* might have been a disproportionately male phenomenon, there was greater gender balance when it came to *petit marronage*, where a female slave might take a temporary unauthorized leave of absence to attend to extended family matters and then return to her more immediate family tasks on her home plantation.

This short article has demonstrated how a deeper look into the history of maroons and *marronage* through the lens of new research trends in several different disciplines reveals a much more complex and nuanced image of the maroon and *marronage* than that propagated by dominant historical, linguistic, cultural, and political discourses. While I do not claim to have completely reconceptualized the terms ‘maroon’ and ‘*marronage*’ in this paper, it is my hope that I have inspired the reader to go beyond the traditional stereotypes of the maroon and *marronage* and to begin to come to terms with the maroon as a key agent and the phenomenon of *marronage* as a key process in the emergence of the creolized languages and cultures of the Caribbean.

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SPIRITUAL MARRONAGE, THE POWER OF LANGUAGE, AND CREOLE GENESIS

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*A people's speech is their spirit and their spirit is their
speech.* Wilhelm Von Humboldt

And the Word became flesh...
John 1: 14

*We die. That may be the meaning of our life. But we do hav
language. That may be the measure of our lives."*
Toni Morrison <http://www.goodreads.com>

After their violent uprooting from their homelands and brutal transportation to the Caribbean and the Americas to become the enslaved work force of European colonial powers, thousands of West and Central African men and women had to find ways to survive physically and spiritually and recreate their lives in a new environment. Many thousands devised means of resisting, opposing and even overturning the harsh, cruel and inhumane conditions in which they found themselves. But what were the linguistic consequences of such a catastrophic set of experiences? If languages reflect environments and world views, in order to achieve this enormous task they had by necessity to create a new language that would reflect their new reality. Thus, in addition to being the product of a very special language contact situation, Creoles exemplify in a unique way how we create and recreate the world with language.

At this point in history the colossal resistance that Africans both males and females and their descendants mounted against their enslavement by European colonizers has been thoroughly demonstrated, documented, and addressed from different perspectives in a vast body of literature. This was a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon which manifested itself in a multiplicity of forms, both covert and overt by both violent and non-violent means. Together with revolts and rebellion the phenomenon of *marronage* was one of the most radical and overt forms of resistance to slavery in the Americas. According to Price in his classic *Maroon societies, rebel slave communities in the Americas*, *marronage* is "[...] the living proof of the

existence of a slave consciousness that refused to be limited by the whites' conception or manipulation of it" (1979: 2).

In this paper I wish to expand the traditional concept of *marronage* to include what I call *spiritual marronage*. I follow the Haitian scholar and mambo of Vodou, Dowoti Désir who states:

"Our institutions, the *sosyetés* (congregations) that make-up our *kai's* (houses) and *hounfours* (temples) became underground spaces of *marronage*, of liberation and resistance that served as spaces of worship. But they also existed to maintain the space of segregation that whites of European ancestry persisted in emphasizing in their social, legal, architectural, and ritualistic existences. Africans responded with subaltern spaces of *lakou*, *cofradía*, *cabillo*, and other volunteer associations, providing social and economic support to Africans throughout the Diaspora." (Désir, 2006: 95)

Thus I contend that the spiritual practices of enslaved Africans and their use of language can be seen as forms of underground *marronage* as strong and effective as overt *marronage* itself. I posit that the "slave consciousness that refused to be limited" that Price refers to was also present in those who remained on the plantations and manifested itself in the only way possible there: in a covert manner. This view will assist in clarifying why linguistic practices such as special language use in present day spiritual ceremonies were generalized practices not only in relatively isolated maroon communities, but also among the enslaved and freed populations on the plantations and in the towns. I further contend that **all** of these populations had a significant input into the emergence of the creole languages and cultures of the Caribbean.

The enormous of resistance that enslaved Africans and maroons mounted against slavery was only possible because, in spite of the fact that they most probably arrived in the New World naked or half naked and had to leave all of their material belongings behind in Africa, they were not taken captive out of a cultural vacuum. They carried in their consciousness, in their minds and in their hearts substantial cultural baggage, consisting of agricultural and technological skills, political and military knowledge, etc. In my view, however, the most important component of this intangible baggage included cosmologies, and spiritual practices, and the use of languages linked to spirituality. As I see it, these spiritual knowledges, practices, and languages became one of their most valuable possessions and instruments for resistance both for those who managed to flee to freedom in *grand maronnage* and those who remained in the plantations.

This spiritual heritage was so valuable, that in the case of the Haitian Revolution, it was key to its success. With regards to the case of Jamaica, Alleyne states:

"From the very inception of the slave society [...] religion and rebellion became associated in a symbiotic relationship. It is generally agreed, and the evidence is quite compelling, that slaves from the Gold Coast area, the Akan

people known in Jamaica in the early period as Coromantees (with several other variant spellings), were the chief instigators of rebellion. The rebellion of 1769 was, according to Gardner (1873: p. 132), ‘led by Coromantees and was aided by the mysterious terrors of Obeah’. Gardner adds (p. 133) that ‘the negroes were greatly stimulated by their confidence in the powers of the Obeahman’, among whom Tacky was the supreme Commander.” (Alleyne, 1996: 83)

Not only had religion played a significant role in earlier slave revolts in St. Domingue, the Haitian Revolution itself is said to have been initiated, by a religious ceremony conducted by Boukman in 1791 According to Mintz in the ‘Introduction to Metraux’ as quoted in Alleyne, “voudou surely played a critical role in the creation of a viable armed resistance by the slaves against the master classes” (1996: 83). Referring to language more specifically, Roberts notes that “There is no question that the dramatic events of the last years of the 18th century and the first years of the 19th in Saint Domingue could not have taken place without this *language créole*” (2008: 259).

The power of these spiritual resources were recognized and feared by enslavers and colonizers, who attempted to suppress them. According to Alleyne, in Jamaica: “[V]ery early laws were passed banning the assembly of large numbers of slaves on Sundays and holidays [...]. This prohibition must have put an early end to the open (but not the secret) celebration of religion by slaves, though after the arrival of Christian missionaries in Jamaica slaves were able to celebrate their religion on the guise of Christianity” (1996: 82). On the generalized religious practices of Africans in Jamaica, Alleyne also asserts:

“Africans adapting their native religions to the new context in Jamaica and working a common set of beliefs and practices had a rich fund of similar experiences on which to draw, for as we have seen religious syncretism was commonplace in African society too. Local African religions were not averse to accepting influences from other religions or to accepting other gods or divinities into their pantheon, especially when these foreign gods seemed as powerful as the local ones and had attributes that appealed to people meeting them for the first time.” (p. 87)

This religious “ecumenical” openness of Africans is also stressed by Désir:

“While Africans of various origins would borrow traditions from one another either as a result of buttressing geographies (i.e. living within close proximity to one another or through acts of war), European enslavement fully set the wheels in motion towards plurality, accelerating and further instantiating a practice already in place. church doctrine and state policy bred resistance in the Americas.” (p. 91)

As is well known, Africa is a very vast continent with a long history and many different countries, traditions and languages. Thus, it is important to clarify that the topics of African cosmology, spirituality and spiritual practices are broad and complex. It is not the aim of this paper to go deep into the diverse and varied beliefs and practices that captive African men and women brought with them to the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas, but instead to address some fundamental principles that are common to many of West and Central Africa's cultures and traditions, that are particular to West and Central African experience, and grounded in West and central African culture and world view. In this paper and for the purpose of my argument I will focus on a few important commonalities: the concept of Spirit/spirits, the cult of ancestors, and the recognition of the power of language.

In the first place, it is important to stress that according to Aondofe Iyo (2006: 45) "in the examination of the survival of African spirituality in the New World, one needs to be cautious about the division between the secular and the sacred. Whereas this division is prominent in Western culture and philosophy, it is nonexistent in African thought and philosophy" (Wiredu, 1980; Andah, 1988). According to Mazama, what is called African spirituality is a way of living, a philosophy of life, not a religion. It is present at all moments and in all the aspects of life. It is not limited to a group of rituals or activities you do at specific moments and in a particular place, such as a temple, for example (2002: 219). In other words, the spiritual world, the Spirit, spirits in their different conceptions and manifestations, the unseen, the super natural were an everyday reality for the African men and women who arrived in the Americas during the time of slavery. And it is to the spiritual realm and to these spiritual entities that they appealed for support, and obtained the strength that would enable them to endure, resist and abolish the ordeal of slavery.

In the second place, in many African spiritual traditions, there is no major discontinuity between death and life. According to Mazama, both are perceived as different modes of being. Life is infinite and knows no end, and therefore death is simply another form of existence. "Within this context the limits between life and death do not really exist. Life is born from death and death, in turn, is the prolongation of life. The circle, which is the African spiritual symbol *par excellence*, takes on its full meaning as it stands for the constant renewal of Life through death and birth" (pp. 221-222).

Death is also a rite of passage that allows one to gain another existential status, that of *ancestor*. Mazama observes that it is generally believed that the spirits of the ancestors remain very interested in what happens in their families and communities. The ancestors are "the guardians of the family affairs, traditions, ethics and activities" (p. 221). Being closer to God by virtue of their spiritual nature, they are in better position to petition God on our behalf. But ancestors are not considered gods and they are not worshipped. Instead, just as living elders are given great respect, the spirits of the

ancestors are remembered, revered and respected. The ancestors provide guidance; “they will send us messages about how we operate in this life, in this world, if we honor them” (p. 222). Due to this easy communication between the world of the living and the world of the dead there is a belief in *reincarnation*, which is generally believed to take place from generation to generation within the same family.

In addition to the ancestors, African spirituality recognizes many other spiritual entities. There are spirits of divine origin which the Yoruba call *orisha* and Vodou practitioners call *lwa*. Farris Thompson, defines them as: “the messengers and embodiments of *Ashe*, spiritual command, the power-to-make things-happen, God’s own enabling light rendered accessible to men and women” (1984: 5). Human beings may be possessed by an *orisha* or *lwa*. To be possessed by an *orisha* or *lwa* is to “make the god”, to capture the god’s numinous flowing force within one’s body (p. 9). Within the realm of the living there are a variety of especially trained spiritual leaders who through special medicines and communications with the spirits provide protection and guidance. There are *priests*, whose roles vary between spiritual traditions but for most of them their function is to officiate in ceremonies and rituals. There are *healers* or *traditional* doctors. They are important in all African societies. It is believed that good health is the result of appropriate behavior, which means living in accordance to the values, norms of traditions of the society. Thus one of the primary causes of illness comes from inappropriate behavior, which requires a spiritual remedy. In most African spiritual traditions there are two kinds of healers: *herbalists*, who use extracts from plants, fruits, berries, roots, leaves, and bark which provide the basis for medicines, and *spiritualists* or *diviners*, who treat illnesses through facilitating the direct intervention of the spiritual world.

Linked to these beliefs is the recognition of the power of the word itself to alter reality, to summons spirits and to communicate with ancestors. According to Murphy:

“Recovering the sense of ‘liturgy’ as ‘work’ and ‘service’ from the ancient Mediterranean can help us understand something of the ceremonial spirituality of diasporan religions. For diasporan liturgies are seen by their practitioners as both works for the spirit and works of the spirit. The reciprocity between community and spirit is expressed in physical work as the community works through *word* [my emphasis], music and movement to make the spirit present. The spirit in turn works through the physical work of the congregation, filling human actions with its power.” (1994: 7)

Désir tells us that “Priests of Vodou must learn *langaj*, the language of Alada, the holy city of ancient Dahomey-literally the language of our ancestors so that we recognize the members of our covenant and have the capacity to call on Spirit. [...] To call on the *lwa*- to sing the songs of our ancestors, to recite prayers we need to be grounded on our native *Ayisiyan* and the sacred language of Spirit. By learning the language of Vodou we unlace the folds of history and reform identity” (p. 93).

Nommo is an African term which cultural theorist, Molefi Asante, calls “the generative and productive power of the spoken word. It means the proper naming of a thing which in turn gives it essence” (1998: 17). “*Nommo* is the power of the word that activates all forces from their frozen state in a manner that establishes concreteness of experience, be they glad or sad, work or play, pleasure or pain, in a way that preserves [one’s] humanity....It [Nommo] is most often defined as the magic power of the word [...]. Nommo is the word and the delivery of the word. It is the master of speech and speech, the word unknowable without its form.” (Harrison: xx) Jahn defines this concept as the vital force that gave life to everything through the power of the word. He writes,

“There is nothing that there is not; whatever we have a name for, that is; so speaks the wisdom of the Yoruba priests. The proverb signifies that the naming, the enunciation produces what it names. Naming is an incantation, a creative act. What we cannot conceive of is unreal; it does not exist. But every human thought, once expressed, becomes reality. For the word holds the course of things in train and changes and transforms them. And since the word has this power, every word is an effective word, every word is binding” (p. 133).

Nommo then is a very powerful and empowering concept in African cosmology. As Rickford and Rickford put it in *Spoken Soul* on African American Vernacular English (AAVE):

“In the end, all words (and the rules for pronouncing and combining them) are mighty. As the African concept of *nommo* asserts, spirits are conjured by the saying of words. Ancestors are invoked by the speaking of words. If our enemies can make us forget these words, and then make us forget that we have forgotten, they will have robbed us of our ability to honor and summon our ancestors, whom we so desperately need now more than ever.” (p. 228)

The Atlantic slave trade (and more recently the new wave of migration of Africans to Europe and North America) was accompanied by the transfer of these spiritual beliefs, practices, and languages to new continents. All over the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas, the enslaved population manifested the spiritual beliefs they brought from Africa or inherited from their ancestors in various ways: Obeah, Salt, fly, *Vodun*, *Santería*, *Candomble*, *Kromanti*, spirit possession, cult to the ancestors, etc. The major role of spirituality, religion and spiritual practices in the resistance to slavery is evident and undeniable, and language use, together with music and dance, was a crucial part of it.

In this paper, I have highlighted some West and Central African spiritual beliefs, practices, and languages to which enslaved Africans and African descended peoples have had recourse in order to empower themselves and resist oppression. I have especially stressed the recognition on the part of Africans and African descended

peoples on both sides of the Atlantic of the power of language and thus, the importance of the use of language relation to spiritual power.

Cassidy and Le Page (1980: xli) characterize maroon settlements as centers of resistance and linguistic conservatism, and Bilby (1983) remarks that the Jamaican Maroon Spirit Language provides us with a special kind of *entrée* into the past (p. 62). I affirm that such cultural and linguistic resistance was also present in the plantations in the covert form of spiritual practices, a sort of spiritual *marronage* which included dance, music, singing and special uses of language that have been preserved in today's African descended spiritual practices all over the Americas. I also affirm that we can go through that *entrée into the past*, that we can tap into those living oral historical documents coming from the creators of the creole languages themselves, to establish a link between resistance to slavery and creole genesis. I contend that in research on creole languages working with spirit or secret languages is crucial, and requires investigators like myself and others go through these *entrées*. Perhaps it's time to pay more attention to the ideas expressed in the quote by Wilhelm Von Humboldt at the beginning of this paper: "A people's speech is their spirit and their spirit is their speech" which the field of linguistics has long abandoned in favor of more "scientific" explanations of language phenomena.

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TENSE, MODALITY AND ASPECT IN LIMONESE CREOLE AND MARTINICAN CREOLE

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In this article, we will compare some features of tense, modality, and aspect marking in Martinican French lexifier Creole (MC) and Limonese English lexifier Creole (LC) with the goal of demonstrating that, despite the fact that they have different lexifier languages and different linguistic histories, these two creole languages share many grammatical characteristics. In this presentation, we will first briefly discuss the comparative historical background of Martinique and Costa Rica, then, we will compare tense-modality-aspect systems in the two Creoles using the work of John Holm as a framework and finally, we will contextualize these systems in short stories in Martinican Creole and Limonese Creole.

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Martinique is part of the Lesser Antilles and the province of Limón is situated on the Caribbean Coast of Costa Rica. According to Girvan (2001), the answer to the question “What constitutes the Caribbean?” is often a matter of perspective and of context and differs substantially between the Anglophone, Hispanophone and Francophone regions. He adds that among scholars, “the Caribbean” is often considered to be a socio-historical category, commonly referring to a cultural zone characterized by the legacy of slavery and the plantation system. The definition of the Caribbean is also sometimes based on language and identity, geography, history and culture, geopolitics, and geoeconomics. Our perception is that, even though we are geographically separated, both Martinique and Limón, share similarities on the cultural, social, linguistic and extralinguistic levels, due to our common legacy of colonization and creolization. This paper is an attempt to corroborate this perception focusing on the morphosyntactic subsystem of tense modality and aspect.

Martinican Creole is the most commonly spoken language in informal situations in Martinique, while French is the official language and is spoken mostly in formal situations. Spanish is the official language of Costa Rica, but the African-descended community in Limón uses Limonese Creole in informal situations. Martinique was colonized mainly by the French and now has the political status of a Department of the French Republic. On the other hand, Costa Rica was colonized by the Spanish.

Costa Rica became an independent republic in 1821, and Limón is a province of this republic. Even though African and European descended people are present in both territories, Martinican French lexifier Creole is spoken by people of both African and non-African descent, but Limonese English lexifier Creole is almost exclusively spoken by people of African descent.

In the following tables, the forms for MC are from Bernabé (2003) or the present authors, the forms for LC are from Portilla (1997) or the present authors, and the other forms are from John Holm (1995). As shown in Table 1 below, in both Creoles, many verbs are used without tense, modality or aspect markers. Active verbs with no markers are normally interpreted as [+past] and [+completive], while unmarked non-active or stative verbs are normally interpreted as being [-past] and [-completive]. Other interpretations are possible, depending on the context or if specified elsewhere in the discourse.

Table 1 Unmarked form for active and non-active verbs (FLC = French lexifier Creole; ELC = English lexifier Creole)

	Unmarked form	
	[+active] verbs = [+past] [+completive]	[-active] verbs = [-past] [-completive]
Lesser Antillean FLC (Holm 1995)	∅	∅
Haitian FLC (Holm 1995)	∅	∅
Martinican FLC	∅ ou manjé	∅ ou pansé
Sranan ELC (Holm 1995)	∅	∅
Jamaican ELC (Holm 1995)	∅	∅
Gullah ELC (Holm 1995)	∅	∅
Limonese ELC	∅ yu iyt	∅ yu tink

In the MC example, we have the active verb *manjé* with no marker and in the LC example we have the active verb *iyt* with no marker. The [+past], [+completive] interpretations are exactly the same in both languages as well as in the other French and English lexifier Creoles of the Caribbean. In the other MC example, we have the non-active or stative verb *pansé* with no marker and in the other LC example; we have the unmarked non-active or stative verb *tink*. The [-past], [-completive] interpretations are exactly the same in both languages as well as in the other French and English lexifier Creoles of the Caribbean.

According to Holm (1995: 153), most of the Atlantic creoles have a preverbal marker indicating past tense or anterior sequence that can occur either alone or before another preverbal marker. In Table 2 below, we show that active verbs in MC and LC can adopt an unmarked form when they are [+past] (*ou manjé* for MC and *yu iyt* for LC). However, to stress anteriority or past tense, the MC preverbal marker *té* (as in *ou té manjé*) and the LC preverbal marker *di* (as in *yu di iyt*) can be used. In the case of non active or stative verbs, the marking of anterior sequence and past tense is normally obligatory. To do this, the same preverbal markers *té* in MC (*ou té pansé*) and *di* in LC (*yu di tink*) are used. This same general pattern is found in the other Atlantic Creoles.

Table 2 Past tense for active and non-active verbs

	Past tense/Anterior sequence	
	[+active] verbs	[-active] verbs
Lesser Antillean FLC (Holm 1995)	Ø té	té
Haitian FLC (Holm 1995)	Ø té	té
Martinican CF	Ø té ou manjé ou té manjé (past, also pluperfect)	té ou té pansé
Sranan ELC (Holm 1995)	Ø ben	ben
Jamaican ELC (Holm 1995)	Ø ben	ben

Gullah ELC (Holm 1995)	Ø bin	bin
Limonese ELC	Ø di yu iyt yu di iyt (past, also pluperfect)	di yu di tink

As shown in Table 3 below, according to Holm (1995) most of the Atlantic Creoles have a preverbal marker indicating completive aspect that can occur either alone or before another preverbal marker. We have already mentioned that active verbs in MC and LC can adopt an unmarked form when they are [+completive] (*ou manjé* for MC and *yu iyt* for LC). However, to stress completive aspect, the MC preverbal marker *fini* (as in *ou fini manjé*) and the LC preverbal marker *don* (as in *yu don iyt*) can be used. In the case of non-active or stative verbs, the marking of completive aspect is normally obligatory. To do this, the same preverbal markers *fini* in MC (*ou fini pansé*) and *don* in LC (*yu don tink*) are used. This same general pattern is found in the other Atlantic Creoles, where a marker derived from a verb meaning ‘to be done, to be finished’ is used to mark the completive aspect.

Table 3 Completive aspect for active and non-active verbs

	Completive aspect, Perfective aspect	
	[+active] verbs	[-active] verbs
Lesser Antillean FLC (Holm 1995)	Ø fini	fini
Haitian FLC (Holm 1995)	Ø fin	fin
Martinican CF	Ø fini ou manjé ou fini manjé	fini ou fini pansé
Sranan ELC (Holm 1995)	Ø kaba	kaba
Jamaican ELC (Holm 1995)	Ø don	don

Gullah ELC (Holm 1995)	Ø don	don
Limonese ELC	Ø don yu iyt yu don iyt	don yu don tink

According to Holm (1995), most of the Atlantic Creoles have a preverbal marker indicating incompletive aspect that can occur either alone or before another preverbal marker, as outlined in Table 4 below. We have already mentioned that non-active or stative verbs in MC and LC can adopt an unmarked form when they are [-completive] (*ou pansé* for MC and *yu tink* for LC). However, to stress incompletive aspect, the MC preverbal marker *ka* (as in *ou ka pansé*) and the LC preverbal marker *a* (as in *yu a tink*) can be used. In the case of active verbs, the marking of incompletive aspect is normally obligatory. To do this, the same preverbal markers *ka* in MC (*ou ka manjé*) and *a* in LC (*yu a iyt*) are used. This same general pattern is found in the other Atlantic Creoles.

Table 4 Incompletive for active and non-active verbs

	Incompletive, Imperfective, Progressive aspect	
	[+active] verbs	[-active] verbs
Lesser Antillean FLC (Holm 1995)	ka	Ø ka
Haitian FLC (Holm 1995)	ap	Ø ap
Martinican CF	ka ou ka manjé	Ø ka ou pansé ou ka pansé
Sranan ELC (Holm 1995)	de	Ø de
Jamaican ELC (Holm 1995)	da ~ de	Ø da ~ de

Gullah ELC (Holm 1995)	da a+verb+in	Ø da a+verb+in
Limonese ELC	a a+verb+in yu a iyt	Ø a yu tink yu a tink

Holm (1995) states that the preverbal markers in most of the Atlantic Creoles can be combined as well. In Table 5 below, we demonstrate that in both MC and LC, the past and incomplete markers can be combined. In MC, the past marker *té* and the incomplete marker *ka* can be combined before active verbs (as in *ou té ka manjé*) and in LC the past marker *di* and the incomplete marker *a* can be combined before active verbs (as in *yu di a iyt*). These markers can also be combined before non-active or stative verbs in MC as in (*ou té ka pansé*) and in LC as in (*yu di a tink*).

Table 5 Past incomplete for active and non-active Verbs

	Past incomplete	
	[+active] verbs	[-active] verbs
Lesser Antillean FLC (Holm 1995)	té ka	té ka
Haitian FLC (Holm 1995)	té + ap = tap	té + ap = tap
Martinican CF	té ka ou té ka manjé	té ka ou té ka pansé
Sranan ELC (Holm 1995)	ben e	ben e
Jamaican ELC (Holm 1995)	ben a	ben a
Gullah ELC (Holm 1995)	bin a	bin a

Limonese ELC	di a yu di a iyt	di a yu did a tink

Holm also notes that the Atlantic Creoles normally have an irrealis modality marker derived from the verbs meaning ‘to want’ or ‘to go’ which is often used to mark the future. As shown in Table 6 below, in MC, this marker is *ké* as in (*ou ké manjê*) and (*ou ké pansê*) and in LC, this marker is either *gwain* or *wi* as in (*yu gwain iyt* or *yu wi iyt*) and (*yu gwain tink* or *yu wi tink*).

Table 6 Irrealis modality for active and non-active verbs

	Irrealis Modality, Future	
	[+active] verbs	[-active] verbs
Lesser Antillean FLC (Holm 1995)	ké	ké
Haitian FLC (Holm 1995)	va	va
Martinican FLC	ké ou ké manjé	ké ou ké pansé
Sranan ELC (Holm 1995)	go sa	go sa
Jamaican ELC (Holm 1995)	go wi	go wi
Gullah ELC (Holm 1995)	gwain	gwain
Limonese ELC	gwain wi yu gwain iyt yu wi iyt (past, also pluperfect)	gwain wi yu gwain tink yu wi tink

The similarities in the tense-modality-aspect systems in these two Creoles demonstrate how socio-historical factors such as African ancestry, indigenous ancestry, and the creolization process itself make the languages more similar than might be supposed at first glance. To conclude, we would like to contextualize the TMA systems in MC and

LC by presenting parts of two short stories that are key elements of our oral traditions in both languages.

The title of the Martinican Creole short story is *Pouki yo ka tchoué kochon lanouel ?* (Why do they kill hogs for Christmas?) (retrieved from potomitan.info/atelier/contes/contes_creole10.php). It explains the origin of the meat traditionally eaten at Christmas, using the common storytelling characters Brother Rabbit, Brother Monkey, etc:

-Mistikri!

-Mistikra!

-Sa ki papa chyin?

-Chyin!

-Sa ki manman chyin?

-Chyienn!

-Toua foua bèl kont!

-Toua kont sa **bon** pou di.

Eh byin manmaye, vini kouté an ti parol, an bèl ti parol éti moun Matnik **ka di** : «Toua kochon ni Sanmdi-yo» épi jan la Gouadloup **ka di**: «Toua kochon **tini** jou-Nouèl-a-yo». Mé sé nou minm nou-minm. **Nou sav** sa lé **di** mimm' bagaye-la.

-Hé krik!

-Hé krak!

Ni moun **ka di** kon sa ki an tan lontan, kochon pa **té alé** lakrèch pou ouè lanfan jézi (sé douett **té** an vié mal kochon-planch bô-kaye). Konpè Lapin, Konpè Makak, Konpè Man-nikou, Konpè Mouton, yo tout **té pran kouri** aye **gadé** sa. Konpè kochon **rété dômi** an kabann-li. Asiparé, i **di** «sé pa ba piès kochon nouè kon moin-minm zafè bondié tala! Aye pann-kô zot !» Yo **di** konsa bondié (bondié blan-an) **té** telman anrajé i vréyé sé lé zot-la **tchoué** Konpè kochon épi **manjé**-ye, épi i **di** yo konsa ki chak lè Nouèl **té ka rivé** falé yo **té tchoué** an kochon pou manjé-ye.

-Hé krik!

-Hé krak!

-Héééé-ééé- kri!

-Héééé - ééé kra!

An pa **sav** si tout moun **dakô** ou byin pa **dakô** épi istouè tala. Moin minm an **té ké la**, an **té ké fè** kon kochon. Manmaye, an vérité, man pa kouè sé pou sa yo **ka tchoué** kochon lanouèl! Ni dé moun **ka di** sa, mé ni dôti moun **ka di** a pa **vré**.

-Hé krik!

-Hé krak!

Manmaye lanouèl **sé** an sèl voumtak, an sel voukoum! Toutt' pèp-la **ka santi** konsi diré i adan an nich fonmi, toutt moun **anvi** krié anmoué ! Nou, lé antiyé, nou **sav** ki

lanouèl, sé pa an jou pou moun **rété dômi** an kabann-yo. Nou **ka fété** lanouèl kon nou nou labitid fété-ye bô kaye nou !

-Hé kri!

-Hé kra!

«Toult kochon ni sanmdi-yo, toult kochon ni jou a nouèl a-yo». Ti parol tala, fôk **sav** la i sôti. Sé an fon lesklavaj i **sôti**. Dépi antan lesklavaj, zansèt-nou **té ka fété** lanouèl an manniè-yo. Jou tala, sé bétché-a **té ka fè** ti nouèl-yo, an manniè yo. Mé yo **té vini pè** jou tala, pass sé joutala toult sé esklav-la **té ka jouinn** kô-yo. Mi sé la fôk **chèché** la ti parol la **sôti**. Sé zansèt nou a **té ka fété** Nouèl épi kochon, boudin, paté, **sété** sèl richès yo. Yo **té ka nourri** bèt-la pandan toult lanné pou manjé-ye lanouèl. Sé pa **té** bondié ki **té ba** yo lôd tchoué kochon. Lè zansèt nou **té ka di** «Toult kochon ni sanmdi yo, toult kochon ni jou a nouèl a yo», sé pass yo **té** byin **sav**, an jou, yo **té ké rivé** libéré kô-yo. Kochon-an yo **ka palé**-a, nou toult sa **sé** ki sa ! Aprézan manmaye, man byin **palé**, man **ka espéré** toult moun-lan **ké passé** an bon Nouèl. Séprifin!

In Limonese Creole, Anancy stories are part of the oral tradition and this short story in particular has many variations, this one was told by Grandma Maria:

Wans opan a taym Naansi **se** im **sik**, den im **miitop** Breda Taiga an **tel** im se im **kyaan waak** an im **mos gi** im a raid pan im bak, bot Breda Taiga **tel** Breda Naansi se **im gwain komaaf** bifuo **im riich** di gyal dem we **did a waait** pan im bai di ruod said. So breda Naansi **se** iz **aarait**, dem **im beg** breda Taiga fi a wiip, se im **wan fi brosh** di flai dem we **a bada im**. So im **a kiip aan raidin** Breda Taiga afa im **get** di wip, an wen dem **don riich** di kaana we di gyal dem **de**, Taiga **tel** Naansi se im **mos kom** aaf, bot Naansi **did a biit** breda Taiga aad aad wi di wip, so Taiga **afi ron** paas di gyal dem, an Naansi **ala** out, mi no **tel** unu se im **woz** mi pupa uol aas, an Taiga **shiem shiem** an **truo** dong Naansi an **ron** ina di bush, so fram dat die, Taiga no **lib** ina di toun an Naansi uoni **lib** ina di siilin.

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COGNITIVE SEMANTICS MEETS CREOLE LINGUISTICS

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Applications of Cognitive Linguistics to areas of semantic inquiry have been largely neglected in contemporary studies of creole languages and cultures. The present study is part of a larger project that promotes a Cognitive Semantics for Creole Linguistics. The focus in this paper is on: 1) the utility of a Cognitive Semantics approach in the study of creole languages; and 2) on metaphorical conceptualizations that have been responsible for predatory processes of colonization and globalization in the Caribbean and beyond. Later stages of the present research project will focus on metaphorical conceptualizations that have motivated successful acts of resistance against the European metropolises by Indigenous descended, African descended and non-property European-descended persons in the Afro-Atlantic.

Cognitive Semantics for Creole Linguistics frames emergent linguistic structure that arises from language contact phenomena in terms of the creative capacities of the mind to conceptualize and to express the multilayered processes inherent in the creolization of language and culture. Cognitive Semantics is concerned primarily with “multiformity of the meaning of human experience conceptualized in language” (Albertazzi, 2000: 15). Cognitive Semantics for Creole Linguistics goes beyond the idea that meaning emerges from the results of algorithmic processes performed in the mind. It suggests that meanings in both physical and linguistic acts are motivated by the “dynamics of the construal activity performed by the mind, or in other words, the ability of the mind to conceive and represent the same situation from different perspectives, or different directions of thought” (Albertazzi, 2000: 13). Cognitive Semantics for Creole Linguistics makes a case for speaker agency in the creation of creole languages and furthers the discussion on ways in which Afro-Caribbean peoples were able to create linguistic systems in the face of colonization and globalization. It is based on second-wave Cognitive Linguistics, the most recently developed framework used to study the roles that semantics and pragmatics play in the grammars of the world’s languages. In their hypothesis on the origin of language(s), Fauconnier and Turner state:

“Language, in the strong sense, must be equipotential. It must be serviceable too for the innumerable new situations we encounter. But the only way it can be equipotential is for the human mind to be able to blend those new situations

with what we already know to give us intelligible blends with attached grammatical patterns so those existing grammatical patterns can express the new situations. To say something new, *we do not need to invent new grammar....* Rather, we need to conceive of a blend that *lets existing grammar come into play*. Only in this way can an individual with small, relatively fixed vocabulary of words and basic grammatical patterns cope with an extremely rich and open-ended world.” (2002: 182, emphasis added)

Fauconnier and Turner provide numerous cases in their study on the mind’s hidden complexities to point to language users’ remarkable propensity for creativity and resourcefulness. The study of metaphor is one area of the creative mind that has received much attention in second-wave Cognitive Linguistic, or more specifically, Cognitive Semantic research. The current project draws on findings from the study of metaphor such as those presented in the above quote, as well as those put forward by linguists such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999); Lakoff and Turner (1989); Lakoff (1993); Kovesces (2005); Polzenhagen (2007); Wolf and Polzenhagen (2009); and Bergen (2012) to stress agency on the part of indigenous and marginalized peoples in the creation and maintenance of the languages and cultures that emerged in language contact scenarios in the Caribbean.

Creolists have shed considerable light on West African substrate sources that impacted the phonological and grammatical systems of new English-lexified varieties spoken in the Atlantic. I suggest we consider searching for West African and Indigenous Caribbean cultural conceptualizations that have played an important role in the realization of Afro-Caribbean creole language and culture as well. We can draw attention to those conceptualizations by turning our attention to the study of unconscious processes like metaphorical reasoning that occur in our “backstage cognition” (Fauconnier, 1994: xvii-xlvi; Turner, 2000). Fauconnier and Turner claim that metaphorical reasoning “permits us to use vocabulary and grammar for one frame or domain or conceptual assembly to say things about others. It brings a level of efficiency and generality that suddenly makes the challenging mental logistics of expression tractable” (2002: 182). Substrate research in Creolistics has provided data that support exactly the processes that Fauconnier and Turner describe above.

Cognitive Semantics for Creole Linguistics argues against the claim that Western thought was overwhelmingly imposed on people in language contact scenarios in the Afro-Atlantic to the extent that creole languages and cultures emerged as “approximations of approximations” of European languages and cultures (Mufwene, 2001). The project looks to research that moves beyond outdated concepts in Creolistics to find new ways to talk about the creativity of creole consciousness and the nature of the arenas in which it emerged. For example, González-López urges us to create a conceptual blend where written sources (considered as ‘factual’ by the dominant paradigm in science) and oral sources (considered as ‘fictional’ by the

dominant paradigm) combine to create plausible scenarios that account for the emergence of creole languages:

“Although the settings and the protagonists are based on historical facts, some of the details might be based on legend, or I filled them out with my imagination and my intuition. This is the first thing I want you to consider: the validity of legends as evidence for theories of Creole formation and genesis. You will have to develop the plot yourselves with your imagination and your creativity and your intuition, skills of the human spirit which rational scientific thinking rejects.” (2007: 3)

Le Compte Zambrana (2007) presents two arenas in the Caribbean that provide differing perspectives on the contact-situation vis-à-vis cohabitation in the Greater Antilles:

“*Sociétés de plantation* are seen by historians as a ‘unifying force’ in the Caribbean because they imposed a single economic model on the region. But this model was based on a divisive and racialized system which marginalized all but the economy, culture, and language of the masters. *Sociétés de cohabitation* can be seen as providing the basis for Caribbean unity ‘from below’ because they provided a multicultural matrix within which all of the diverse populations on the various islands could find a space for their different subsistence economies and for preservation and enrichment of their multiple cultural and linguistic repertoires.”

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Fauconnier and Turner’s Blending Theory (2002) uses the term *double scope conceptual integration* to refer to the blending of facts and hypothetical situations that regularly occur in the brain when humans make sense of discursive events. González-López’s study is in line with this type of research. The point I aim to make with the analogy of creole languages to emergent structure and the resulting conceptual blends is the following: linguistic and cultural artifacts give us insight into aspects of metaphorical reasoning that occur in *backstage cognition*. Because language and culture are products of *backstage cognition*, it is no wonder that traces of the languages and cultures of the people who participated in contact scenarios show up in the creole languages and cultures that have emerged in West Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Creolization involves, after all, linguistic and cultural processes of creativity that occur alongside speakers’ enduring ancestral linguistic and cultural patterns (Alleyne, 1993). The existence of Afro-Caribbean creole languages reflect the creative responses on the part of all persons in the Caribbean who faced complex trade and co-habitation scenarios as they attempted to bridge their diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Little research has been done in Creolistics on semantics in African languages and

Afro-Caribbean English-lexifier Creoles using Conceptual Metaphor Theory. And yet, the study of metaphor and metonymy in Cognitive Linguistics has revealed universal conceptualizations of thought that have been found in many typologically unrelated languages. Because it is believed that West African languages played a substantial role in shaping the semantic systems of new English-influenced varieties that have emerged in Sierra Leone, Liberia, the Gambia, Cameroon, Ghana, and Nigeria (Wolf & Polzenhagen, 2009) and, similarly, that the indigenous languages of the Caribbean helped shape the Creole languages that emerged in the Antilles (Viada, 2008), I contend that West African and Indigenous Caribbean cultural conceptualizations can be found in Afro-Caribbean Creole languages and cultures as well.

The remainder of this paper should be considered to be a first attempt towards a Cognitive Semantic study in the Creole Linguistics context. It aims to exemplify the process of uncovering the existence of metaphors that have motivated hegemonic discourses of imperialism, colonialism, and plunder in the Caribbean. I argue that strategies of discursive erasure were implemented in the Caribbean as a result of the insurrectional response to colonialism on the part of Indigenous peoples, Afro-Caribbean peoples, and poor European indentured servants. The maroonage and revolts that occurred in the 17th and 18th centuries are examples of actions that were motivated by a distinct way of thinking, namely a conceptual system of resistance, which was in conflict with the Western program of capital accumulation.

Conceptual Metaphor Theory, as described by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999), refers to the role of the mind's imaginative capacities in the mental processes that enable humans to make meaningful sense of experiences that they encounter in their lives. Aside from work by specialists in literature and philosophy by writers such as Wilson Harris, the importance of the imaginative capacities of the mind in the organization of thought and the creation of language and identity has been largely neglected in contemporary studies of creole languages and cultures by linguists and other social scientists. The following sections discuss Conceptual Metaphor Theory in general and the metaphor LAND AND PEOPLES AS COMMODIFIABLE RESOURCES in particular to reference the way in which European metropolises established, propagated, and justified their hegemony in the Caribbean.

From the time of its inception in 1660, the Royal Society in London searched for new scientific methods that would shed light on the 'true' nature of the world. These new methods that Early-Modern thinkers such as Copernicus, Galileo, Bacon, Descartes, Huygens, Boyle, Newton, Wilkins, Locke and others developed would eventually lead to the Age of Enlightenment, an age of "developing objective science, achieving a universal form of morality and law, and liberating rational modes of thought and social organization from the perceived irrationalities of myth, religion, and political tyranny" (Steger, 2003: 28). It is no coincidence that this particular time period

coincides with the transition to a new capitalist model of colonial domination by Europe, first over the Americas and eventually over Africa and the rest of the world. In the 16th and 17th centuries, philosophers and scientists began to conceptualize reason as something separate from the body. In a sense, reason was extracted from within us and placed outside of our reach. In this period, language, the facilitator of reason, gained a special status. It became a means of control, specifically for controlling those who had not adopted the enlightened, Western hegemonic tradition. Even in the present post-modern era, Francis Bacon's 'scientific method' is still the method that most scientists believe to have an objective advantage for conducting scientific investigation. In this paper I assert that scientific investigation in and of itself is a relativistic processes that focuses more on *finding* than on *finding out*. The very sense of what objectivity is originates from the hegemonic ideas that people accept concerning what is and is not pertinent to and appropriate for scientific inquiry. The current consensus of what is objective can be considered to be a key component of the dominant discourses of science, to which academics adhere in the same dogmatic and faith-based manner as alchemists adhered to previous dominant discourses. As we are constrained to certain modes of interpretation when conducting scientific research, there can be no value-neutral science (Whorf, 2000). Science is dominated by dogmatic and empirically unverifiable beliefs that have plagued scientific discourse and scientific communities for hundreds of years. These dominant discourses have severely limited and restricted the results of centuries of research to that which could be utilized in the Western hegemonic project of world domination by a small ruling class. Western economic activity has inculcated these dominant discourses into our reasoning (Fairclough, 2003: 208):

“Inculcation is a matter of people coming to ‘own’ discourses, to position themselves inside them, to act and think and talk and see themselves in terms of new discourses. A stage towards inculcation is rhetorical deployment: people may learn new discourses and use them for certain purposes (e.g. procuring funding for regional development projects or academic research) while at the same time self-consciously keeping a distance from them. One of the complexities of the dialectics of discourse is the process in which what begins as self-conscious rhetorical deployment becomes ‘ownership’ – how people become un-self-consciously positioned ‘within’ a discourse.”

Violence and competition have been the key methods by which Western science has established domination over nature, women, and colonized peoples. The dominant discourses of Western hegemony have conditioned us to think that competition and violence are the natural way that the world functions, with little or no space allowed for co-operation and complementary co-existence. Selection is seen as a zero-sum game, the winner takes all. Dominant cultures and languages spread, erasing cultures

and languages in their paths.

Up-down constitutes one of the most basic of human experiences (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). It is not surprising that much of the language which we use to conceptualize events and causes are directly related back to our understanding of this embodied experience. Those who accept Western hegemonic discourse perceive their relation to nature and to indigenous peoples by using a basic orientation metaphor UP IS SUPERIOR/GOOD, DOWN IS INFERIOR/BAD which leads to conceptual metaphors such as: 1) RATIONAL IS UP/SUPERIOR/GOOD; 2) MAN IS RATIONAL/SUPERIOR/GOOD, EUROPEAN IS RATIONAL/ SUPERIOR/GOOD, CULTURE IS RATIONAL/SUPERIOR/GOOD; 3) WOMAN IS IRRATIONAL/ INFERIOR/EVIL, NON-EUROPEAN IS IRRATIONAL /INFERIOR/EVIL, NATU-RE IS IRRATIONAL/INFERIOR/EVIL (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 17):

“People view themselves as being in control over animals, plants, and their physical environment, and it is their unique ability to reason that places human beings above other animals and gives them this control. CONTROL IS UP thus provides a basis for MAN IS UP and therefore RATIONAL IS UP.”

Racism is based to some extent on a conflation of this metaphor with others such as WHITE IS PURE/CLEAN/INNOCENT/GOOD and therefore UP/SUPERIOR, BLACK IS IMPURE/DIRTY/CORRUPT/EVIL and therefore DOWN/INFERIOR.

LABOR IS A RESOURCE and TIME IS A RESOURCE are two important conceptual metaphors that motivated the transition to capitalism in the Caribbean. This transition relied crucially on widespread acceptance of these hegemonic constructs as ‘truths’. The language engineers of the 17th century (Slaughter, 1982) were in a position to embed dominant metaphors into the unitary standardized language that they attempted to re-create out of the heteroglossic chaos of complex human interactional behaviors mediated by speech. The hegemonic discourses that they were perpetuating were in line with notions of economic and political development to be achieved through the colonization and commodification of land and peoples. Western hegemonic metaphors that motivate systems of domination are still very much alive and, like the 16th and 17th centuries, they have a special role in political and social decision-making via the Rational Actor Model (Lakoff, 2008).

Lakoff and Johnson stress that our perception of events changes as the result of the dominant position that certain metaphors have had in the history of our society, for example the perception of labor and leisure activities has been configured by the LABOR IS A RESOURCE metaphor (1980: 67):

“In viewing labor as a *kind* of activity, the metaphor assumes that labor can be clearly identified and distinguished from things that are not labor. It makes the assumptions that we can tell work from play and productive activity from nonproductive activity.... The view of labor as merely a *kind* of activity,

independent of who performs it, how he experiences it, and what it means in his life, hides the issues of whether the work is personally meaningful, satisfying, and humane. What is hidden by the RESOURCE metaphors for labor and time is the way our concepts of LABOR and TIME affect our concept of LEISURE, turning it into something remarkably like LABOR. The RESOURCE metaphors for labor and time hide all sorts of possible conceptions of labor and time that exist in other cultures and in some sub-cultures of our own society: the idea that work can be play, that inactivity can be productive, that much of what we classify as LABOR serves either no clear purpose or no worthwhile purpose.”

The metaphorical conceptualizations of the events that I reference are meant to be placed within the background of the Early Modern Period and are emphasized to show the correlation between the unfolding of those events and the emergence of Western hegemonic thought. The central difference between Western and non-Western ontologies and epistemologies can be specified in terms of two distinct conceptualizations: metaphors of co-operation and sustainability in the non-Western tradition, and violent metaphors of land and peoples as commodifiable resources in the Western hegemonic tradition. My future research will deal with West African and Indigenous Caribbean philosophies that are based on self-sustaining metaphors, which, in turn, motivate other metaphors of co-operation, sustainability and subsistence.

The creation of a unitary, standardized, taxonomized conceptualization of language became a major project of the 17th century, exemplified by the attempt to create a universal language (Slaughter, 1982: 1-3). The Baconian method introduced in 1630, and developed by Wilkins in 1668, eventually led to the creation of the universal language project. The dominant trend in science established in the 16th century was the assignment of values to words through taxonomical nomenclatures. Scientists felt they could gain control over nature if they designated and defined it in terms of pure essences, conceived of in the Aristotelian sense. Of course domination over nature could only be attained through language, which, ironically, had to be reordered and taxonomized itself in order to produce an essential and appropriate language sufficient enough to ‘codify’ and, at the same time, ‘decode’ the natural world.

The 17th century language engineers endeavored to construct a language that would accurately represent the nature of the world. As Slaughter states, “The analysis of nature into its simple elements or component parts was understood to be the prerequisite of a philosophical language. Constructing it [the language] required no less than providing a model or theory of nature....the model and explanation of nature adopted by the language projectors were taxonomic” (1982: 3). The scientists and language engineers of the 17th century felt that if they could satisfactorily “methodize,

follow a strict set of rules, consciously proceed by an institutionalized (impersonal) set of directions,” then it would lead to “triumphing over, or at least controlling, chaos [the nature of the world]” (Slaughter, 1982: 7). The method used by these language engineers was typical of scientific procedure in the 16th and 17th centuries. The thinking was mechanistic in that scientists firmly believed that parts of a whole had to be ‘decontextualized’ in order for a satisfactory and truthful analysis to be carried out. In a similar vein, taxonomy and nomenclature in the sciences were closely related to another popular method of science in the 17th century, namely alchemy:

“To the natural historian of the seventeenth century, plant organisms are regarded as structures, i.e. arrangements or configurations of a number of significant elements or variables; the structure is the visible sign of the essence. The isolation of these variables or the decomposition of the organism into these elements permits organic form to be reconstituted or retranslated into a linear language, into a series of successively ordered elements which constitute a taxonomy. Once this is done, they can be represented in natural language and given names.” (Slaughter, 1982: 9-10)

Although she does not explicitly mention metaphor as a theory, Maria Mies critiques the *scientific method* by metaphorically constructing Western hegemonic science into systems of exploitation that have remained central to patriarchal systems of domination. The author states, “The progress of European Big Men is based on the subordination and exploitation of their own women, on the exploitation and killing of Nature, on the exploitation and subordination of other peoples and their lands” (1986: 76). I agree with Mies and contend that the ideology which drove much of the political activity of the Early Modern Period can be conceptualized using metaphors that evoke ideas of commodification, such as PEOPLE ARE COMMODIFIABLE RESOURCES and LAND IS A COMMODIFIABLE RESOURCE. “Nature had to be transformed into a vast reservoir of material resources to be exploited and turned into profit by this [the rising protestant, capitalist] class” (Mies, 1986: 88). These discourses led to the belief that land was a commodifiable resource, something to be used up. The perception of people and land as commodifiable resources eventually developed into strategies of erasure of languages, cultures, identities, and belief systems.

Mies states that: “European science and technology, and its mastery over nature have to be linked to the persecution of the European witches. And both the persecution of the witches and the rise of modern science have to be linked to the slave trade and the destruction of subsistence economies in the colonies” (1986: 77). She specifically refers to Francis Bacon to demonstrate how those in power in the philosophical and scientific arenas set the standard for patriarchal thinking in the 16th and 17th centuries (1986: 87):

“Francis Bacon, the ‘father’ of modern science, the founder of the inductive

method, used the same methods, the same ideology to examine nature which the witch-persecutioners used to extract the secrets from the witches, namely, torture, destruction, violence. He deliberately used the imagery of the witch-hunt to describe his new scientific method: he treated 'nature as a female to be tortured through mechanical inventions'." (Merchant, 1983: 168)

European colonial powers of the Early Modern Period and neoliberals today have aimed to erase modes of production that are based on traditional indigenous lifeways which are thought to be in competition with the capitalist/colonial system. From the first stages of the Age of Enlightenment onward:

Europeans and their descendants on other continents took it upon themselves to assume the role of the world's guardians of universal law and morality.... [These] economic entrepreneurs and their academic counterparts began to spread a philosophy of individualism and rational self interest that glorified the virtues of an idealized capitalist system supposedly based upon the providential workings of the free market and its 'invisible hand'. (Steger, 2003: 31)

The dominant discourses of Western hegemony are constructed on metaphors and syllogisms such as: NATURE IS A RESOURCE, LAND IS A RESOURCE, LABOR IS A RESOURCE, RESOURCES ARE COMMODITIES, NATURE/WOMEN/NON-EUROPEANS/BLACKS ARE IRRATIONAL, therefore NATURE/WOMEN/NON-EUROPEANS/BLACKS ARE COMMODITIES. This was the metaphorical thinking that 17th century philosophers used when they reasoned about the world and personified it as something to be commodified (Federici, 2004; Von Werlhof, 2001). Resources are commodifiable, hence the idea that persons thought to be less rational than the 'standard average European' (Whorf, 1956) – Africans Indigenous persons, and women – could be used by any means necessary to 'yield' profits in the colonial system. Even in the 20th and 21st centuries, ever increasing commodification has undeniably been the primary aim of the neoliberal and globalization projects. Whereas land, labor, colonized peoples, and women have been seen in Western hegemonic discourse as resources for unlimited exploitation since the 17th century, the scope and depth of commodification and colonization has recently been extended from land, labor, colonized peoples, and women to human body parts, cells, DNA sequences, hedge funds, mortgage futures, 'intellectual property', and a host of other 'new frontiers' for the profiteers and their global casino that Western hegemonic discourse supports and defends.

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VARIACIÓN EN LA JERARQUÍA DE RESTRICCIONES DE /-S/ EN EL CARIBE HISPÁNICO: ¿EVIDENCIA EN CONTRA DE UNA TIPOLOGIZACIÓN DEL ESPAÑOL EN LA ZONA?

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Introducción

Generalidades y descripción del fenómeno

Este trabajo toma como punto de partida la noción de Caribe como una unidad geográfica constituida por las comunidades que se agrupan dentro de lo que Gaztambide (2003) ha denominado el Gran Caribe. Desde esta perspectiva, se realiza un análisis Optimal de las variaciones de (-s) en el español de una Muestra del Caribe Hispánico (M_{CarH}) dividido éste en el insular: La Habana (Cuba), San Juan (Puerto Rico) y Santiago de los Caballeros (República Dominicana); y el en continental: Barranquilla (Colombia), Panamá (Panamá) y Puerto Cabello (Venezuela). El análisis de las variaciones y su ordenamiento cuantitativo en estas comunidades se convierte en evidencia que aclara si existe uniformidad en torno a este fenómeno, y que a su vez, contribuye a la tipologización de los dialectos del Gran Caribe Hispánico bajo una Gramática del Caribe Hispánico ($Gram_{CarH}$).

Los estudios muestran por lo menos cuatro variantes de /-s/ en el español en general. Dicha variación se organiza a partir de una escala de debilitamiento que evidencia la existencia de una forma plena [s] (1a), una aspirada [^h] (1b), una elidida [Ø] (1c), y una asimilada [α] (1d):

- (1) a. [susto] *susto*
- b. [ko^hta] *costa*
- c. [karoØ] *carros*
- d. [sugga^j inaØ] *sus gallinas*

Desde la perspectiva de la geometría de rasgos, (1a) se formaliza manteniendo en el nodo Coronal la propiedad [+anterior] (Rueda Chaves & Navas Escorcía, 2012). (1b) ancla al nodo Laríngeo la propiedad [+glotis extendida] (Kenstowicz, 1994; Cutillas Espinosa, 2006; Rodríguez Cadena, 2010; Rueda Chaves & Navas Escorcía, 2012). (1c) disocia los rasgos desde la raíz (Núñez Cedeño & Morales-Front, 1999; Martín Butragueño, 2007; Rueda Chaves & Navas Escorcía, 2012). Y por último, (1d) disocia

todos los rasgos de [s] desde la raíz y se reasocia al segmento siguiente, asimilando totalmente sus rasgos (Martín Butragueño, 2007; Rueda Chaves & Navas Escorcía, 2012).

Estado de la cuestión y marco teórico

La clasificación del español de América se ha emprendido a partir de la hipótesis de la bipartición del español (Rona, 1964 citado por Moreno Fernández, 1993; Moreno de Alba, 1988; De Granda, 1994; Lipski, 1994; y Montes Giraldo 2000); en los postulados sobre la influencia de las lenguas indígenas (Valdés Bernal y Rodríguez, 2003) y africanas (Álvarez Nazario, 1974; Lipski, 1993; Megenney, 1999), y en las diversas propuestas de clasificación dialectal. Sin embargo, estos esfuerzos han evidenciado la falta de fiabilidad y rigurosidad de los datos (Moreno Fernández, 1993) y lo infructuoso de clasificar la amplia variedad de una zona bajo un límite artificial. A la luz de todo esto, /s/ también se ha constituido en un elemento divisor de zonas dialectales del español (Montes Giraldo, 2000) y en un elemento de aparente unificación del Caribe (Canfield, 1981; Vaquero, 1996). Después de los cambios fonológicos de la edad media, la /s/ se realiza en América de forma muy variada y se acerca a la realización andaluza (Quilis, 1982; Lapesa, 1986). La hipótesis andalucista (Rona, 1964 citado por Moreno Fernández, 1993; Canfield, 1981; Vaquero, 1996), o por otro lado la hipótesis criolla, ha llevado a plantear la existencia de un español del Caribe (Vaquero, 1996). No obstante, la lingüística tipológica sostiene que las clasificaciones se llevan a cabo teniendo en cuenta un sistema o componente de la gramática (Hyman, 2006) y los rasgos estructurales del mismo (Vajda, 2001 citado por Hyman, 2006) para así dar cuenta de los patrones que se manifiestan en la comparación de las lenguas (Croft, 1990). También que los sistemas lingüísticos seleccionan un inventario de rasgos más abierto que clasificaciones cerradas; y que difieren en la selección de inventarios fonológicos que poseen propiedades específicas y diversas interacciones (Duanmu, 2004). Los sistemas lingüísticos capturan la relación entre el nivel subyacente, el léxico y las representaciones fonéticas (Hyman, 2006). En consecuencia, se ha determinado que es imposible proponer una sola forma subyacente para todos los dialectos de una lengua (Trudgill, 1983 citado por Martín Butragueño, 2004). La idea de incluir diversas variedades en una sola gramática panlectal terminó en una versión más limitada denominada gramática polilectal (Martín Butragueño, 2004). Silva-Corvalán (2001) propone la existencia de una estructura jerárquica de dialectos afines subordinados a una lengua histórica común, lo cual lo denomina la pirámide dialectal.

La variable /-s/ posee variantes condicionadas por aspectos lingüísticos, sociales y estilísticos (Samper Padilla, 2001; Rodríguez Cadena, 2004, 2005, 2010). En el español en general, la realización articulatoria de /s/ es variada (Lapesa, 1986; Quilis, 1988; Vaquero, 1996; Martín Butragueño, 2007). El reanálisis de los datos de

numerosos estudios de corte sociolingüístico han conllevado a plantear tres zonas dialectales el área americana según el ordenamiento cuantitativo de las variantes de /s/¹: 1) dialectos conservadores en proceso, 2) dialectos intermedios, y dialectos más avanzados (Samper Padilla, 2001). En lo que respecta al Caribe insular y continental, se encuentran aparentes regularidades en el uso de las variantes de /-s/ (Terrell, 1979; López Morales, 1983; Navarro 1987, citado en Samper Padilla, 2001; Alba, 1990; Rodríguez Cadena, 2004b, 2005; 2010; Rueda Chaves & Navas Escorcía, 2009; Samper Padilla, 2001). En Barranquilla, sus variantes se distribuyen de forma complementaria, atendiendo a un patrón de restricción segmental (Rodríguez Cadena, 2010). En Cuba y Puerto Rico [h] es la norma, en República Dominicana [Ø] se establece como el alófono más productivo en el habla (Vaquero, 1996). En el estilo informal, Barranquilla mantiene el continuo [h] (41.5% / 49.2%) >>[Ø] (39.9% / 36.4%) >>[s] (18.3% / 13.7%) >>[α] (0.1% / 0.6%) (Rodríguez Cadena, 2004, 2005, 2010; Rueda Chaves & Navas Escorcía, 2009) al igual que San Juan [h] (51.1%) >>[Ø] (38.2%) >>[s] (9%) >>[α] (1.5%) (López Morales, 1983) y Puerto Cabello [h] (63%) >>[Ø] (34%) >>[s] (3%) >>[α] (2%) (Navarro 1987; Samper Padilla, 2001). La Habana muestra una tendencia similar: [h] (61%) >>[Ø] (21%) >>[s] (18%) (Terrell, 1979; Samper Padilla, 2001). Mientras que Santiago de los Caballeros registra el continuo: [Ø] (80%) >>[h] (14%) >>[s] (6%) (Alba, 1990; Samper Padilla, 2001) así como Panamá [Ø] (48%) >>[h] (41%) >>[s] (11%) (Cedergren, 1973; Samper Padilla, 2001).

Dicha variación segmental es pertinente tratarla con un modelo fonológico como la Teoría de la Optimidad (TOp), un engranaje capaz de explicar datos de variación lingüística (Martín Butragueño, 2002). TOp es un modelo basado en la evaluación en paralelo de formas subyacentes a partir de restricciones jerarquizadas que escogen un candidato óptimo. Cada gramática tiene una jerarquía de restricciones provenientes de la Gramática Universal que está organizada de manera particular (Núñez Cedeño & Morales-Front, 1999; Prince & Smolensky, 2004; Kager, 2004; Cutillas Espinosa, 2006). Las restricciones son de dos tipos: i) restricciones de *fidelidad*; y ii) restricciones de *buena formación* (Prince & Smolensky, 2004; Kager, 2004; Cutillas Espinosa, 2006). Este marco teórico ha reformulado su enfoque de restricciones y jerarquías para dar cuenta de los hechos de variación (Cutillas Espinosa, 2004). Submodelos de TOp como gramáticas estratificadas o el continuo de jerarquización (Anttila, 2004) y el modelo de tres gramáticas (Cutillas Espinosa, 2004), muestran la relación intrínseca entre los datos estadísticos de la variación y la formalización de los

¹ Según Samper Padilla (2001) cada clasificación tiene una razón de ser por el ordenamiento cuantitativo de tipo descendente de las variantes. En este sentido, los dialectos conservadores en proceso poseen la dominancia cuantitativa: [s] >>[h] >>[Ø]. Los dialectos intermedios tienen dos dominancias cuantitativas: a) [h] >>[s] >>[Ø], y b) [h] >>[Ø] >>[s]. Por último los dialectos más avanzados presentan la dominancia cuantitativa: [Ø] >>[h] >>[s].

mismos, y son pertinentes para explicar datos de variación segmental como los de /-s/ en M_{CarH} .

Preguntas de investigación

- i) ¿Cuales son las jerarquías de restricciones y su ordenamiento en M_{CarH} según los datos cuantitativos?
- ii) ¿Existe una $\text{Gram}_{\text{CarH}}$ a partir del análisis de M_{CarH} ?

Variación cuantitativa en el Caribe y jerarquía de restricciones de TOp

Este trabajo emprende la comparación de resultados generales de la variación de (-s) en M_{CarH} . Se comparan los datos obtenidos por Rodríguez Cadena (2004b, 2005a, 2010), Rueda Chaves & Navas Escorcía (2009), Terrel (1979), López Morales (1983), Alba (1990); Cedergren (1973) y Navarro (1987; Samper Padilla, 2001) para vislumbrar la existencia de una gramática del Caribe. Se emprende un análisis TOp que permite establecer una jerarquía de restricciones donde se vislumbre cada variante como candidato óptimo. Asimismo, se jerarquizan los órdenes de restricciones según su productividad cuantitativa en cada variedad.

Variaciones de /-s/ en el Caribe desde una perspectiva de la TOp

En este apartado se realiza un análisis TOp de la variación en las seis ciudades de M_{CarH} que permiten determinar el orden de restricciones que elegirá a cada candidato óptimo, asumiendo que /s/ es la forma subyacente para todos². Los procesos descritos en la sección 1.1 permiten presentar el siguiente conjunto de restricciones (Martín Butragueño, 2002, 2008; Rueda Chaves & Navas Escorcía, 2009):

(2) a. Restricciones de fidelidad pertinentes:

MAX-IO: todo elemento del input está máximamente presente en el output; en consecuencia, no se puede suprimir elementos.

MAX [Punto-c]: todo nodo Punto-c del input está presente en el output; en consecuencia, no se puede suprimir el nodo.

DEP-LINK: no pueden insertarse asociaciones estructurales no subyacentes.

b. Restricciones de buena formación pertinentes:

NOCODA: las sílabas mejor formadas carecen de coda.

² Esto representa un problema para la tipologización de una $\text{Gram}_{\text{CarH}}$, puesto que una gramática caribeña debe tener una misma forma subyacente como lo plantea Hyman (2006). Si lo analizamos desde TOp, el elemento en el nivel subyacente en cada gramática sería el output más armónico que legitima al input de Gen (Kager, 2004; Cutillas Espinosa, 2006). Sin embargo, este punto de vista se extrae de una versión categórica de TOp y no de una perspectiva de las preferencias como lo apunta Martín Butragueño (2008). Según Samper Padilla (2001) las altas frecuencias de elisión de /-s/ en la República Dominicana han llevado a considerar la existencia de -s/ subyacente como lo apuntan Terrell (1986) y López Morales (1990).

- ✓ NOCODA/[+estr]: las sílabas mejor formadas carecen de una coda con el rasgo [+estr].

(2) muestra tres restricciones de *fidelidad* y una de *buena formación*. Es decir, en M_{CarH} se favorece la *fidelidad* de las formas por encima de la *buena formación*. No obstante, este conjunto de restricciones no aplican para todas la variedades examinadas aquí. En el apartado 2.2 se da cuenta del grupo de restricciones y la jerarquía de las mismas que afectan a cada comunidad de habla. En general, se puede apuntar que MAX-IO es violada por $[\emptyset]$, puesto que va en contra de la supresión de segmentos. MAX [Punto-c] es infringida por $[\text{h}]$, la cual disocia el nodo Punto-c. El candidato $[\alpha]$ no cumple la restricción DEP-LINK, la cual vela por la no inserción de formas. Por último, NOCODA sufre una violación por parte de $[s]$, $[\text{h}]$ y $[\alpha]$, ya que ocupan esta posición silábica en el output. Teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, en M_{CarH} se tiene el siguiente análisis TOP que provee cada uno de los candidatos óptimos con una jerarquía de restricciones distinta:

Modelo 1 Jerarquía de restricciones para (-s). Candidato óptimo $[s]$

(-s)	DEP-LINK	MAX-IO	MAX [Punto-c]	NOCODA
$\text{☞}[s]$				*
$[\text{h}]$			*!	*
$[\emptyset]$		*!		
$[\alpha]$	*!			*

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Modelo 2 Jerarquía de restricciones para (-s). Candidato óptimo $[\text{h}]$

(-s)	DEP-LINK	NOCODA/[+estr]	MAX-IO	MAX [Punto-c]
$\text{☞}[\text{h}]$				*
$[\emptyset]$			*!	
$[s]$		*!		
$[\alpha]$	*!			

Modelo 3 Jerarquía de restricciones para (-s). Candidato óptimo $[\emptyset]$

(-s)	DEP-LINK	NOCODA/[+estr]	MAX [Punto-c]	MAX-IO
$\text{☞}[\emptyset]$				*
$[\text{h}]$			*	
$[s]$		*!		
$[\alpha]$	*!			

Modelo 4 Jerarquía de restricciones para (-s). Candidato óptimo [α]

(-s)	NOCODA/[+estr]	MAX-IO	MAX [Punto-c]	DEP-LINK
α				*
h			*!	
$\emptyset$		*!		
s	*!			

La evaluación que da como candidatos óptimos a cada una de las variantes de (-s), en general, muestra cuatro posibles modelos con distintas jerarquías de restricciones:

- (3) a. Modelo 1: DEP-LINK >> MAX-IO >> MAX [Punto-c] >> NOCODA
 b. Modelo 2: DEP-LINK >> NOCODA/[+estr] >> MAX-IO >> MAX [Punto-c]
 c. Modelo 3: DEP-LINK >> NOCODA/[+estr] >> MAX [Punto-c] >> MAX-IO
 d. Modelo 4: NOCODA/[+estr] >> MAX-IO >> MAX [Punto-c] >> DEP-LINK

El conjunto de jerarquía de restricciones en (3) muestra que DEP-LINK se constituye en la restricción más alta en las jerarquías que provee M_{CarH} para (-s), lo que explica que sea muy costosa su violación. NOCODA/[+estr] se instaure como una prohibición de alta jerarquía apareciendo dominada por la restricción más alta en dos de los cuatro modelos. NOCODA, MAX-IO y MAX [Punto-c] mantienen una fluctuación como restricción de baja jerarquía. Sin embargo, los modelos presentados anteriormente no son enteramente categóricos como parece evidenciarse en los análisis TOP arriba. Éstos sólo presentan una vista general a la formalización de la variación en M_{CarH} . Los datos interesantes se consiguen con la revisión del orden cuantitativo que muestra el estado de las preferencias de los hablantes en la producción de este fenómeno del español (Martín Butragueño, 2008), que permite establecer conclusiones sobre la existencia de una $\text{Gram}_{\text{CarH}}$.

*Variación cuantitativa, TOP y el ordenamiento de las gramáticas en el Caribe*³

Teniendo en cuenta los datos cuantitativos presentados en la sección 1.2 planteamos una M_{CarH} variable con una jerarquía de restricciones variable. Es decir, M_{CarH} está constituida, a la luz de los candidatos (C) de (-s) que tienen cabida en cada una de las comunidades de habla, por lo menos de dos gramáticas: una Gramática A (GramA) y una Gramática B (GramB), esto teniendo en cuenta los candidatos aportados por el lexicón (Lex) para (-s) en español. En este sentido, las gramáticas se organizan en primer lugar por las variantes/candidatos de (-s) que se documentan en el habla. Los

³ Cabe resaltar que en este apartado se trata de constatar las *preferencias* de candidatos y no la selección o exclusión de los mismos. Martín Butragueño (2008) destaca que este es un punto de divergencia entre las representaciones fonológicas categóricas y las variables: los candidatos no óptimos tienen cabida en la gramática analizada y no sufren de exclusión alguna.

candidatos de GramA son: [s], [α], [Ø] y [ʰ]; mientras que los de GramB son: [ʰ], [Ø] y [s]. Lo anterior entonces permite especificar sobre GramA la cual está constituida por las comunidades de: Barranquilla, Puerto Cabello y San Juan; y sobre GramB la cual agrupa a las comunidades de: Panamá, Santiago y La Habana:

Organización de Gramáticas de M _{CarH} por variantes	
C Lex M _{CarH} = {[s], [ʰ], [Ø], [α]}	
C GramA= {[s], [ʰ], [Ø], [α]}	C GramB= {[s], [ʰ], [Ø]}
GramA= {Barranquilla, Puerto Cabello, San Juan}	
GramB= {(Panamá, Santiago), (La Habana)}	

Ilustración 1 Organización de gramáticas en M_{CarH}

La ilustración 1 es clara en presentar dos gramáticas distintas con número de candidatos diferenciados. Esto a su vez tiene una consecuencia, cada variedad tiene un conjunto distinto de restricciones (R) jerarquizadas para evaluar cada forma óptima. En ese sentido, restricciones que tienen lugar en una gramática no tienen efecto en otra, o quedan ocultas por las restricciones dominantes (Núñez Cedeño & Morales-Front, 1999). Lo anterior, en consecuencia, afecta directamente la constitución de los Modelos y su jerarquía interna. A esto se suma lo que atañe al orden cuantitativo que cada variedad les imprime a los candidatos validando así una jerarquía de restricciones particular. El análisis presentado en la sección 2.1 presenta claras limitaciones y no es suficiente para explicar la variación real de las gramáticas de M_{CarH}. Teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior, a continuación se reanalizará cada gramática desde TOp.

Como se apuntó en el apartado 1.2 GramA posee un jerarquía cuantitativa de variantes como sigue: [ʰ] >>[Ø] >>[s] >>[α]. Teniendo en cuenta este orden de frecuencias, el Modelo 2 y la jerarquía de restricciones de (3b) presentados en la sección 2.1 son pertinentes para la formalización de la variación de (-s) en estas variedades, ya que favorecen esta jerarquía de restricciones frecuentemente (41.5% - 49.2% / 63% / 51.1%). Desde esta perspectiva, Barranquilla, Puerto Cabello y San Juan además de generar unos mismos candidatos desde su lexicón, poseen la misma jerarquía de restricciones favorecida en términos cuantitativos y que da como resultado un mismo candidato óptimo: [ʰ] (Modelo 2). Para estas tres comunidades también son pertinentes, en su orden cuantitativo, los modelos tres, uno y cuatro, quedando la dominancia de restricciones para (-s) como sigue: Modelo 2>>Modelo3>>Modelo 1>>Modelo 4. En resumen estas gramáticas mantienen como restricción de alta jerarquía a DEP-LINK.

Para GramB los datos no muestran un panorama regular como en GramA. Aunque el lexicón aporta los mismos candidatos, es decir [s], [Ø] y [ʰ], el orden cuantitativo que

se explicitó en la sección 1.2 para las variedades que hacen parte de GramB no es el mismo. Si seguimos el análisis TOP de 2.1 es evidente que DEP-LINK no es pertinente para el análisis de los candidatos de GramB, puesto que en su input no posee un candidato como $[\alpha]$. DEP-LINK no aplica en estas variedades por el accionar de otras restricciones dominantes/pertinentes en la evaluación de los candidatos. Estos hechos conllevan a proponer una división más fina donde por lo menos se identifican dos gramáticas dentro de GramB: GramB1= {La Habana}; y GramB2= {Santiago, Panamá}. Las restricciones a tener en cuenta son las mismas explicitadas en (2) a excepción de DEP-LINK.

Modelo 5 Jerarquía de restricciones para (-s). Candidato óptimo $[\text{h}]$

(-s)	NOCODA/[+estr]	MAX-IO	MAX [Punto-c]
$\text{☞} [\text{h}]$			*
$[\emptyset]$		*!	
$[\text{s}]$	*!		

Modelo 6 Jerarquía de restricciones para (-s). Candidato óptimo $[\emptyset]$

(-s)	NOCODA	MAX [Punto-c]	MAX-IO
$\text{☞} [\emptyset]$			*
$[\text{h}]$	*!	*	
$[\text{s}]$	*!		

Los análisis arriba evidencian dos jerarquías de restricciones que dan como resultado dos candidatos óptimos distintos. Así tenemos el Modelo 5: NOCODA/[+estr]>>MAX-IO>>MAX [Punto-c] el cual da como resultado a $[\text{h}]$, variante favorecida cuantitativamente en GramB1; y el Modelo 6: NOCODA>>MAX [Punto-c]>>MAX-IO, que permite en el output a $[\emptyset]$, forma productiva frecuentemente en GramB2. Un Modelo 7 es necesario para dar cuenta de $[\text{s}]$ como candidato óptimo, aunque frecuentemente sea el menos favorecido.

Modelo 7 Jerarquía de restricciones para (-s). Candidato óptimo $[\text{s}]$

(-s)	MAX-IO	MAX [Punto-c]	NOCODA
$\text{☞} [\text{s}]$			*
$[\text{h}]$		*!	
$[\emptyset]$	*!		

El modelo 7 muestra una jerarquía de restricciones que tiene la siguiente dominancia: MAX-IO>>MAX [Punto-c]>>NOCODA. En general, para GramB1 el ordenamiento cuantitativo de los modelos que describirían su variación cuantitativa es: Modelo 5>>Modelo 6>>Modelo 7. En el caso de GramB2: Modelo 6>>Modelo 5>>Modelo 7.

Conclusiones

El análisis TOP de las preferencias de las comunidades conlleva a varias conclusiones interesantes. En primer lugar, está claro que M_{CarH} trata de manera distinta la variación de (-s). Esto es evidente a partir del grupo de candidatos/variantes que están disponibles en cada gramática y la jerarquía de restricciones que los hacen óptimos. En este sentido, M_{CarH} se constituye de siete modelos distintos de jerarquías de restricciones que dan cuenta de los candidatos: $[\emptyset]$, $[\alpha]$, $[^h]$ y $[s]$. GramA tiene al Modelo 2 como la jerarquía de restricciones de más peso cuantitativo. De la misma manera, organiza los modelos según la siguiente dominancia cuantitativa: Modelo 2>>Modelo3>>Modelo 1>>Modelo 4. El Modelo 5 se constituye en el de más relevancia estadística en GramB1. Esta gramática también da cuenta de la siguiente jerarquía cuantitativa de modelos: Modelo 5>>Modelo 6>>Modelo 7. La jerarquía de más peso cuantitativo en GramB2 es el Modelo 6; y el ordenamiento cuantitativo que da cuenta de su variación es: Modelo 6>>Modelo 5>>Modelo 7.

Lo anterior es una clara muestra de la inexistencia de una $Gram_{CarH}$ unificada. El análisis demuestra dos conjuntos de candidatos ($C_{M_{CarH}} = \{ \{C_{GramA}\}, \{C_{GramB}\} \}$) para tres gramáticas ($M_{CarH} = \{GramA, GramB1, GramB2\}$), lo que sugiere la existencia de por lo menos dos lexicones que aportan candidatos distintos para /-s/. Esto problematiza la tipologización, puesto que debe haber una relación entre los tres aspectos de las variedades susceptibles a ser clasificadas, es decir, el nivel subyacente, el léxico y las representaciones fonéticas (Hyman, 2006). De la misma manera, las formas superficiales de GramA, GramB1 y GramB2 son la evidencia de su existencia en el Lexicón, donde se descartan elementos lingüísticos no existentes y descabellados, cumpliendo así con la *Optimización del léxico* (Prince & Smolensky, 2004; Kager, 2004; Cutillas Espinosa, 2006), aspecto que deslegitima la unificación de estas gramáticas. Otro argumento en contra de una $Gram_{CarH}$ es el ordenamiento cuantitativo de las jerarquías de restricciones. GramB se bifurca en GramB1 y GramB2 ya que sus organizaciones internas difieren cuantitativamente eligiendo al candidato $[^h]$ como la forma preferida de un lado y al candidato $[\emptyset]$ por el otro. Aunque posean las mismas entradas léxicas, éstas son ordenadas cuantitativamente de manera distinta. También es relevante el hecho de que GramA y GramB poseen conjuntos de restricciones distintos, ya que DEP-LINK no es pertinente en los modelos que van del cinco al siete: $R_{GramA} = \{NOCODA, DEP-LINK, MAX [Punto-c], MAX-IO\}$; y $R_{GramB} = \{MAX-IO, MAX [Punto-c], NOCODA\}$. Lo anterior sostiene que las lenguas

seleccionan un inventario de rasgos abierto y que difieren en la selección de inventarios fonológicos, imposibilitando las clasificaciones cerradas (Duanmu, 2004). El análisis TOp de la variación de (-s) en M_{CarH} muestra un ordenamiento variado de las jerarquías de restricciones (Morris, 1998) en cada variedad que refuta la idea de la existencia de una $\text{Gram}_{\text{CarH}}$. Los datos se constituyen en una evidencia que contraviene varias hipótesis sobre la existencia de una gramática del Caribe y sobre el trazo de isoglosas que demarcan zonas dialectales. De la misma manera, contradicen la idea de la existencia de dialectos afines que son parte de una lengua histórica común que se encuentra en la cima de la pirámide (Silva-Corvalán, 2001), puesto que no concuerda con el principio de Optimización del léxico en cada gramática y con la evidencia concreta de la existencia de distintos conjuntos de candidatos para cada una.

No obstante, lo trabajado aquí posee sus limitaciones. Todavía queda por abordar la variación y el ordenamiento de las jerarquías de restricciones según las preferencias y regularidades que se observan de acuerdo a distintos factores lingüísticos, estilísticos y sociales. De la misma manera, queda por definir el marco teórico/metodológico para determinar lo qué es cuantitativamente pertinente para agrupar variedades en una misma gramática. Es decir, ¿Es suficiente que variedades como Santiago y Panamá tengan alta preferencia cuantitativa del candidato [Ø] por encima de otros para pertenecer a GramB2 , sin evaluarse las distancias frecuenciales de la elisión en cada comunidad? Este y otros interrogantes deben ser contestados en investigaciones futuras. Lo que sí queda claro es que el estudio optimal de la M_{CarH} rechaza la idea de una $\text{Gram}_{\text{CarH}}$. Sustentar la idea de su existencia debe basarse en examinar un componente completo de la gramática de la zona (Hyman, 2006), así como los rasgos estructurales de la misma (Vajda, 2001 citado por Hyman, 2006).

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**LITERATURE AND THE RHIZOMATIC CULTURES
OF THE CARIBBEAN**

RHIZOMATIC FEMALE PROTAGONISTS IN THE WORK OF CLAIRE HARRIS, MAHADAI DAS, AND MARYSÉ CONDÉ

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This article examines the politics of Caribbean female identities in the poetry and prose of Claire Harris, Mahadai Das and Marysé Condé through the conceptual frames of the rhizome advanced by Eduard Glissant (1997), transculturation as defined by Fernando Ortiz (1995) and deterritorialization as formulated by Deleuze and Guattari (2004). I intend to show how Condé, Das, and Harris engage multiple positions on the woman question in the Caribbean and in the process, undermine patriarchal structures that define the lives of Caribbean women. I also argue that Condé, Harris, and Das question the myth of the Caribbean woman and the idea of Africa or India as motherlands. I argue for a Caribbean feminist poetic that reflects the multiple identities and complexities of Caribbean femininities and that the work of these three female writers reflects the complexities of what it means to live a rhizomatic life.

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According to Deleuze and Guattari in *A thousand plateaus* (2004) the processes of *deterritorialization* and *reterritorialization* have resulted in a post-modern way of living that resembles Glissant's (1997) rhizome: "The point is that rhizome or multiplicity never allows itself to be overcoded, never has available a supplementary dimension over and above its number of lines. All multiplicities are flat, in the sense that they fill or occupy all of their dimensions." (p. 9). Thus, people "increase [their] territory by deterritorialization, [and] extend the line of flight to the point where it becomes an abstract machine covering the entire plane of consistency." (p. 11). Das and Harris' poems could also be said to echo sentiments expressed by Glissant because they reflect aspects of rhizomatic creation and identity and the process of *créolisation*. Identity and essence are multiplex as the rhizome and its various roots connect to one another. Like the rhizome, *créolisation* has no frontiers, it breaks free from all rules:

"La Créolisation est imprévisible. Elle ne saurait se figer, s'arrêter, s'inscrire dans des essences, dans des absolus identitaires...Ce qui perdure dans le changement ou le change ou l'échange, c'est peut-être d'abord la propension ou

l'audace à changer. Je vous présente en offrande le mot «créolisation», pour signifier cet imprévisible de résultantes inouïes, qui nous gardent d'être persuadés d'une essence ou d'être raidis dans des exclusives." (p. 26)

[Creolization is unpredictable. It cannot be fixed, paused, assigned to essences, to absolute identities...What is 'permanent' in change and interchange is perhaps first and foremost the propensity or the audacity to change. I thus present the reader with a conceptual crutch in the form of the term 'creolization' to signify this unpredictable phenomenon that consists of unprecedented outcomes that prevent us from being convinced that essences exist or to allow ourselves to be stiffened by limitations.] (translation by the editors)

From these sketchy definitions, I can say that the personae in Harris' and Das' poems and Condé's novel live in *déterritorisatized* liminal spaces through their ambiguous references to Africa and India. For the female protagonists in the work of these three writers, neither Africa nor India seems to fully represent their desires for self-fulfillment. These protagonists therefore reflect the nomadic consciousness that these writers internalize as they negotiate their cultural and geophysical deterritorialization that encompasses the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, North America, and Europe. Cultural deterritorialization in this case could be considered to be a form of the cultural creolization that typifies the rhizomatic cultures of the Caribbean.

Harris destabilizes and complicates her identification with what she regards as the brave, resistant and wise nature of African women. In *Drawing down a daughter* (1992), the Afro-Caribbean persona in the labor of childbirth prays to the androgynous god of her African foremothers:

"Obatala 'who turns blood into children'
Make me a woman out of my blood
...
A girl who can place brick upon brick
And yet read from a book
A woman of our grandmothers and their wisdoms
And still a woman with the light of dawn on her." (p. 40)

Throughout the poem there is a constant reference to Afro-Caribbean mothers and grandmothers, whose spirits dominate her consciousness, yet whose influence she simultaneously resists and admires and wants to transfer to her daughter in Canada where she knows her daughter will lead a liminal existence. Harris shows multiple desires for and resistances against her tripartite locations: Africa, Caribbean, and North America, none to which she truly belongs completely. For instance, of *Seen in stormlight*, Harris' very first poem written and published in Nigeria (1984), she writes:

“This poem recalls a Nigerian experience in a sort of ghostly, jerky, flickering of very old, very bad movies in which scenes flash in and out of focus. For the first time I found myself in a culture which was almost alien – the more doors opened paradoxically the more closed the society became. But it was, at the time, the great adventure of my life and jolted me into writing. . . . I did not go to Africa looking for my “roots”. These are very deeply embedded in the black earth of the West Indies. But my much maligned ancestors came from Africa. I wanted to stand where they might have stood. I did.” (p. 43).

So though she stresses here that she did not go to Africa in search of her roots, she nonetheless embraces what she considers aspects of African women’s femininities that can help define who she is as a diasporic Afro-Caribbean woman living in Canada. In admiration, she writes: “In Mali she danced to fire drum night alive with incantation blessing [...]” (p. 74); and “You can learn how to deal with; you cannot avoid what nests in you. / There is something of the ancestral, of Africa in this.” (p. 54) Thus for Harris, Africa symbolizes a source of strength and spirituality usually associated with the incantations and ritual blessings of African derived religions in the Caribbean. Africa is “nested” in Caribbean women. They revitalize themselves through a mystical reconnection to Africa.

This could be seen as an example of Kamau Brathwaite’s (1993) literature of African reconnection. Africa is no longer Harris’s physical home, however, but instead a metaphysical and mythic source of origin. The Caribbean is her natural home now as even in death she would want to be buried in her native Blanchisseuse:

“sunborn I shiver at the thought of burial
in such a cold cold ground if I die
(it will be an accident Baby lapse of attention)
i want to hear the Caribbean muttering
on hot white sand
bury me at Blanchisseuse.” (Harris, 1992: 73)

But for now, her existence in Canada is a calculated adventure with a specific material purpose: access to formal education for her daughter, in spite of the problems of the racism she and her child will face daily. “I’m saying this once / I don’t care whether they’re racist or not you will / get all the education I can buy”(p. 22) because formal education is something not easily available in the Caribbean for women, and because ignorance is simply unaffordable.

Similarly, Das through her poetry reflects on the complicated nature of the relationship between Indo-Caribbean peoples and India. In *If I came to India*, she hypothetically asks herself what it would be like if she went to India in search of her identity. She recognizes her ancestral origins as Indian, but what she is in doubt about is whether she can lay an unproblematic claim to pure Indian identity, having grown

up in Guyana in contact with Afro-Caribbean, Christian, Indigenous, Muslim, Buddhist, and Hindu spiritualities and identities. In the following stanzas, the use of the modal “shall” reveals the author’s dilemma and the strictly conditional and imaginative nature of her quest for identity through an introspective and spiritual exploration of the attitudes and feelings that she might experience if she went to India:

If I came to India
Shall I be on a broken pilgrimage
To Mahatma?

Resigned or rebellious?
At streetcorner hunger,
Shall I wear penitence, a saffron
Robe, the wooden beads of my days
Cast about my breast?

Shall I be Methuselah
In my tradition, a foreign vine
Grafted to the Deccan Peninsula?

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Shall I find
The poet naked in the mountain?
Shall I discover philosophy
In mountain-caves where
Everest reigns?

Near the Tibetan border
Where monks levitate, is
The secret of Being written
On a parched leaf?

If I come.
Will I find my Self?

Das asks herself whether she will be disappointed by her trip to India, and foresees herself experiencing a religious and cultural shock. What will her reaction be to poverty and hunger? She also expects to be torn between Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. Will she be disappointed by Mahtma’s country? Will her Christianity be challenged there? Does she need to adopt the life of Buddhist monks to discover the secret of life?

On account of their complicated and deterritorialized cultural existence and their desires to stitch together and synthesize the often competing paradigms of the trans-cultural locations in which they find themselves, Harris and Das embrace their rhizomatic Caribbean cultures which include their respective ancestral “Mother countries” in addition to the imposed Euro-American ones. These transcultural locations are further exemplified through intertextual references which focus on the genetically and socio-culturally hybrid peoples of the Caribbean. It is this transcultural blending that I refer to as rhizomatic, resulting in multiply based Caribbean cultures and populations which have been influenced by the con-fusion of intertwined African, European and Asian roots.

Fernando Ortiz (1995) defines transculturation as follows:

“Transculturation is a set of ongoing transmutations; it is full of creativity and never ceases; it is irreversible. It is always a process in which we give something in exchange for what we receive: the two parts of the equation end up being modified. From this process springs a new reality, which is not a patchwork of features; but a new phenomenon, original and independent.” (p. 55)

If the protagonists in both Harris’ and Das’ poetry engage in constant processes of transcultural existence, it is Marysé Condé’s heroines Veronica in *Heremakhonon*, and Rosélie Thibaudin in *The story of the cannibal woman* who best demonstrate what it means to be a deterritorialized and transculturated Caribbean woman. Here I will focus on Rosélie Thibaudin. She has “a velvety, satiny skin” (p. 2) but in Guadeloupe she is seen as being a plain, unremarkable girl with a dark complexion and “bad hair” so that the gossiping public can not understand why and how she gets involved with a white man. “What did she have that was so special to hook a white man and wallow at his side? [She was] not that beautiful. Not that light-skinned. Not that young. And bad hair.” (p. 165) Perhaps as a result of the multiple liminal and indeterminate cultural interstices in which she finds herself, her whole life resembles a zombielike existence, which has manifested itself in what psychoanalysts often misdiagnose as a split personality.

Thus, while Rosélie is perceived as a gentle woman by people around her, her artistic works express violence and masculinity: “Her painting was so violent, somber, and virile whereas she appeared so feminine and gentle” (p. 169). Her entourage also considers her as uninteresting and distant. Moreover, she does not conform to female stereotypes: she does no housework and she never becomes a mother. Hence by her actions, her personality, and non-performance of patriarchal roles assigned to womanhood she indirectly challenges the ‘rules’ governing her gender. Rosélie is seen to be “somber, withdrawn, quick to retire to her apartment when there was a visit, and

not at all a polyglot, since she only spoke French-French. She didn't cook, didn't do the washing, didn't iron, and especially didn't give birth." (p. 274)

Her non-conformity to the social-construction of her gender is further exemplified in the kind of work or hobbies she engages in: A painter, a medium, a prostitute, the cannibal woman, Stephen's wife, a lover. She is an enigmatic character whose personality is difficult to decipher because of her rhizomatic multiple identities. Rosélie thus cannot be precisely defined ("overcoded"), predicted, or essentialized because her life, just as her personality, is characterized by multiplicity and complexity. Indeed, to the question; "Aren't you going to return home?" (p. 30) She replies:

"Home? If only I knew where home was. Chance had it that I was born in Guadeloupe. But nobody in my family is interested in me. Apart from that, I have lived in France. A man took me to Africa, then left me. Another took me to the United States, then brought me back to Africa, and he too left me stranded, this time in Cape Town. Oh, I forgot I've also lived in Japan. That makes for a fine charade, doesn't it?"

In this excerpt we come to understand that Rosélie's life is composed of several cultural connections and disconnections. She has lived on various continents but at the same time she does not identify herself with any of the places where she has lived. She does not fit into a given cultural identity, whether it be French, Caribbean or African. This feeling is accentuated by her feelings of rejection by black, white and mixed societies. Indeed, in Cape Town she is the "invisible woman" (p. 36). The racially mixed relationship that she forms with Stephen is rejected by both the white and the black segments of Cape Town society. The whites do not want her to exist at all and the blacks reproach her for betraying her race in marrying someone of European descent, hence a colonizer:

"Cape Town: No place had been more marked by its history. Never had she felt so denied, excluded, and relegated out of sight because of her color. Stephen was no longer walking beside her, arm in arm or ostentatiously placing an arm around her shoulder. They would not turn their heads in her direction. She no longer irritated, she no longer gave offense. She had become invisible. Sadly, she had to choose between being excluded or being invisible." (p. 36)

She feels that she has no place in a world based on racial prejudices. Thus, she is caught in a perpetual transitional space of in-betweenness which prevents her from adopting a definite cultural identity. As a rhizome, Rosélie is anti-genealogy (p. 11). Hence in response to the question "Who is Rosélie?" I assert that she is a typical postmodern woman who appears and functions in narratives defined by Lyotard (1993) as follows: "The narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal. It is being dispersed in clouds of narrative language elements" (p. xxiii). Rosélie is neither heroine nor anti-heroine. She is both

the narrator and the subject/object of the narration. I and She come and go in order to enter/go beyond or resist entry into the frontiers of a constructed African diasporic female identity.

Thus like the protagonists in both Harris and Das, Condé's Rosélie debunks the monolithic vision of a classical character in the sense that she is "unclassifiable". Through their characters, Harris, Das, and Condé all question and challenge the often monolithic phallographic constructs of Caribbean female gender, race, culture and womanhood. These characters do not behave according to what their societies or their readers expect of them, instead they provide us with destabilizing and non-essentializing insights into the rhizomatic, transcultural, and deterritorialized lives of Caribbean women.

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OF SUN, SULPHUR, AND CYCLONES: THE GEPOETICS OF THE ISLAND IN DANIEL MAXIMIN'S CARIBBEAN TRILOGY

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Between 1981 and 1995, the Guadeloupean novelist, poet, and essayist, Daniel Maximin, composed the panels of his Caribbean triptych in the form of three novels written between 1981 and 1995, *L'isolé soleil*, *Soufrières*, and *L'île et une nuit*. In these works he charts the life and times of the protagonist, Marie-Gabriel. She comes to terms with her cultural identity through a documentary encounter with her island's colonial history in the first novel, and in the following novels through her experiences of the anticipated eruption of Guadeloupe's volcano in 1976 and the arrival of Hurricane Hugo in 1989. While political overtones resonate throughout the accounts of natural disaster in the latter novels, the natural forces unleashed upon the island command their own emphasis. In a later volume of essays written in collaboration with the philosopher Valérie Picaude-Baraban, *Les fruits du cyclone: une géopoétique de la Caraïbe* (Seuil, 2006), Maximin compiles a geopoetics of the Caribbean in which he considers the evolving roles of Caribbean languages and cultures, foregrounding nature as a major actor in his island's history. Missing from the panorama of West Indian artists and literary figures he evokes is any reference to his own creative work. The present study seeks to situate Maximin's reflective essays within the larger conceptual framework of contemporary work being done in the field of geopoetics, and to complement his perspective with an appraisal of his trilogy as a reflection and instance of the Caribbean geopoetics he seeks to explore.

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The term geopoetics was coined by Kenneth White in one of his diaries in the fall of 1979. White's intellectual journey is a richly diverse one. A poet and professor of literature in France and in the United Kingdom, he styles himself a Scottish-European intellectual. His life has been framed by a scholarly and creative quest that has led him to a renewed understanding of man's relationship to the earth, conceived as a geopoetics. The year 1979 is of particular significance in this regard. This is the year in which White defends his state doctoral thesis at the University of Paris on 'intellectual nomadism', opening up a new field for research. As Bsaithi Omar

remarks in the introduction to his book, *Land and mind: Kenneth White's geopoetics in the Arabian context*, intellectual nomadism is global in compass, and novel in intent, it constitutes a "global approach to culture, besides being a new vision of the relation between man and world" (Bsaithi, 2008: 1). As such it needs to be enacted, not merely related. In that same year of 1979, White took a trip to Labrador, traveling along the St. Lawrence. His voyage served as the basis for a waybook (another neologism) entitled *La route bleue*, published by Grasset in 1983, and awarded the *Prix Médicis Étranger* in that year, a year in which he was also appointed to a new chair in Twentieth-Century Poetics at the Sorbonne.

The waybook functions as an essential counterpoint to White's academic and poetic endeavors. It is at once a record of his nomadic travels and an envisioning of his place in the world. Geopoetics is thus both theoretical in its formulation and direct in its application. As White comments in his preface to the *The blue road*, the blueness of the road in the silent spaces of Labrador draws on the natural phenomena associated to it, and inspires an almost mystical sense of place. The quality of blueness stems from blue of the sky and the ice, but also encompasses them: "But all those notions, along with a few others I can think of, while they talk to my senses and my imagination, still don't exhaust the depth of that 'blue'" (White, 1990: Preface). In a 1994 work, *Le plateau de l'albatros: introduction à la géopoétique*, White grounds the concept of geopoetics historically and cartographically through its literary dimension, retracing the itineraries of "proto-geopoéticiens" (White, *La géopoétique*) in the expedition narratives and documents of earlier explorers and writers. Similarly, the waybook, as a modern instance of geographical exploration, derives its geopoetic impetus from the contact between writing, reflection, and discovery of the real world. Since 1979, geopoetics has expanded into a large-scale intellectual and academic enterprise. Due in large part to White's inspirational leadership, Geopoetics Centers now exist across Europe as well as in Quebec and New Caledonia.

One of the shortcomings that critics have noted with respect to the concept of geopoetics, however, is its contradictory character. In his article 'Kenneth White and identity', Pierre Jamet plays upon the anagram geopoetics\egopoetics, pointing out the disconnect between White's theoretical rejection of the core concept of identity in the Western philosophical tradition on the one hand, and his insistence upon a self-centered writing in his own creative work. He is not alone in making this criticism. In his article 'Defining geopoetics', Federico Italiano examines the phenomenon of geopoetics, and the reasons behind its rapid and widespread acceptance in academic circles, marveling that despite its evident success, the concept has a credo, but lacks a clear definition. Italiano recognizes the need for a modern concept that supersedes the traditional notion of landscape, and offers his own definition of geopoetics as a concept uniting geography, ecology and aesthetics: "The concept of geopoetics [...] as an operative category, enables us to comprehend and to analyze the territorial,

geographical and geo-ecological dimensions of a literary text – and finally the aesthetically encoded relationship between man and earth” (Italiano, 2008).

In Daniel Maximin’s work, *Les fruits du cyclone: une géopoétique de la Caraïbe*, the author immediately makes it evident that his notion of the self and identity is neither individual nor rooted in tradition. Identity is indissolubly linked to natural forces, he affirms, it is none other than the fruit of the cyclone. Rereading La Fontaine’s cautionary fable, *Le chêne et le roseau*, Maximin likens the island inhabitants of the Caribbean to peoples of the reed, whose resilient identities lie in not in their roots but in the fruit they bear:

“Et les humains ne sont pas des arbres : ils savent renaître après les déracinements, édifier après les arrachements, féconder l’île déserte après le naufrage, s’enraciner comme Caliban et Vendredi, et encre les feuilles blanchies pour faire récit de l’impensable est de l’inespéré.” (Maximin, 2006: 14-15)

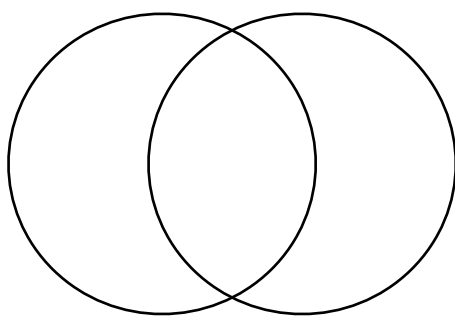
The story Maximin wishes to relate is the Caribbean’s own tale of apocalyptic survival, victory over oppression, and the celebration of existence. Isolation and solitude become waystations to a greater sense of solidarity and collective identity, as Maximin reveals when he directly refutes the egocentric impulse in Caribbean poetry: “Le poète noir se présente en Narcisse sans reflet, découvrant alors non quelque artificielle identité raciale, mais la source de sa ferveur dans une essentielle solidarité, au-delà des masques nègres et du miroir des Blancs” (Maximin, 2006: 127). Citing Aimé Césaire, Maximin charts the identity of the Caribbean through the memory and history of a traumatic voyage to a new native land, citing what Césaire refers to as “*mon originale géographie*”, and “*la géométrie de mon sang répandu*” (Maximin, 2006: 128). This sense of self is inseparable from the geography and history that encompass it, and while the retelling proposed by Maximin is in part the application of a corrective vision to popular misconceptions about the Caribbean as a disjunctive space consisting of a natural paradise and a downtrodden humanity, his primary purpose is to elevate a collective tale of survival against the odds, against human oppression and the violence of nature, to the scale of universal struggle and suffering, while retaining the specific referents of time and place framed by four centuries, four continents and four cataclysms.

Maximin’s Caribbean geopoetics differs from that of White in that it is predicated upon a perception of convergent realities, a creole archipelago forged by natural forces and the tides of history. The dialectics of a ‘here’ and an ‘elsewhere’ is reversed in Maximin’s formulation. Maximin’s version of the nomadic wanderer does not seek out new places to explore, the Caribbean island is the new world waiting at the ends of the earth, both figuratively and literally speaking for those migrants Brathwaite styled the ‘arrivants’ in his poetry. It is a place both barren and fertile, swept clean of native inhabitants after the first American genocide, and rich with agricultural promise for

European planters, where travelers from other continents arrived, voluntarily or by coercion, and where a new collective identity is forged, rising from the human disaster brought on by the sterile scourge of slavery.

The island habitat is both bountiful and inhospitable. In historical terms, the isle is a place of exile, a place without existing roots for the nomadic voyager, a place whose fruits are those of toil, and where nature is a force to be dominated by the plantation, or domesticated in the slave garden. From a geographical perspective, the island's eco-structure is similarly regenerative in nature, dictated by the intermittent destructive energies unleashed by the four cataclysms of natural origin: volcanoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, and tidal waves. As Maximin points out, like the successive waves of arriving peoples and their ensuing history of oppression and resistance, these natural catastrophes are all visited upon the island and come from elsewhere, above, below, or faraway, being either geological or meteorological in origin. Neither victim nor victor in its historical and geographical struggle for survival, each island culture exists not in isolation, but in a dynamic relationship with its companions, and its destiny is modeled by the mutually supportive and reinforcing patterns of island life across the pattern of islands that forms the twin chains of the Greater and Lesser Antilles. History thus mimics geography in the Caribbean, according to Maximin, but he also goes to great lengths to debunk outmoded interpretations that propose linear explanations of their mutual interdependency, such as the persistent and pernicious appeal of Montesquieu's climate theory, dating back to the 18th century, which would ascribe character traits to climatic influences. In the absence of an original Indian population, the contention is absurd on the face of it, according to Maximin.

In this regard, Maximin's posture maybe said to reflect the rhizomatic networks of the



kind proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *Capitalisme et schizophrénie 2*, and adapted by Édouard Glissant to underpin his theory of the 'Tout-monde', rather than espousing more traditional notions of roots and origins as the dominant form of geo-cultural transmission. The Venn diagram is one way to represent this relationship, and is used by Italiano in his article to show the overlapping

circles formed by the connections between landscape and geopoetics. The diagram is also recruited by the authors of *Éloge de la créolité* to show the overlapping spheres of anthropological and geopolitical activity that form the creole identity. It is a convenient visual aid to understanding how two linked spheres of activity may share common features without being subsumed one by the other into a hierarchy of influence. In Maximin's geopoetics, the history and geography of Guadeloupe

converge and overlap, just as geological and cultural overlapping along the island chain is a determining feature of the Caribbean archipelago.

The historical and geographical representations of the relationship of man to his Caribbean environment exhibit common features that are further bonded by the imagining of a shared dynamics, that of the cataclysm in Maximin's geopoetics. The predominant characteristic of a reed people is to bend without budging, to find victory in defeat. Maximin draws this lesson from the history of creole resistance to oppression. In both his historical and geographical situation, Caribbean man lies at the mercy of elemental forces and passions, and draws his inspiration and capacity to endure, in both senses of the term, from moments of great suffering: a resilience that springs from undergoing the unthinkable and the unspeakable. While Maximin's geopoetics reflects a collective resistance to harsh reality rather than an individual exploration of the world, his theoretical position also reveals the fault lines that lie at the heart of his alignment of historical and geographical events. He strives for inclusiveness in his Caribbean model, yet division lies at the heart of the oppression visited upon the African slave population by the European colonial oppressor, and the extended timeframe of this reality does not match the passing fury of hurricanes, tremors and eruptions in the Caribbean. Maximin is unwilling to modify a vision of resistance that is twofold, a passive resistance to natural forces and an active resistance to oppression. The peoples of the reed are also those of the humming bird, embodying weightless power and an indomitable warrior spirit in self-defense, but without aspiring to ascendancy over rivals and adversaries. In consequence, the relationship of past to present is not an entirely comfortable one, and Maximin finds himself frequently on the defensive when alluding to colonial reality.

The nomadic figure of Saint-John Perse presents more of a conceptual obstacle for Maximin than it does for Glissant, and remains a paradoxical example of Caribbean exodus. Perse came from a relatively prosperous white family, and left Guadeloupe for good at the tender age of 12 years old, never aspiring to return. The heroic figure of Louis Delgrès also poses a dilemma for Maximin, but for the opposite reason. Delgrès was a Martinican whose legendary resistance to invading Napoleonic forces came to represent for Guadeloupe what the great liberator, Toussaint Louverture, signified for the island of Haiti. Unlike Louverture's triumphant routing of the French naval might arrayed against him, Delgrès was unable to prevent General Richepanse's expedition from reestablishing slavery on Guadeloupe, only a few years after its abolition during the French Revolution. The question that has haunted Maximin down the years is that of the meaning and manner of Delgrès's death, a valiant last stand in the tradition of Roland, or perhaps Custer? Maximin speaks of Delgrès's sacrifice as an inscription of hope in the memories of his people and in the soil of his adoptive land, but spends more time denying that Delgrès's actions had other, less admirable

motivations. Delgrès remains the model, again a paradoxical one, of defeat without failure, but without ultimate victory. In Maximin's metaphorical categorization, Delgrès is the humming bird, but not the reed.

It is in the earlier novels that constitute Maximin's Caribbean trilogy that his literary practice sheds light upon his articulation of a Caribbean geopoetics. Maximin's novelistic treatment of the two abovementioned figures, Perse and Delgrès, highlights the crucial symbiosis of literary practice and philosophical reflection that exists within his writing, as it does in White's. The first of Maximin's novels, and the only one to explore a human rather than a natural disaster, is centered around the figure of Delgrès, the lone sun of the novel's title. Unlike White's waybooks, criticized for a focus on the self that detracts from his geopoetics, Maximin's novels, I would suggest, practice a creative model of inclusion that both complements and mitigates his theoretical assertions. *Lone sun*, an attempt to match the anagrammatic play of the original French title: *L'isolé soleil*, portrays the solar figure of Delgrès presiding in splendid isolation over the literary endeavors of the novel's protagonist, Marie-Gabriel, as she seeks to reconstitute his final battle through a polyphonic dialogue with the people and texts that constitute her network of interlocutors. As defined by Mikhail Bakhtin, polyphonic dialogue engages multiple participants and perspectives in collective exchange of ideas, attitudes, and behaviors. By choosing to invest his autofiction with a female protagonist, Maximin adroitly undercuts the patriarchal model of men in conversation about men, and opens the way to a counterhegemonic discourse in which women's agency is foregrounded. As Clarissa Zimra notes in her introduction to the English translation, this strategy brings a subversive element into play: "The claims and the aims of women's writing, therefore, allow Maximin to write his own countertext on heroism; which is to say, a narrative whose meaning eventually depends on a contrapuntal yet associative reading of other texts in a literary tradition it may well subvert" (Maximin, 1989: liv).

Viewed through the lens of female skepticism, Delgrès's heroic self-sacrifice in *L'isolé soleil* appears more futile than fruitful. Marie-Gabriel begins to doubt the value of the official version of his death, exclaiming: "*Le sentiment croissant que l'histoire n'est qu'un mensonge des hommes m'arrête aussi. Mensonge par rapport à la manière dont les femmes vivent leur histoire*" (Maximin, 1987: 108). Her exchanges with other characters reinforce this perception. In his correspondence with her, Adrien denounces the history of Guadeloupe as a saga of vain endeavor: "*As-tu remarqué dans tes lectures à quel point le suicide est le seul héroïsme de nos îles écrasées par le déferlement des escadres des continents*" (Maximin, 1987: 86). Louis, another of her interlocutors, views Delgrès's suicide as no more than a bid for immortality, a desire to have a statue erected in his name. In response to her changing perceptions of history, Marie-Gabriel will adjust the focus of her novel, and rewrite the past from the viewpoint of unlauded women's exploits, as well as their unmemorable failings.

General Richepanse will meet his end at the hands of an old woman healer who treats his ailment by poisoning him with jam and tea. Saint-John Perse's grandmother, on the other hand, is exposed as lamenting the deaths of 7,000 whites in the eruption of Mont Pelée, and callously omitting the 'inconsequential' tally of blacks killed, another 33,000.

The description of Saint-John Perse, and Louis Delgrès in Maximin's novels and in his geopoetics is, therefore, sharply dissimilar in nature, providing evidence of the evolution that occurs between Maximin's creative reenactment of key moments in Caribbean history in his fiction, and the inclusive embrace of his essay. The change of emphasis that occurs between the trilogy and *Les Fruits du cyclone* reveals a new-found determination on Maximin's part to heal the narrative of his island's past and to avoid returning to his earlier questioning of history. His geopoetics is forward looking in its conception, and seeks to bridge the catastrophic and persistent divides that have afflicted the Caribbean. In the pursuit of this elusive ideal of a holistic creole ecology, one of the remarkable achievements of his novelistic vision now appears less in evidence, as the unique voice of Marie Gabriel is eclipsed, and her desire to relate the counternarrative of the part played by women in history disappears. Maximin's vision of a Caribbean identity may thus be seen as uneasily papering over some of his own doubts about the value of conventional interpretations of his island's history and society, and his geopoetic enterprise reveals the difficulty inherent in bringing solidarity to collective human experience without sacrificing the richly conflicting tapestry of multiple viewpoints and emergent voices that compose the fabric of Caribbean culture.

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THE BADJOHN IN EARL LOVELACE'S *THE DRAGON CAN'T DANCE* AND *THE WINE OF ASTONISHMENT*

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Lovelace's vision and mission as novelist derive from his belief that African culture has functioned as a site of resistance to the colonizing mission which needed to establish darkness as the necessary condition for bringing the light of civilization to Africans enslaved in the new world (2003: 2-3). Lovelace argues that the Europeans needed to legislate darkness and they achieved this by making illegal or illegitimate all the expressive cultural practices which the enslaved Africans have retained or reinterpreted in the new world.

Elsewhere Lovelace reveals that when he attended a wake in Eastern Trinidad he chanced upon all of the elements of the dark, "everything that wasn't anywhere else, that I had not seen before" (2003: 11). This was his moment of epiphany, as he puts it, "in a kind of way I had found the darkness to grow" (2003: 11). From this rooting there emerged a vision and a life purpose which he declares in the words: "And soon it became quite clear to me that my task lay in validating the lives of these people because they were indeed the salt of the earth. They represented meaning and possibility; moreover in validating them, I was validating myself. I was one of them." (2003: 4)

Lovelace's philosophical position is that "[n]obody is born into the world. Everyone is born into a place in the world a culture, and it is from that standpoint of the culture that we contribute to the world" (2003: 152). The African dark of Trinidad and Tobago is simply his place in the world from which he contributes to the world.

In his novels Lovelace features several of the warrior figures who guard the African dark. Some of these warriors are simple, others complex sometimes conflicted; they differ in social context, vision, style and method. This paper examines Lovelace's treatment of two warriors, Fisheye of *The dragon can't dance* and Bolo of *The wine of astonishment* who are best defined as badjohns.

Lise Winer defines a badjohn as "[a] man willing to use violence and who likes being known as a dangerous person, a ruffian" (p. 37). Badjohns inhabited society's netherworld without ever managing to become major underworld figures like the notorious Boysie Singh who is described by his biographer as a robber, arsonist, pirate

and mass murderer as well as the vice and gambling king of Trinidad (Bickerton). Badjohns were often charged with bullying, petty extortion, assault, wounding, disturbing the peace and similar infractions of the law. To many in society badjohns were a nuisance and feared for sudden but calculated explosions of violence, especially on Carnival days. These acts, generally targeting rivals, were carried out with rare ferocity and without regard to the safety of non-participants.

In *Dragon and Wine*, Lovelace redefines the conventional stereotype of the badjohn treating Fisheye and Bolo as human beings capable of the complex emotions and the romance which mainstream society denies their kind. His sympathy towards them derives from an understanding of the historical circumstances which generate them and the social contexts within which they perform operate. Their biographies establish their circumstances and explain their personalities.

Belasco John of *Dragon* migrated from rural Moruga to Port of Spain in search of fortune. Possessing a restless energy, he threw himself wholeheartedly into his longshoreman tasks rejoicing in “the feeling of kinda that he was like a man, kinda like he was tall and wide and big” (p. 49). When he found out that his co-workers were dumping work on him he feels exposed and this effectively terminates his career as dockworker. Denied a creative or productive outlet for his unfocussed energies, he enacted a pose of delinquency which eventually lands him in prison from which he emerged a full-fledged badjohn. He found a natural outlet for his passions in the steelband where his bulging eyes earned him the nickname Fisheye.

In one of the sleights of hand for which he is famous, Lovelace gives his fictional character the *nom de guerre* of Rudolph Olliviere, the pioneer steelband captain of Hellyard [later Cross of Lorraine, now Trinidad All Stars]. It is a truism that badjohns featured prominently in the formative years of the steelband movement from the 1940s to the late 1960s, a fact poeticised in calypsonian David Rudder’s fine line “nearly every old time pan man could tell you that his in-laws were outlaws” (from his song *Engine room*, 1988). Fisheye of *Dragon* is a player of the boom [an instrument that keeps the timing for the band] but is more comfortable as iron-beater and is at his best when violent action is required. A vastly reduced Ogun figure, he lacks the creative talents of Rudolph Charles, the iconic leader of the Desperadoes steel orchestra. David Rudder’s sublime calypso eulogy, *The hammer* (1986), metaphorises Charles into his hammer, operationalising the tool/weapon as symbols of Charles’ creativity, irascibility and leadership style: “He used to use it to pong a pan/ Or sometimes a stupid man.”

Fisheye possesses the irascibility of the Dragon but lacks the creativity of the Hammer; he also lacks the leadership skills of the steelband captain for whom he is named. The domestication of the band leaves him seeking another outlet for his passions and he is ultimately reduced to a sullen brooding figure, a slave to incomprehensible passions. At first this takes the form of violent physical domestic

abuse; then he becomes the co-leader of a gang of anachronistic warriors fighting a battle for the recognition of their refusal to surrender to the reductivity of a changing world.

Fisheye finds himself at the head of what was called The People's Liberation Army, a rag-tag fighting force without resources, plan or ideology, and one whose members are quickly rounded up and imprisoned after a misdirected tragi-comedic adventure. In prison Fisheye keeps talking about the two-day adventure of the People's Liberation Army, as the omniscient narrator puts it, "not so much to live on those memories alone, but to recall them so that they would celebrate himself" (p. 190). His judgement on the incident and by extension his life is: "It's a joke man. This business of being bad, a bad john. That is a old long time thing. That gone out with the biscuit drum and the three note boom. Now a man have to learn how to live" (p. 190). The words "Now a man have to learn how to live" constitute his surrender to the reductive forces of civil and productive living; they are also his epitaph for he then disappears from the story.

While Fisheye is merely one of the more significant characters in *Dragon*, Bolo dominates *Wine*. A far more romantic figure than Fisheye, he is presented more sympathetically and with more loving attention. The progression in Lovelace's thought regarding the badjohn is reflected in the almost reverential representation of Bolo. Eva, who functions as the principal narrating consciousness of the novel, retells the folklore surrounding Bolo in the rural village of Bonasse:

"They say that in the stickfight ring, the *gayelle*, it don't have a man to stand up to him. They say he don't fight to win battles for himself, for him stickfighting was more the dance, the adventure, the ceremony to show off the beauty of the warrior. And he did it with love and respect, more as if he was making a gift of himself, offering himself up with this quick speed and rhythm, as if what he really want was for people to see in him a beauty that wasn't his alone, was theirs, ours, to let us know that we in this wilderness country was people too, with drums and song and warriors." (pp. 21-22)

In the traditional village setting of Bonasse the stickfight was a ritual of empowerment, a rite of initiation into manhood; it is a retention of what the *kalenda* must have meant in Central African communities (Warner-Lewis, 2003: 199-218). As a traditional mode of expression Carnival functioned as the site for the activation of the ancestral warrior spirit; it was when warriorhood is tested and reaffirmed publicly. As are many other things in the novel, this is filtered through Eva's consciousness:

"When Carnival come is like a call go out to all the men. Is as if something from deep inside them wake up and want to face a danger, and they leave whatever they doing and go again each year to the *gayelle*, the ring. Every year they go to shed they own blood or bust somebody head. And for what? I ask Bee. For the bottle of rum and for the five dollars Mitchell offer the man to

bust the first head. For nothing, he tell me. No not for nothing. Because they is man.” (p. 92)

Masculinity, the central construct of warriorhood, is at stake in those ferocious encounters: “Because, say Buntin, because they is men. They must test theyself against each other in this dangerous battle, so as to keep alive the warrior in them, in us, to show us again that we have champions, that we have men” (p. 92).

Bolo, the embodiment of the stickfight, is the acknowledged king of the *gayelle* in a tradition in which there can be only one king. As the warrior king he treats his subjects with courtesy, friendliness and gentleness so that they all connect to him in small individual acts of homage, respect and affection. Eva details Bolo’s openhanded generosity, his ‘sweet-talking’ of the village women, his willingness to be of service to all, and concludes: “...for this Bolo was a special man; and not only to us the women, to everybody if you have a house to build or a dead to bury, you could call him to lend a hand, and though he’s a man who fears nobody, he knows how to laugh, and if you down to cheer you up.” (p. 21)

But the circumstances generated by the coming of World War II including the suspension of Carnival and the subsequent reduction of stickfight to meaningless rumshop antics signal that the warrior was losing his traditional place in a village which was drifting away from its traditional values. Eulalie’s unfortunate rejection of Bolo for the unmanly politician Ivan Morton is a clear indication that “the warrior was dying in the village as the chief figure.” (p. 46)

Bolo functions in another and related dimension: the Spiritual Baptist church. Alone among the congregation he advocates for the murder of Corporal Prince, the African policeman who relentlessly persecuted the members of faith which had been outlawed in the Shouters Prohibition Ordinance of 1917. Bee, the leader of the congregation, decides to comply with the legislation against ‘shouting’ and other ritual practices; also he steadfastly refuses to countenance the terminal violence advocated by Bolo. In reaction, Bolo attends services but conspicuously refuses to participate. By his brooding non-participating presence he offers a man-challenge which Bee does not take up.

Carol Breedy, in her careful reading of Maarit Laitinen, observes that Bolo’s positioning at the rear of the church indicates that he was a warrior/ watchman, responsible for denying entry to evil spirits (p. 51). Significantly, Breedy argues, Bolo was absent from service on the day that Bee decides to break the law. That is the day Prince and his squad disrupt the service and arrest Bee and other members of the congregation. Bolo, however, confronts the police gang in the street, demonstrating in this a manliness dramatically unlike the supine acquiescence of Ivan Morton, then the political representative of the village. Prince does not take up the challenge to fight

Bolo man-to-man as is expected in the warrior tradition; instead his entire posse of licensed bullies throw themselves upon the *batonnier* and beat him *sans humanité*.¹

Back in Bonasse after serving three years hard labour, Bolo becomes a drifter, unable to connect with anything solid. Salvation seems to come his way when he enters the stickfighting arena to punish Innocent, who takes advantage of Lester's youth, inexperience and innocence and maliciously strikes down the youngster. Innocent, however, smilingly eases his way out of a potentially dangerous situation, observing Bolo *carray* towards him "like a wave with that soft hard flowing rhythm, coming in with that slow sure sliding dangerousness" (*Wine*: 97). But none of the other stickfighters respond to Bolo's challenge and in frustration he cuts to ribbons the skin of every drum hoping by this to arouse someone to anger. This does not happen and within days he degenerates from *batonnier* to badjohn, his actions becoming increasingly provocative as he attempts to incite the village to demonstrate its manhood. In the words of Eva,

"From that day it look to everybody like Bolo had one mission: to force the village stickmen to battle him to make them face up to that man-challenge that they inherit from Fitzzy Banyre and Musso and Joe Tamana and Riley and Wattley and all that long line of stickmen who carry on their warriorhood in this heathen country far away from Africa, bringing it out, parading it for the whole village, for the whole people to see on Carnival day; and so he would push and provoke not only stickmen but would harass and insult any villager to get him to rise up and battle him." (p. 101)

Only Cap, the old *casa* of the cards, and the outspoken Charleau are man enough to defy Bolo. When Bolo insults the entire village by demanding Primus' elder daughter and then abducting the second who had come to visit her sister, the village turns to the diminutive Bee who, without a thought for his own safety, confronts Bolo:

"This thing you do...this thing you do is more than overbearing. This conduct is something we can't accept. You been going on for a long time now, doing what you like taking what you want, and nobody stop you. I can't believe that you think that nobody don't care what happen. I can't believe that you think that will go on and nobody will never tell you nothing. And why you do these things? Because you strong? And you know the jail and people 'fraid you? Because you is big bad Bolo?"

"Yes, because I is Bolo."

"And because you is Bolo you don't care about people? You don't care about nobody? You forget that you is a human?" (pp 118-19)

¹ A similar fate befell the Jamaican reggae singer/martial artist Peter Tosh who was an outspoken critic of the police and other authority figures, and who at times during his stage performances lit up the forbidden herb. On one occasion he was assailed by "a multitude of demons" to quote his description of the assault on him by a party of policemen in Kingston, Jamaica. It is quite possible that Lovelace who often deploys and reworks historical facts in his work may have heard of the Tosh incident and used it imaginatively in *Wine*.

Bee's insistence that Bolo is one of the community results in Bolo's heart wrenching, "I want you people to be against me. I want you to be my enemy. I want you to come and take these girls from me." (p 120)

This is the spoken declaration of war between warrior/watchman and warrior/priest which began when Bolo resisted Bee's decision that the church comply with the law against shouting and his veto of Bolo's call to kill Prince. Bolo's abducting of the girls is not an act of moral depravity (as happened with Mano Benjamin² whose reprehensible actions provide the story for Bolo's later actions) but a last-ditch attempt to rile up the men of the village to rediscover their manhood. As it turned out this was ineffectual because Primus, without consulting Bee, brought in the police to rescue his daughters. Unaware of Primus' actions, Bolo saw the presence of the police as an act of betrayal on the part of Bee and he was devastated that Bee would bring or countenance the bringing of the agents of the European dark against him. Bolo's death at the hands of an alien force is symbolically the death of a community spirit and this is reflected in the fact that after the ban against shouting is lifted the spirit does not return to the church. It does manifest, however, in the steelband whose practices were counter to the God-fearing, Sabbath-observing traditions of the church.

Each in his own way, Fisheye and Bolo represent in vastly differing spheres a spirit of warriorhood, an ancestral tradition of affirmation of masculinity and of resistance to reification. They embody the spirit of warriorhood left stranded by the changing tides of modernity. Lovelace represents them, before their degeneration, as kindly figures capable of kindness and caring. Of Fisheye the omniscient narrator says:

"And they [the youthful warriors] were drawn to him not out of the fame alone but to the fire in him, the light; and he was rough and tough and gentle with them, and they would talk about battles, makes jokes, and he would advise them about women, the world, their youth and promise talking like a brother to them." (*Dragon*: 58)

What is more interesting is that when one of these youths thanked him for his advice, he would answer offhandedly "but his voice would be sticking in his throat, and water would be right behind his eyes." (p. 58)

Bolo's gentleness and kindness have already been noted in this essay and even in decadence his humanity is evident. When he confronts Bee for the last time, as Eva notes, "on his face is this terrible sadness and rage and water is in his eyes that wasn't from the rain" (*Wine*: 127). It was the expression of his disappointment in the decline of the ancestral warrior spirit, something akin to the despair which must have overtaken Okonkwo of Achebe's *Things fall apart*. Bolo's warrior guardianship of Bonasse secures him a place in their collective consciousness. In voicing an epitaph

² In the mid 1960s Mano Benjamin, a villager of Biche in East Trinidad, was charged with sexual and physical abuse of two sisters which left one blind in one eye and both scarred and traumatised.

for this tragic figure, Bee observes, “People don’t care, Bolo was bigger. He care.” (p. 129)

Lovelace’s novels and essays voyage into the heart of consciousness where Africa is practice rather than theory, part of the collective genetic software by which some African-ancestored people have lived for centuries unknowingly defying the amnesia which is thought to have set in after the experience of the Middle Passage. Lovelace’s fiction and his essays constitute bimodal expressions of his engagement with the psychic dimensions of the African presence in the New World. The lines of continuity and development, as well as of affirmation and ambivalence, which are manifested in his novels, parallel those in his essays just as his essays express the thoughts which inform his published novels. We have to look to the essays for an explanation of Fisheye and Bolo, who are far more than mere celebrations of colorful characters of a bygone period.

In its anatomising of Fisheye, *Dragon* converges with Lovelace’s essay “The emancipation-Jouvay tradition and the almost loss of pan” which recognizes the steelband as the inheritor of the fierce energy liberated at Emancipation and first manifested in the *Jouvay* [*Jouvert*] tradition:

“Where the violence of the *Jouvay* characters had become formalised into ritual, the steelband presented a violence that was naked, that could not be ignored, that recalled the first fierce *Jouvay* revellers coming onto the streets just after emancipation. And this naked violence was not limited to Carnival. It was linked to everyday living. In some ways the steelbands’ violence was greater outside of Carnival than within it.” (Lovelace, 2003: 39)

The badjohn is located within this Emancipation-Jouvay tradition of danger:

“The badjohns were the carriers of that danger, heroes at least to schoolboys who intuitively knew that they were warriors, heroes to those stickfighters now metamorphosed here in the urban ghettos of Laventille and John John and Gonzales into fist-fighters and head-butters. Heroes, Warriors: these terms, in even their most limited application, traditionally suggest a political consciousness. It is doubtful that the badjohns exhibited any of that; but they were all we had to express the breadth of violence that the poorest of us had been emancipated into.” (p. 40)

Fisheye is credited with a limited political consciousness and for a while acts as political muscle, a role played in national politics by steelbandmen in the 1950s and early 1960s. His tentative attempts to ignite a collective class consciousness founder on the scepticism and ignorance of his colleagues and he reverts to his earlier and easier role of badjohn which in the post Independence dispensation is anachronistic and counter-productive. Ultimately he fails as an individual; ultimately the steelband movement itself failed as it entered into a subservient partnership with big business and lost its spontaneity and independence of spirit.

In “*Jouvay* and the Emancipation Tradition” Lovelace appreciates that steelband violence transcends the physicality of the Carnival moment: “Just as the steelband was showing us the inventiveness, dedication, and genius by which we were to be liberated, the badjohns were displaying the violence we needed to confront if we were to lay claim to that liberation” (p. 40). But violence can also liberate creative energy of the kind manifested in Lovelace’s writings and evident in his treatment of the warrior in general and of the badjohn in particular. In the essay “Why I chose the *Express*” he signs himself as a warrior figure when he declares, “I am here to do the best I can” (2003, [1967]: 61). He chooses the definite hardships of being a writer at home to the dubious pleasures of exile. The warrior/writer disdains “the role of martyr or knight in shining armour” as much as he rejects the “morbid attraction” of dying or the “luxurious nonsense” of running away (p. 61).

As noted earlier, Lovelace declared that he was one of the people (p. 4). This manifests in the final paragraph of *Salt* when, among the fictional characters of the novel who make the procession with Bango and Myrtle, Lovelace introduces members of his family, his friends and associates. He is also there in his shadow persona of John de John, the failed novelist from Matura. This suggests that for Lovelace the novel assumes a life and an urgency beyond the pages of the book. If we apply this reasoning to the badjohn figures of *Dragon* and *Wine* we appreciate Lovelace’s concern for the archetypal figure who stood guard at the gateway of what Europeans denigrated as the African dark.

And yet, while all of this accounts for Lovelace’s fascination with the warrior, his presence in the percussion section (engine room) of Desperadoes steelband on *Jouvert* morning can only be explained in terms of the suspicion that he remains a badjohn at heart.

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THE HERMENEUTICS OF VICTIM AND SACRIFICE IN *THE WINE OF ASTONISHMENT*

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The Christian community is a community of the cross, for it has been brought into being by the cross, and the focus of its worship is the Lamb once slain, now glorified. (John Stott)

If sacrifice resembles criminal violence, we may say that there is, inversely, hardly any form of violence that cannot be described in terms of sacrifice. (René Girard)

Victimization and sacrifice in Earl Lovelace's novel *The wine of astonishment* appear most vividly in the character of Bolo who is both victimizer and victim in the work. In this article, I argue that the underlying theology of Lovelace's Spiritual Baptists supports the acceptance of suffering and sacrifice, encouraging a fatalistic outlook on human existence. For Eva, the female narrator, Bolo is like "Christ who they let die ... because it was easier for Christ to bear the sins of the world" (p. 129) than for people to accept responsibility for their own lives. Lovelace challenges the Christian concepts of both sin and sacrifice with what at first appears to be an argument for the freedom of religion but turns out to be a critique of individual freedom and collective responsibility.

Bee, the leader of the Baptists, says that "the church is the key to everything" (p. 133). It is the key to the acceptance of their oppression. When the police storm the church and arrest the men, women, and children, Bolo, whose name means the beast from the east, the brute, is the only character willing to resist, to fight back and he, Eva the narrator tells us, is "there alone battling", a victim of an unjust law. One is reminded of King's piercing conclusion when he said, "He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it" (King: 39). And of course Gandhi warned that "Non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as is cooperation with good" (Gandhi: 19). Eva watches her son Taffy lose respect for his father and the other men of the church when they do nothing to save Bolo from the violent attack by the police.

In her introduction to Lovelace's 1982 novel, Marjorie Thorpe states that the author is critiquing the Trinidadian political establishment "making a damning condemnation of West Indian politics and West Indian politicians" (p. xi), which no doubt is true. It is also true that politics have taken the lion's share of critical approaches to this work. While acknowledging that politics are an important part of the text, I want to focus instead on Lovelace's understanding of the underlying theology and the church that indeed is key to everything.

The back-story to this novel is based on political and historical facts. In 1917, the colonial government declared the Spiritual Baptist Church of Trinidad and Tobago illegal. The Baptists were called "an unmitigated nuisance" (p. vii). The law forbidding their expressive form of worship was called the Shouters Prohibition Ordinance. The Spiritual Baptists were guilty of not only shouting but of dancing, stamping their feet, and spiritual possession. They also had the misfortune of being of the working class and not upwardly mobile. The middle and upper class Blacks followed the practices of the white colonial masters. For doing so they are roundly condemned as Thorpe and other critics point out. Lovelace uses Eva, the preacher's wife to subtly criticize the cultural assimilationist. But the Africanization of Christianity also is critiqued. In Lovelace's eyes, Baptists have accepted their oppression in large part because of the Christianity they have adopted and adapted.

Lovelace takes his title, as it were, from Psalms 60 (KJV), which reads: "God., thou hast cast us off, thou hast scattered us, thou hast been displeased; O turn thyself to us again. Thou hast made the earth to tremble; thou hast O broken it: heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh. Thou has shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us drink the wine of astonishment." David's song makes several assumptions. First that his people are a chosen people – selected as it were, for "hard things", oppression –, and second, that God has made them (the people) to drink the wine of astonishment. A fundamentalist reading of the text makes even more assumptions in accepting the words as the voice of God instead of hearing the voice of David who might or might not have been inspired by the Spirit of God. A close reading of the text might in fact reveal that David is inspired by fear as it sounds like he is describing an earthquake, which in his day was hardly understood as a natural phenomenon. Thus, human suffering and injustice are perceived as God-ordained and redemptive. Western theology, Christianity in particular, has perpetuated the idea of redemptive suffering for the expressed purpose of the oppression and exploitation of the masses of people for the financial and political gain of the dominant elites.

Lovelace presents a slice of life example from Trinidad, but the ideas examined in the novel are universal, at least for those of Christendom. Speaking of Africa and the Africanization of Christianity, Aylward Shorter has written that "The goal of [what he calls] inculturation, therefore, is a single cultural entity that is at once a culture transformed by faith and a faith that is culturally re-expressed." Cultural expression

is what Lovelace's Spiritual Baptists are denied. As Shorter points out, "Christian religion is a historical religion and Jesus is first and foremost a historical person, who lived in first century Palestine, at that time in a situation of considerable cultural complexity." The European development of Christianity far from being spiritual has been political and economic. Lords, landowners, overseers, and slave masters all required obedience from serfs and enslaved people. The church became an institution of indoctrination. Catechism and homiletics were used and are still used to render suffering and victimization palatable. With the enslavement of Africans came not only the missions but the trinity became Religion, Labor, and Capital.

Resistance and the refusal to be a victim would ultimately have undermined the systems of exploitation and oppression, serfdom, feudalism, and slavery that resulted in the emergence of multinational capitalism. Therefore, the acceptance of suffering has served an economic purpose. The first chapter of the novel clarifies how the yoke of oppression is slipped on and accepted. The narrator, Eva, declares in the opening line: "God don't give you more than you can bear. I say, 'Cause for hundreds of years we bearing what He (meaning God) send like the earth bear the hot sun and the rains and the dew and the cold, and the earth still the earth, still here for man to build house on and fall down on, still sending up shoots and flowers and growing" (p. 2). Clearly the analogy is that they, the people of the village, are likened unto the earth but the vision of He is much distorted. He who abuses the earth is man. He who abuses the people of the village and the Spiritual Baptists is also man, but man has slyly and through many biblical translations turned the vision from human behavior to an inscrutable God whose ways are neither to be understood nor questioned by humanity.

In Christian theology the focus is not on the pain and suffering of the crucifixion but rather on the liberation of the resurrection and the promise of life eternal. In situations where life is wretched and the people are oppressed to the point of not being able to enjoy what life has to offer, Christianity offers the promise of eternal life after death. But even in her acceptance of the promise of everlasting life elsewhere and at some future date, Eva still questions her circumstances, asking, "But what sin we commit?" (p. 1). Christianity also teaches that death is a consequence of sin. Since death is an experience that all must undergo, the idea of original sin was formulated. Eve and Adam bear the blame for original sin. Thus Eva asks, "What deed our fathers or we do that vex God that He rain tribulation on us for generations?" (p. 1)

Lovelace lays the groundwork for the dismantling of the kind of religion that not only allows but enables victimization and oppression for not only does Eva question, she concludes. She tells her children: "What God will vex with you for? You ain't do God nothing. God don't vex with his children." The children's question opens the door for the explanation of their suffering and sacrifice. They ask, "... if God ain't

vex with us then why we alone have to carry this heavy burden?" (p. 1). The image of Christian suffering and sacrifice is reinforced with the image in the final paragraph of page one. All are looking to Eva, children and husband, for an explanation of their predicament. She describes her husband "standing up there in the kitchen door, with his two hands stretch out across the door like how Jesus Christ had his hands when they crucify him on the cross, and his face half turned to me, listening, as if what I have to tell the children is for him too." Lovelace uses Eva to narrate the story, even though Bee, her husband is the minister. One might wonder why Lovelace chose to use her voice. It is my belief that he has chosen to do so because as Pope John Paul II proclaimed in *Ecclesia in Africa*, "Faith becomes culture." Traditionally African women have been the bearers and preservers of culture. In Lovelace's novel, the religious faith of the Spiritual Baptist has become their culture.

Eva's response is revealing in a number of ways. She tells her family that they are abused because they can bear it: "because of all the shoulders of the world our shoulders could bear more weight, and out of all the flesh in the world, our flesh could hold more pain, and out of all the hearts in the world our heart could stomach more ache, without breaking or burning or bursting than any shoulder or flesh or heart" p. 2). She concludes, "The strong suffer most, the weak dies" (p. 2). Thus begins the story of the suffering Baptist. They become victims. René Girard's explanation of victim and sacrifice provides the context for understanding what happens to them. According to Girard, "between . . . victims and the community a crucial social link is missing, so they can be exposed to violence without fear of reprisal" (Girard: 13). Thus the Baptists are seen as expendable by the larger and more educated community.

The fatalism that marks Lovelace's Baptists also is articulated in Eva's introduction for she says: "God ain't made this world by guess. Things have meaning ... God have His reasons for everything. He have eyes, and all man have here is a few moments that God give him and a little sense to learn who he is and why, so he could make use of his little time here and praise God and die" (p. 2). Christian dogma preaches that people suffer not just for original sin but according to the Reverend Doctor Peter Marshall former Chaplain of the U.S. Senate, "It is a fact of Christian experience that life is a series of troughs and peaks. In his efforts to get permanent possession of a soul, God relies on the troughs more than the peaks. And some of his special favourites have gone through longer and deeper troughs than anyone else." The following words from a Catholic brother indicate clearly the role of the church in the acceptance of suffering. Brother Lawrence has written: "The sorest afflictions never appear intolerable, but when we see them in the wrong light: when we see them in the hand of God, Who dispenses them; when we know that it is our loving Father

who abases and distresses us; our sufferings will lose their bitterness and become even a matter of consolation” (Brother Lawrence: 59).

Such is the homily that Eva presents to her family. Bee’s response is likely that of the outraged author. Bee takes himself “down from the cross in front the door” and questions: “We could bear it? From the police, from the magistrate we could bear it, but from our own people?” (p. 2). Bee’s question is two-pronged. He questions the neighborhood boy who has made good and become an elected official that he has helped put into office. Clearly his question interrogates the political regime, but the question left unasked is not from our own people but from our own God? Ivan Morton represents not just a disappointment in not fulfilling his obligations to his people but his very name points to the theological issues inherent in the text. Ivan translates as “God is gracious.”

Bee has stated that the church is the key to everything. In the novel’s closing chapter he proclaims that “if Ivan Morton can’t understand that the church is the root for us to grow out from, the church is Africa in us, black in us, if he can’t understand that the church is the thing, the instrument to make us legal and legitimate and to free him – if he can’t understand that, . . . then he don’t have any understanding of himself or of black people” (p. 133). His words are filled with irony. On the one hand Lovelace’s Spiritual Baptist church is indeed Africa in them. On another, it is not the true root of African spirituality but a hybrid Africanized Christianity drawn from European hegemonic discourse that has deliberately manipulated dogma for control.

Eva’s comments make clear that the teachings of their religion, submission and acceptance of victimization, have destroyed their people-hood. Recognizing what they have become or failed to become she exclaims: “Oh God! Maybe is our own weakness: that because we don’t have power, the strength of our own to hold up our children, to protect them, and keep alive our church for our people to worship in. Maybe our weakness and not the wickedness (of Ivan Morton) is what turned him away from us” (p. 135). She concludes by saying, “if we wasn’t standing up on our own as a people, what was he there standing up for? We is a lot of people but we ain’t a people. I mean Ivan Morton couldn’t be a leader because we wasn’t a people” (p. 136). The irony of the text, its paradoxical humor is that the very religion that prevents Lovelace’s Spiritual Baptists from breaking the law and fomenting revolution is characterized by the bourgeoisie as heathen and devilish causing them to “jump and shout as if they are in the wilds of Africa” (p. 73). But in effect their religion prevents them from jumping up and bearing arms and killing those who would abuse or disrespect them.

Some have preached that to refuse suffering is to refuse personal growth. Many are diminished by suffering and destroyed or become destroyers. Such is Bolo. When Bolo returns from his unjust imprisonment he is the victimizer and also the victim.

Because of the paralyzing fear of his fellowmen, Bolo becomes their most vicious abuser. They will not stand up so he stands on them. His final act to abduct Primus' youngest daughter brings to an end his reign of terror. The police kill him. Through his deliberate actions, Bolo chooses himself as a sacrifice. According to Girard, "The function of sacrifice is to quell violence within the community and to prevent conflict from erupting" (Girard: 14). Bolo is "the one terrible enough and strong and close enough to the hearts of the men to drive them to take up their manhood" that they abandoned when turning the other cheek.

If Bolo is indeed the scapegoat, the sacrificial lamb, the Christ on the cross, his death and his sacrifice solve nothing. Sacrifice does not absolve the people of the responsibility of demanding respect, refusing oppression, and protecting one another. James Frazer claims that the idea of transferring guilt and suffering to someone who will bear them and absolve us of responsibility is "familiar to the savage mind" (quoted in Girard: 316). He seems to miss the ironic point that the so-called civilized mind is the one that has perpetuated the belief in a savior that expiates and absolves guilt, sin, and suffering. On the other hand, perhaps the "civilized mind" is simply lying and knows that there is nothing to save the people but the people.

The novel ends with the Ordinance being repealed and the Spiritual Baptists being free to worship as they please. What should be a joyous occasion is a paradox. Their spiritual fervor has been lost. Eva says the Spirit would not come. What appears to be a defeat, however, is a turning and recognition of the true African spirit of the sacred in the secular. Listening to the steel drum players both Bee and Eva realize that they are hearing something holy.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY AS PERSONAL AND NATIONAL IDENTITY: THE CASE OF JAMES MITCHELL IN ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

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While there are significant ways in which fiction and non-fiction differ, the writer of the autobiography has to employ some of the very same skills as the writer of fiction. According to Gergen, the narrator of the autobiography like the author of fiction has to have an end point, a theme or focus for his/her story, and events have to be selected that move the story to the desired end. MacIntyre (1981) introduces the intriguing idea that there is no such thing as “self-authorship”. Instead he suggests, that the “I” is merely the “narrator, not the author, of (his) life story.” When the subject is also a politician in the English Speaking Caribbean, this is especially true. In this case, the autobiography is not only the charting of a self-concept but also one that is articulated against a background of national and regional identity formation. *Beyond the islands*, by James Mitchell, presents an interesting case study for assessing the development of the “I” in self and national identity in the Eastern Caribbean.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines is one of the smaller independent states in the British West Indies. Mitchell attempts to posit a significance for the islands that goes beyond their size, with him at the forefront of change. He establishes the significance of his right to lead in the entwining of his personal history with that of the islands to suggest a meaningfulness that goes way ‘beyond the islands’. Mitchell begins with an illustration that puts St. Vincent and the Grenadines at the centre of international conflict – the war in Sierra Leone – and the opportunity presented but perhaps not maximized – to have a voice – he muses, in the outcome of the war. This is the prologue that contains the seeds of the ideas that will be developed in the rest of the narrative – the inside island view of international and regional events bound up in the story of the island’s leader/foremost son. In *Beyond the islands*, by James Mitchell, the focus is on how the elements of the narrative structure are worked out in the autobiography, how the subject attempts to impose order on “chaotic experience” and how self and national identity develop through this process. But before Mitchell’s story is examined in some more detail, it would be useful to clarify/define certain definitions that underpin this analysis.

Traditional definitions of narrative confine it to the literary realm – the substance of novels, and plays. More contemporary definitions of narrative see it as a characteristic of human thought and activity. In the field of psychology, narrative is seen as a significant means of conceptualizing the self. According to Polkinghorne, “Viewing the self as a narrative or story, rather than as a substance, brings to light the temporal and developmental dimension of human existence” (p. 35). Polkinghorne goes on then to define narrative as “the cognitive process that gives meaning to temporal events by identifying them as parts of a plot” (p. 136). ‘Cognitive process’ refers to the mental ability or constructs that humans use to organize knowledge – how we define what we know or how we know. ‘Temporal’ refers to the way in which events of the story/narrative are related to each other through time. ‘Plot’ in this instance refers to the end point of the story/narrative – the reason why these events/segments have been linked together – each event has been selected and organized in a particular sequence for a specific reason or purpose. So, in a very simplified summary – both the writer of fiction and the writer of non-fiction share this elemental need – to organize experience around an end point or plot that gives meaning or significance to the events narrated. For both writers of autobiography and writers of fiction, according to Mandler (1984) as quoted in Polkinghorne (1991), stories have a setting through which characters, location and time are established. Events which begin, develop and have a particular goal. “Each episode includes the outcome of the attempts to reach the goal and assumes that the attempts are understood as the causes that bring about the outcome. ... After a series of episodes has been presented, the narrative includes ending portions that show that the episodes coalesce into one story” (p. 139).

In the autobiography or self-narrative, just as in fiction, there is thus plot, conflict, theme, setting, point of view, exposition, rising action and resolution. In fact, McAdams, argues that “Identity itself takes the form of a story, complete with setting, scene, character, plot and theme” (qtd in Randall & Mc Adams: 101) Unlike the writer of fiction though, there is no neat resolution of loose ends – “they differ ...in the unfinished nature of their plots and in the personal nature of the events available for inclusion in the story.” (p. 136). Polkinghorne offers the view that the writer of fiction has the opportunity to write a story including only those elements that are relevant to the development of plot. The autobiography reveals in a special way the story of self – identity. The autobiography Pasupathi et al. observe is “a selective set of events and themes which serves to explain “how I came to be who I am”” (p. 10). The significance of the implications of narrative structuring for self-identity lies in the fact that narrative takes the events/actions of a life and shapes and gives coherence/meaning to them.

Time or temporality is an important aspect of grasping the significance of narrative. Polkinghorne argues that

“Like each episode singly, my life as a whole- that is , my self- is something temporal that unfolds in time and whose phases I survey prospectively and retrospectively from within an ever-changing present.... It is the narratively structured unity of my life as a whole that provides me with a personal identity and displays the answer to “Who am I?” My self-story gives a unified context in which it becomes clear how I am living my life and what is the nature of my individual existence, character, and identity.” (p. 143)

Indeed, Mason (2004) observes that the personal narrative can include shifts “between past and present” in the subject’s attempt “to express continuity or change in her personal sense of what matters now, and mattered then” (p. 165). Narrative therefore can take the form of both fiction and non-fiction. Ricoeur (1983) was the first to coin the word ‘emplotment’ to describe the process by which the events or episodes that make up the traditional beginning, middle and end structure associated with narratives, is achieved. According to Ricoeur, emplotment refers to the drawing together of what would otherwise be disconnected events into one coherent whole that has a specific point or theme:

“The synthesizing function of the plot provides narrators and storytellers a means to draw together information about physical laws, personal dispositions and character, responses to actions, and the processes of deliberation in reaching decisions. Although emplotment can consist of a single thread that serves to draw elements together, it often consists of multiple threads of subplots woven together into a complex and layered whole.” (Polkinghorne: 141)

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Randall and McKim argue that identity – who we really are – lies at the bottom of our life story. Mc Adams (2001) advances criteria (qtd in Randall & McKim) by which a “‘good life-story’ can be evaluated: coherence, openness, credibility, differentiation, reconciliation and generative integration” (p. 104). In terms of establishing a coherent structure or framework, Mitchell presents his self/identity as part of a particular family, self/identity as part of a country, self/identity as a part of a region. These different selves/identities structure and select the events narrated. In constructing life history narratives, people draw on memories to construct stories about themselves that will validate their self-identity. For Mitchell, how he comes to be who he is, is through his identity as son of the soil and prime minister of a nation. These twin areas of focus select and set the boundaries for the story.

The events narrated in *Beyond the islands* follow a particular ‘schematic structuring’ identified by Mandler (1984) and quoted in Polkinghorne where:

“setting (is)... established, the story proceeds with one or more episodes, each of which has a beginning and a development. ...Each episode includes the outcome of the attempts to reach the goal and assumes that the attempts are understood as

the causes that bring about the outcome. When the outcome has been given, the episode ends, and the ending links the episode to the whole story.” (p. 139).

Mitchell thus favours a temporal organization where the event, its causes and subsequent implications are stressed. The self that Mitchell presents develops through different experiences. His account is organized into five sections: *Formative years*, *Launching a political career*, *Sole opposition*, *Prime Minister Mitchell: the first 10 years (1984 to 94)*, and *Onwards to retirement*. Within each section the title becomes the narrative frame that encapsulates the events/memories selected and sets the context for their interpretation. These stories or mini-events of the self are intended to help the reader understand how the narrator has come to an appreciation of his *self*. Because significance in memory is the dominant theme under each heading, each section highlights events as they stand out in the narrator’s memory as opposed to causal or chronological linkage.

Each section contains anecdotal memories that correspond to the heading. Anecdotal memories also serve the purpose of introducing that quality of differentiation looked for in the life story through the introduction of memorable characters and a variety of themes and situations. In *Formative years* as narrator, Mitchell emphasizes that the context in which he was born – that of the island of Bequia in the early 1930s, was instrumental in developing his identity. Born into a shipbuilding family – “Shipbuilding and sailing ships were our lifelines” (p. 9), the leader as captain of the sea becomes an over-arching metaphor that defines his life philosophy. He writes: “In evaluating events around me, I kept returning to my nautical underpinnings, feeling that running a country is like steering a ship and that that ship cannot be allowed to drift” (p. 184). Family heritage accounts for his business acumen: “...the long Friday afternoon walks as a little boy to pay off the family debts my father had incurred to build the ship in which he perished had helped to prepare me to be Minister of Finance” (p. 181).

The proof of his acumen is provided in the accolades that he receives from the International Monetary fund, which reported that under his administration there was “much to praise and little to fault”. He notes that in secondary school “I was Prefect, Sergeant, Troop Leader, head of School House and chosen as extra for all teams, but good at none. But the Vincentian group never wanted to leave me behind” (p. 27). These are experiences that he ties to his success as his country’s leader: “I learned that a leader leads by being part of the team....It was a principle with which I endowed my Cabinet colleagues in the management of a country” (p. 24). Even working on the farm during school vacations played a significant role in the development of his identity as a leader “I joined farm labourers pounding sacks of dried peas, and shelling and grinding corn. The memory of those long, dry afternoons sparked my later concerns about global warming today and its possible effect on changing seasons.” (p. 24)

In *Prime Minister Mitchell: the first 10 years (1984 to 94)* he narrates memories of his rally in Victoria Park, of the artist, Dinks Johnson, who painted a picture of the opposition leader, of how he got rid of an unsupportive governor general (“I did not enjoy being ruthless, but there are times when one needs to act in accordance with the 11th commandment : save thyself” (p. 214)) of his visit to Malaysia, of a refugee camp, and of his attendance at a meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Associative memory becomes the linking device/strategy that connects and selects the particular event that moves the narrative along. This he does through explicit connections between his life experience and his leadership. Pasupathi et al. refer to this as “elaborative remembering” which “...includes both more details about what happened during an event, and interpretive, evaluative information such as what the experience meant to the individual” (p. 90). Thus in recalling the Victoria Park rally, Mitchell notes one aspect of the significance of the experience was that “No one of course was in a mood to accept my prophecy, but in that moment of glory, I wanted to let them know I knew too much of history and the feeble nature of the public not to realize how short their memory usually is, and how insatiable the public appetite to destroy their former heroes” (p. 212).

In order to make the connections between his life experience and his identity as a leader, there is the constant shifting between past and present, that Mason (2004) highlights as an important strategy employed by the narrator in the life story to show the importance of what has happened in the distant past to events of a more recent past. This is seen in his reporting of his early foray into politics:

“So, another friend, Phillip Vera, a merchant whose moral support I remembered when competing for the scholarship to university, and who also operated a shop in Bequia, and another in Kingstown first rented from my grandfather’s sister, offered to accompany me to the legal office of the leader of the party, Milton Cato.” (p. 90).

Culture also has a significant role to play in the formation of identity. Polkinghorne argues that culture significantly impacts the structuring of the life story. But culture is a very complex and multifaceted thing in the region where Mitchell’s autobiography is set. There is the surface culture – Mitchell’s birth on the sea-faring island of Bequia for example, pervades his narrative in the continuous references to the sea and to himself as a sea captain. Pasupathi et al. point to the importance of “shared beliefs about what constitutes self and how selves are valued...life stories are consequently culturally shaped” (p. 9). There are repeated references throughout the autobiography to the food of the region that Mitchell enjoys “the ackee and saltfish”, the lobster he cooks on the beach for his international counterparts, his connection with the people of his constituency, how his understanding of the Grenadian, Barbadian, and Trinidadian psyches becomes a powerful tool for fostering his attempts at regional unity. Even within his own country, he points to his role as mediator between

competing perspectives: “For those readers unfamiliar with St. Vincent and the Grenadines, it is a plural country of two distinct geological ages. The people of the mainland, St. Vincent, have the culture of the land: the people on the Grenadines belong to the sea. One group looks to the mountains, the other to the horizon. I am in between – a sailor who studied agriculture.” (p. 183)

His understanding of different cultures within the Caribbean leads him to head off conflict among rice farmers in Guyana over a proposed rice mill by ensuring that both African Guyanese and Indian Guyanese have separate dining rooms serving the food appropriate to each culture. This hints at deeper issues in the construction and interpretation of culture within the region. Best observes that the Caribbean is a region characterized by “demographic turbulence” with “ethnicity (being) certainly the most fissionable issue in the region” (p. 147). The creation of “separate dining rooms” points to the failure of the political mind to grasp the underlying seriousness of what Best has described as a “plural culture” that evokes “the ancestral aspect of social identity” (p. 139). It points as well to the perpetuated failure within political circles to address issues of ethnicity and race in the Caribbean with meaningful solutions.

This colonial setting constrains the identity of the leader who emerges in insidious ways. In his seminal work, *The hero and the crowd in a colonial polity*, Singham has argued that, “Individuals who are socialized in a colonial society develop attitudes toward politics and political power that are qualitatively different from those of individuals raised in non-colonial societies” (p. 146). Singham argues further that this setting leads to the creation of a leader who has to cultivate an image of himself as the “national spokesman: the personalism of the leader’s style is dependent on his understanding of the cultural and social patterns of relations” (p. 148). In seeming support of this view, Mitchell writes that:

“My genealogy is a true Caribbean cocktail. By the time I had to deal with apartheid in South Africa in the 1980s at the United Nations, and at the Commonwealth Conferences, I could speak with the authority of my inheritance...so I suppose it was my destiny to deal with the resolution of some serious twentieth-century racist problems, in my own way.” (p. 16)

Mitchell is not part of the “big four” of the Caribbean who Smith refers to as Michael Manley of Jamaica, Forbes Burnham of Guyana, Eric Williams of Trinidad and Tobago and Errol Barrow of Barbados (Smith: 1). These are men who formed the group of “charismatic leaders” who in language that Mitchell would appreciate “steered” their countries through the turbulent times of the transition from colonial to self-government. But Mitchell situates his autobiography firmly in the centre of national and regional affairs showing that he too, has had an appreciable role in the formation of the modern Caribbean, that he too has had the “knowledge of colonial regulations”, and the ability to speak and write the Queen’s English and articulate the inarticulable grievances of his people and use his own brand of “personal charisma” to

claim the legitimacy of his quest for national sovereignty – all qualities Singham observes as characteristic of the leader who is constrained by the contexts of an outside power which continues to hold the purse-strings for economic development of formerly colonized people. So, even as Mitchell struggles in his autobiography to highlight the glaring weaknesses of his contemporaries against his own achievements, he is as much a product of the limitations of his culture and history as they are.

He argues for example that in his incorporation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines' colonial past into the modern revamping of the main city's architecture, he is unlike Eric Williams who "...instructed me and the world about the mercantile theory and the Navigation Laws...but it was disappointing that his clear understanding of how the sweat of slaves enriched England did not match his deploying the OPEC bonanza to enhance the architectural landscape of Trinidad." (p. 241)

Concerning Erskine Sandiford, Prime Minister of Barbados he observes that "Sandiford had steered the ship through all the turbulent IMF storms, all the rough seas of public protest, only to end like a captain getting rid of the crew that, with him, had weathered the storm, then turned over the ship to a new captain in calm waters to go into a safe harbour" (p. 259). This stands in contrast to his own practice: "Unlike Sandiford, I was the founder of my party, and was not about to destroy my creation. To me, a political party is no more than a treaty among friends. Single-minded selfishness at the expense of your friends will eventually only lead down an avenue of loneliness in old age." (p. 259)

Pasupathi et al. observe that "Adult memory narratives continue to "reflect and create a more conceptual self- a set of beliefs about one's capabilities, relationships and roles as the narrator attempts to create a sense of 'global coherence' out of the intersections between life experiences and innate 'personal characteristics.'" (p. 91) She draws attention to two types of 'global coherence': "relations in which the self causes an experience to occur, and relations in which the self is changed or shaped by an experience" (p. 91). The overall structure of *Beyond the islands* lends itself to the narration of events where 'the self' causes things to happen. This is evident in the preponderance of recollections of Mitchell's impact on national and regional affairs. But the reality is that true political and economic power continue to lie outside the region even after "independence".

Mitchell defines his identity as a leader in terms of his ability to negotiate benefits for his country in a way which masks the limitations imposed from without. Being able to highlight his achievements is also a strategy by which he attempts to lend credibility to his story. He staves off St. Vincent and the Grenadines' decline into communism: "In opposing unity with Guyana, I was not prepared to jump from colonialism to communism. Nor did I see how we in St. Vincent would fit into the racial conflict of separate parties for Indians and blacks" (p. 118). On a national level it is through his intervention that his country is named: "I sponsored tourism promotion, naming us St.

Vincent and the Grenadines. Such was the genesis of the name of our country” (p. 118). Through his efforts EEC funding is secured to build the first national marine park in Bequia “for perpetuity”. He plays a significant role in restoring Grenada to democracy after the assassination of Maurice Bishop. Under his leadership, his country secures the “largest single grant project in the Caribbean”. He facilitates the meeting between ANR Robinson and Sydney Knox a “formidable industrial giant” in the region that leads to the overthrow of the PNM in Trinidad and Tobago. In Antigua his intervention again leads to the return of Lester Bird to his father’s party. He sees himself as “a liberal politician in the Caribbean, opposing communism while advocating private-sector advancement” (p. 232).

The narration of events where the self is changed by experience is foregrounded to a lesser extent. What is interesting here is Mitchell’s true powerlessness to effect change in these situations. These events are also significant in establishing the credibility of his story – his level of openness to discuss or expose his vulnerability in certain situations. His visit to a refugee camp in Cambodia and is one instance, where he writes “With all the interviews I have faced with the media and all those who ask me to encapsulate my life, I have never been able to tell the truth about Cambodia, how my heart was torn – and how my political instincts betrayed a piece of my soul I left in that wilderness.” (p. 216)

458 The break in the narrative structure in *Section 1V: Prime Minister Mitchell: the first 10 years (1984 to 94)* is interesting, because associative memory as a linking strategy seems to break down and diary entries become the form through which the pieces that resist efforts to impose order on “the chaos of experience” are presented. The collapse of Mitchell’s first marriage is an experience that changes him, though the events are related outside of the story frame, through diary entries. He ranks the reaction of his children to the news that his partner was pregnant as more traumatic to him than “...the death of my father when I was eight years old...the shock of a wife’s infidelity in the 1970s...the torture that led to my divorce” (p. 320). This ‘breakdown’ of order is to some extent also characteristic of any life story. Polkinghorne observes that “plots that have functioned to configure the events of one’s life often become strained at times of severe life stresses as well as on the occasion of major developmental events” (p. 149). The negative reaction of his children underscores the strain and abandonment that Mitchell feels at this time:

“I am, as I have always been for much of my life, alone. I struggled alone. I wandered over the face of this earth looking for my destiny. I have carried a country, extended my poor islands into Africa, Latin America and around, but I myself belong nowhere except with Jeannette. She cares. When will her turn come to abandon me also?” (p. 321)

The fact that these events occur in the midlife of the subject help also to point to the fulfillment of another criterion in the evaluation of a life story – that of reconciliation

where the subject attempts to reconcile the “integrity of the self” with trauma suffered (Randall & McKim: 109). But the autobiography as Fludernik reminds us “... is part of a general performative identity which we create inside our social roles – as teachers, as wives, as parents as drivers, etc, these roles do not necessarily cohere, so somebody can be an irresponsible driver but a caring son (sic) to his or her aged parents” (p. 261). So even in reporting traumatic incidents, Mitchell as narrator is projecting “an image of the self which the narrator wants others to recognize as his or her character or personhood” (Fludernik: 260) wronged but magnanimous in his forgiveness. In the service of this image, narrators often “elide or camouflage possible negative facets of the self” (p. 261).

The autobiography is a story of identity. It is the story of the self that we want to project to others. It is the way we want to be seen. Ochberg calls this projection, “persuasion”. Particularly for the narrator who is also a politician, ‘generativity’ one element of McAdams’ schema, has particular resonance. Generativity refers to the extent to which one’s story has relevance not only to oneself but also to “one’s community, one’s society” (McAdams: 110). Fludernik argues that within the post-colonial environment, the *other* becomes the protagonist of the text, assuming “the agency, articulation, and intellectual or emotional expression” (p. 269) characteristic of the colonist’s stance. Thus the autobiography gains relevance as the site of the wrestling of identity from the hand of the former coloniser.

Fludernik also suggests that “identity becomes notable only when set into relief against one or more others” (p. 271). These others can be non-human in the form of the physical landscape or human – another individual or society. This strategy is also evident in Mitchell’s autobiography. In the last chapter entitled *Finale*, Mitchell summarizes the history of his country from Carib to French and then English occupation and affirms his identification with these islands: “Images of land and water that nurtured my affection for mountains and lakes in distant continents, imbuing me with a love of nature, a love of life and a fascination with the way other souls responded to their piece of Mother Earth” (p. 453). He thus affirms his image of himself as the “national spokesman” that Singham identifies as an important role in the identity of the Caribbean politician though he is still constrained by the economic power held by the former colonial power. Casteel sees a tension between the identity of the ‘spokesman’ of the people and the self-identity that the narrator wants to project and points to the unsatisfactory merging of the two within Caribbean discourse. Certainly this tension is evident in Mitchell’s narrative.

In the Caribbean the significance of the (auto)biography of the political/party leader does not lie in its wide readership or its bestselling possibilities, as is the case in places such as the United States, Britain and Australia (Selth, 2006). Its significance lies in its power to tell the story of the individual self – a story that has been denied

and downplayed through a history of displacement, plurality and economic dependency. Best argues that even so, the colonial environment continues to exert and constrain the forms in which identity can be portrayed and developed. To this end, Best satirically categorizes emergent leaders as various types of doctors. Public school doctors: leaders who are expected to achieve “for and on behalf of the population Grammar School doctors – who use the route of education to legitimate their ‘fitness to rule’ and Sunday School Doctors who emerged from the plantation colonies but as professionals ‘alienated from the people” (pp.1-4). Mitchell in fact, boasts of his fluency in the Queen’s English and his education at the University of the West Indies and abroad as features of his fitness to rule. Fludernik makes the point that “Identities cannot be upheld without the co-operation of others” (p. 262). Thus the auto/biographies that emerge from the Caribbean context are a serious indictment of the post- colonial environment if as Turner et al. have argued, “people follow leaders because they embody ‘us’ and define what ‘we’ think is true and right, and do a better job than the rest of us of expressing what ‘we’ have in common” (p. 62).

The autobiography creates a context for reflection. “We do not merely tell stories about our recent experience in which we try to make ourselves look good; we also narrate and retell our lives to ourselves” (Fludernik: 262). The autobiography unlike fiction is never completely definitive. The narrator is never quite sure of what the end will be. As Randall and McKim suggest, “how the ending gets written depends in no small measure on us: on the decisions we take and choices we make...” (p. 43). Thus the autobiography encapsulates a story that offers new opportunities to rewrite the end. As Mitchell himself states: “It is still wonderful to rise, breathe slowly the fresh air coming across the ocean and discover beyond the islands the dawn.” (p. 456)

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EDGAR MITTELHOLZER'S TROPICAL GOTHIC

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In *A Morning at the office*, Edgar Mittelholzer scoffs at what he considers the literary fashion of engaging African-Caribbean folk traditions to forge a West Indian identity distinct from that of the colonizer. As a “white” West Indian, he disapproved of basing a Caribbean identity solely on an African heritage. Nevertheless, Mittelholzer, like many black early twentieth-century West Indian writers, exoticized folk spirituality, if not to forge a distinctive West Indian identity, but rather to create what Louis James calls an “intense tropical Gothic world” (James: 137).

Like Wilson Harris, Mittelholzer was very much impressed by the majestic Guyanese landscape, which led him to infuse both landscape and weather patterns with what Michael Gilkes calls an “almost . . . living intelligence” (Gilkes: 44). Despite these similarities, a fundamental difference in worldviews prevented Mittelholzer from letting a spiritually charged nature transform the fabric of his texts, as Harris does. Rather, his European, rational-scientific worldview limited Mittelholzer’s engagement of African-Caribbean spirituality to the creation of a spooky atmosphere, which resembles that of European writers’ Imperial Gothic. Like the European Imperial Gothic, which Patrick Brantlinger explains in his *Rule of darkness*, Mittelholzer’s eerie spiritual presences reinforce European concepts of superiority and the colonizers’ right to dominate and oppress other peoples.

Brantlinger aligns Imperial Gothic with the late Victorian anxieties over the decline and fall of the empire. Although it “combines the seemingly scientific, progressive, often Darwinian ideology of imperialism”, which characterizes the optimistic early Victorian period (p. 227), its occultism links it with atavism. Literary versions of this fear are “revenge of the colonized” stories, in which native curses and ghosts haunt the colonizers even when they return to England, and “invasion scare” stories in which British characters fight off barbarians, demons, monsters, and foreign enemies.

Another subtopic of Imperial Gothic, the waning of heroic adventure, is a compensatory answer to the “invasion of civilization” stories. Running out of physical frontiers to conquer, British romance writers have British characters invade and conquer the spirit world. A third subtopic of Imperial Gothic, individual regression, appears not only in popular romances, but in serious literature. The occult and the supernatural in British literature contaminate civilization with primitivism, which in

turn evokes the nightmare of ‘going native’. The civilized character’s regression into that very savagery which he or she purported to eradicate, such as Kurtz does in *Heart of darkness*, parallels the ease with which imperial civilization can regress to savagery. Thus Imperial Gothic stories can reveal subconscious doubts about imperialism even in otherwise ostensibly pro-imperialist stories.

The anxiety of regression addresses the degradation of civilization’s values and institutions. Thus the disillusionment with civilization that pervaded Modernist writing had its precursors in the late Victorian period, with writers who questioned the right of England to dominate on the basis of moral superiority when its own civilization was rotten and morally corrupt (Brantlinger: 232). However, in contrast to Romantic and early Victorian narratives, in which the colonies represented a pastoral utopia to which European heroes could go to cure any social or psychological disease in contact with innocent nature, late Victorian and early Modernist narratives project the colonies as the heart of darkness. Thus, they conveniently deflect imperial guilt onto the victim. Ironically, decades after Imperial Gothic lamented the loss of British power, Mittelholzer was writing novels which helped put those fears to rest.

Mittelholzer’s *Shadows move among them* is a Gothic version of what Brantlinger calls “Colonial Pastoral”, conversion fantasies in which white settlers or merchants [shepherds] convert the natives [their flock] to civilization (Brantlinger: 109). *Shadows* is set in the Guyanese hinterland, a village called Berkelhoost, in 1937. Reverend Harmston, a British minister of the Church of Christ the Man, acts as the religious and political leader of the village’s Amerindian population. As the novel opens, Gregory Hawke, an Englishman who has fought in the Spanish Civil War, hopes to recover from his psychological and moral sickness by sojourning in the Guyanese heartland. At first Gregory believes that Berkelhoost is the liberal, Arcadian utopia he needs to recover from his existentialist madness and disillusionment. The pastoral colony appears to be a happy medium between noble savagery and the advances of civilization: British education, the sweetness and light of high culture, including music and art, but only the necessary amounts of technology and free trade to live comfortably. Following Clive Bell’s *Civilization*, they have eradicated patriotism and orthodox religion, as these constitute ideologies (myths) imposed by the central powers to fool the masses (Mittelholzer, 1979: 235). They have also thrown off most of the restrictive sexual inhibitions of civilization. Therefore Rev. Harmston appears to have converted the population of Berkelhoost to an “authentic” civilization which counters the “false,” self-destructive European society rejected by the existentialists.

The Gothic elements of the story emerge from the new, “religious” ideology which replaces the old, and from the sinister political ideology which it masks. An eerie, Gothic atmosphere characterizes the novel from the beginning, although it is demystified as the story develops. What the reader thinks is a real belief in spirits is

gradually revealed as play-acting in accordance to the religion's "basic code of make-believe" (p. 232). Rev. Harmston replaces world-renouncing religious dogma with the practice of "myth-pleasure." The congregation is encouraged to make creative use of the violent psychic effluvia which permeate the environment. These psychic phenomena, residues of the sadistic cruelty of Dutch slave-owners and the bloody violence of slave insurrections, turn out to be the only supernatural forces in the novel. However, people are free to let these "local influences" generate additional beliefs in ghosts, jumbies, goblins, and fairies purposely to titillate and thrill their senses (p. 239).

Furthermore, they are permitted to act upon their fantasies of promiscuity, provided that they do it under the guise of sleepwalking. Promiscuity is the only sexual taboo in the religious ideology, since free love and birth control are encouraged – as long as those involved are in love – from the time that children reach puberty. We later realize that the sleepwalking rule was conveniently invented by Rev. Harmston to justify his infidelity with a village woman. Another motivating factor for the inclusion of violent effluvia in this work is that they blur the boundaries between pain and pleasure. The novel abounds with instances of people ecstatically reveling in pain and sado-masochism.

Just as colonizers used their religions to justify slavery and oppression, Rev. Harmston's religion is used to disguise a terrifying political tyranny. Like a good mystery story, the evidence of this sinister side of Rev. Harmston is gradually uncovered until the end, when the picture of the true monster is unveiled. Harmston's harsh disciplinary measures initially shock the war-torn Gregory. Harmston smiles as he brutally slaps his children and chains his Amerindian servant in a dark shed for hours after whipping him. Gregory rationalizes Harmston's violence either as a personal eccentricity or as a necessary measure of control. Furthermore, contrary to Gregory, the village people seem content, despite the hypocrisy of Rev. Harmston's rules. Harmston's family also tries to convince Gregory that Harmston is not a Hitler or a Mussolini. Nevertheless, Gregory must finally face the extent of Rev. Harmston's tyranny when he and Harmston's daughter, Mabel, apprehend a thief in the house. Mabel explains that after a pretense of a trial, the thief will surely be sentenced to death. Asked how Harmston can account for these executions to the higher authorities, Mabel explains that as the official coroner at any inquest, Rev. Harmston has the authority to certify these deaths as accidental snake bites.

Gregory convinces Mabel not to testify at this travesty of a trial, explaining that this type of fascism is precisely what people in European countries were fighting to overthrow. The thief is released at the end of the trial, but dies of snakebite, Rev. Harmston's routine explanation for his executions. While Gregory thinks that his British sense of justice has been vindicated, the reader knows that Gregory will be the next fatality. Earlier, upon receiving Rev. Harmston's blessing for his betrothal to

Mable, Gregory asked Harmston what he would have done if Gregory had not been able to fit in to Berkelhoost society. Harmston promptly replied that he would have “given [Gregory] something nasty to drink and got [him] safely underground” before he could “contaminate” them (p. 302). The implication is that Gregory, and possibly Harmston’s “contaminated” daughter, Mabel, will eventually be poisoned by Harmston. Therefore, there is no doubt that Harmston’s tyranny will prevail in the end.

Shadows illustrates how ideology works to impose political and cultural hegemony and how novels work as carriers of ideology, either to counter or to reaffirm hegemonies. If what Frederic Jameson contends in *The political unconscious* is true, that all literature is political and that every novel is a symbolic solution to intolerable social dilemmas, what exactly is *Shadows*’ solution to Guyana’s colonial situation? In terms of its form, *Shadows move among them* evinces the same political ambiguity as does Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of darkness*. Brantlinger agrees with Jameson that Conrad’s merging of popular adventure story with his elitist modernist impressionism empties the story of its social and political content. Politically, the story becomes a perpetual evasion.

Brantlinger makes the same distinction in terms of form for Imperial Gothic: the combination of popular romance and Modernism. Most Imperial Gothic took the form of popular adventure stories, not of serious literature. These popular versions of imperialism convinced the British populace of its superiority and of the beneficence of its civilizing mission. Far from critiquing imperial oppression, Imperial Gothic stories were what Martin Green calls “the energizing myth of English imperialism. They were, collectively, the story England told itself as it went to sleep at night” (quoted in Brantlinger: 11). *Heart of darkness* was the first major serious novel to attempt a critique of imperialism, yet its combination of popular adventure story and Modernist impressionism undermined this attempted critique. If, as Jameson says of *Heart of darkness*, its form evinces a perpetual evasion in terms of its anti-imperial content, a similar evasion is produced by *Shadows move among them*. It is a parody of the Victorian Colonial Pastoral, in which the shepherd, Rev. Harmston, converts the savages to a “new” Christianity and civilization. This new, atheistic Christianity, stripped of its spirituality and patriotism, reflects the British Modernists’ critique of their civilization. And just as the Modernists evaded political commitment with their elitist aesthetic, Mittelholzer evades critiquing imperialism with his own aesthetic form.

To the Colonial Pastoral, Mittelholzer adds the Imperial Gothic, which in its time revealed the fears of imperial decline and regression to savagery. Gregory goes to the Guyanese jungle hoping to reap the redemptive benefits of nature. At first the jungle seems like a Gothic nightmare, but soon proves curative. However, Gregory finds another nightmare, a social one, in Rev. Harmston’s’ tyranny – the reverse Colonial Pastoral, where the civilized regress to savagery. The old late Victorian form of

Imperial Gothic then merges with Modernist nihilism as Gregory chooses to remain in the jungle rather than return to the wasteland of Europe.

In terms of its ideological content, Mittelholzer's *Tropical Gothic* privileges imperialism and reflects his pathological over-identification with the British. Gregory grudgingly conforms to Rev. Harmston's version of fascism and oppression. He seems to be saying that, since there is tyranny everywhere, he might as well stay in this jungle version of it. On the other hand, the villagers do not even realize they are being oppressed. They think that they have evaded the false ideology of civilization and have created their own, liberating one. The novel's ideological message could be put as follows: 'We, the colonized, know the civilizing ideology of colonialism is a myth. We know we are being oppressed. However, since the British culture is the most advanced, we might as well make the most of it.'

With this novel, Mittelholzer has effectively demystified Christianity, the civilizing mission, the stereotypes of the benevolent colonizer, the noble savage, New World utopianism, and imperialist adventure stories. He has basically exposed the hypocrisy of imperialism. Published in 1951, the novel's *Tropical Gothic*, like British Imperial Gothic, reflects the anxieties of a waning imperialism, but it also signals the loss of faith in civilization characteristic of the Modernists. Late Victorian anxieties about the decline and fall of the empire came true as World Wars I and II signaled a definite degeneration of Western hegemony. However, as Sandra Drake notes in *Wilson Harris and the modern tradition*, the decay of empire that triggered pessimism in Europe was, in turn, cause for optimism in the colonies (Drake: 42).

Yet this decentering of European values was not cause for celebration in Mittelholzer's novels because of his pathological over-identification with the colonizer. Thus Rev. Harmston and Gregory could 'go native' to a certain extent, and yet it would benefit the Amerindians to remain under Harmston's subjugation. Despite Gregory's existentialist loss of faith in civilization, a tyrannical distortion of civilization prevails at the end of the novel. For, contrary to Conrad's *Heart of darkness*, in which Kurtz faces the horror of his betrayal of civilization, Mittelholzer's Harmston never has to face his horror. In the end, Gregory is denied his goal of returning home to the regions of at least a certain amount of 'light'. He will be another victim of his adventure into colonial regions of darkness.

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BETWEEN COVERGIRL AND CHLOROFORM- CAULIFLOWER: THE RE-CREATION OF THE FEMALE CHARACTER IN *AMALIA* BY ROSARIO FERRÉ AND *AMOUR* BY MARIE VIEUX-CHAUVET

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In the Caribbean, the long struggle against conquistadorial, colonial, and plantation modalities of racism and sexism has come to a charged nexus in the works of a post-plantation generation of women writers who have responded to these familiar challenges in the face of ever-more complicated class struggles accompanied by consumer capitalism, North American-style. In their work to undermine and transform the hegemonic values of their own ruling class, two Caribbean authors may be read as emblematic of a wider struggle throughout the region. We place our focus upon Puerto Rico's Rosario Ferré (1938) and Haiti's Marie Vieux-Chauvet (1916-1973), two writers from a Caribbean aristocracy who – in exemplary fashion – reveal the violence of the social-sexual hierarchies that have controlled their countries even as they defend their home spaces against consumption by US interests.

Ferré's writings point out themes that refer to the social and political conflicts that Puerto Rican society goes through because of its dependency upon the United States. Through her characters (or avatars), Ferré conceives imagined realities encouraging Puerto Ricans to reorient their dependent way of living. Many readers have noted that Ferré's works give liberatory feminist emphasis to women's oppression under the patriarchal system. In addition, Ferré points to the fragmentation of Puerto Rican society around a single issue: the question of statehood or independence. In "Amalia", one of the fourteen short stories collected in *Papeles de Pandora* (1976), Ferré interweaves all of this with religious and political themes that date back to the long history of Spanish colonization. With "Amalia" Ferré offers a triune domestic focus: a rebellious female character opposed to the passiveness of the other women mentioned in the story; a Catholicism used to keep appearances and support patriarchal control; and a political system set up to preserve oppression – all of which we find complicated by US political and economic hegemony. Analysis from a religious and political perspective highlights the ideal behavior for women in situations created by

the patriarchal order. Under those ideal patterns, women are valued for their docile behavior as well as for their acceptance of suffering as prescribed by the Church.

There is also a strong undercurrent in “Amalia” of what the conquistadores did to the indigenous peoples of the ‘New World’ to impose their religion and their culture. When young Amalia, the main female character, is initiated into Catholicism by her uncle, a general who works for the American political system, Ferré’s intentions become clear to the reader. As the uncle/general introduces his young niece to communion, he tries to introduce her to a sexual life as well. Although he accomplishes his desire on a religious level, he is far less successful with regard on the sexual level as she rebuffs his intentions. The girl realizes that her uncle must own every single thing within his domain and discovers something of the sexual abuse that her mother suffered at his hands. Her violent reaction is an example of what María José Chávez notes about the two kinds of women portrayed in *Papeles de Pandora*: “la sumisa ajustada al sistema y, la rebelde que se opone al mismo” (Chávez: 65).¹

The story’s young protagonist has lived in her uncle’s house and has been forced to obey his orders; however, while she has been under his protection she does not allow him to destroy her integrity, and she reacts defiantly. Under such abusive circumstances, she reacts rebelliously, and her rebellion is based on rejecting him as a man, as a relative, as a military leader, and as her oppressor: “[E]mpecé a gritar a mí no me interesa tu paraíso de manjares y de champanes edificado para los embajadores y militares que vienen de visita” (Ferré: 76).² The importance of rebellion in the story is exemplified as well through the way the girl makes fun of her uncle and through how she distances herself from the perfect behavior expected of upper class ‘ladies’.

This rebellion, however, is richly complicated by the protagonist’s degenerative illness. She can’t expose herself to sunlight because perspiration will cause her death. Her family doctor mentions that the origin of this bizarre disease is likely due to the relationship of her uncle and her mother. As the doctor puts it, the problema is “incesto. In-cesto, in the basket, encestó señora, el cesto de la basura, el vicio de los pobres en el diez por ciento de los puertorriqueños, . . . pero también es el vicio de los ricos” (Ferré: 66).³ Here, the doctor’s words play a snide game of sport pushing the reader to identify social and conflict: “incesto”, “in-cesto”, “in the basket” (p. 66). Also the text suggests how religion actually fosters incest via the law of the Father: “dios creó al mundo a su imagen y semejanza pero el hombre se sintió solo en aquel paraíso tan grande y entonces dios creó a la mujer y se la presentó, esta se llamará varona porque de varón ha sido tomada y el hombre se sintió consolado porque cada

¹ “The submissive woman who respects patriarchy and the rebellious woman who opposes it.” *All translations from Spanish are our own.*

² “I started yelling that I was not interested in your paradise full of delicacies and champagne, a paradise created for ambassadors and generals.”

³ “Incest. In-cest, in the basket, you scored a basket madam, in the trash can, in the form of the vice of the poor ten percent of Puerto Ricans... but it’s also a vice of the rich.”

vez que fornicaba con ella le parecía que fornicaba con dios” (p. 66).⁴ Since woman was created of man, men can make women serve them whenever or wherever men desire to do so.

In “Amalia” the Church and the government exert their control over people. The protagonist sarcastically invalidates the oppressive rules and language of the Church: “somos responsables de que la paz sea con vosotros, de esa paz que conseguimos por medio de la producción en masa de cloroformocoliflor, de esa paz que repetimos todos los días, . . . prohibido fumar, prohibido maravillarse, prohibido preguntar, prohibido pensar *dominus vobiscum et cum spiritu tuo*, la paz de la televisión sea con vosotros” (p. 70).⁵

What also strikes the reader is the radical superficiality of a system that uses the name of God and the numbing peace of mass production and the mass media to zombify the populace. The protagonist takes note of what her uncle and his colleagues say about their mission on the island: “oigo que dicen de ahora en adelante usaremos todas las armas que la divina providencia en su inmensa sabiduría ha puesto a nuestro alcance” (p. 71).⁶ The fact they mention Divine Providence is emblematic of how, in their hegemonic discourse, reference to supreme divinity is coupled with Yankee economic, political, and military power.

In her fiction, Ferré consistently makes comparisons between human beings and dolls. Human beings get turned into dolls, and dolls take on human agency. Amalia’s predicament is embodied in a wax doll which is also named Amalia, that her uncle gives her as a gift. Both of them will melt away and die if they are exposed to sunlight. María José Chávez calls this kind of embodiment “asimilación interna” (p. 66). Both girl and doll are trapped: the girl in the house, which she cannot leave because the sun can kill her, and the wax doll in a box. At the beginning of the story the girl compares herself to the doll saying that they have become two-in-one: “Ahora empiezo a acunar entre los brazos esta masa repugnante que eras tú, Amalia, y era también yo, juntas éramos las dos una sola” (p. 64).⁷ Both the girl and the doll face the constant threat of destruction. Both are under someone else’s control.

Amalia can be seen as representative of oppressed upper class Latin American and Caribbean women who live enclosed in their houses, where they are expected to serve and take care of everyone else who lives there. Although the house represents a secure

⁴ “God created the world in his image but the man felt lonely such a big paradise and so God created a woman and introduced her to him, and the woman’s name will be WoMAN because she was created from the man’s essence and the man felt consoled because every single time he fornicated with her he felt he was fornicating with God.”

⁵ “We are responsible that peace be with us, the peace that we obtain through the mass production of chloroform-cauliflower, of the peace that we repeat everyday . . . it is forbidden to smoke, to get excited, to ask, to think *dominus vobiscum et cum spiritu tuo*, the peace of the television be with you.”

⁶ “I overhear them when they say that from now on, we will use all of the weapons that Divine Providence, in its infinite wisdom, has put at our disposal.”

⁷ “Now I hug you, you disgusting piece of nothing in my arms Amalia, and so I am you and I we are two in one.”

shelter, the price women pay to live under this protection is their freedom. Seizing control over the rules of her own story, Amalia disrupts the patterns that have been predesigned to determine the role that the house must play in her life, as Juan Gelpí insists: “la representación de la casa está marcada por distintas formas de transgresión: abundan en esas casas el ‘escándalo’ y el ‘desenfreno’” (Gelpí: 157)⁸. The drama in Amalia’s house draws attention to the General’s perverse command over it. The house is the place where he entertains his political comrades and American guests. He brings them there for sex with his three servants: Maria, Adela and Leonor, who must obey his orders to ‘doll themselves up’: “hacía que se sentaran con ellos a darles conversación, como son extranjeros es bueno que nos conozcan mejor que vean que aquí también hay muchachas bonitas que se hacen tipping en el pelo que usan pestañas postizas y covergirlmakeup, use Noxema shaving” (p. 72).⁹

The way in which Amalia’s uncle/general has his servants serve the foreigners exposes how upper class Caribbean and Latin American women are expected not only to do the housework but also to serve men sexually. As a military avatar of the Puerto Rican bourgeoisie (and North American power), her uncle/general takes advantage of his commanding place in society and abuses not only the women in his realm, but anyone else under his control, including his Afro-Puerto Rican chauffeur. The plantation casts a long shadow here. We should note that during the island’s sugar boom, Puerto Ricans struggled under the control of the foreign investors who were not only reaping handsome profits, but also imposing a certain economic and ideological hegemony.

Even under these circumstances of oppression Amalia rebels against her uncle’s desires. When they return to the house from church and the girl resists his sexual advances, her uncle stops protecting her. He does not cover her with the umbrella to shade her against the deadly sunlight, so she gets scared and asks him to protect her again, which he interprets as her acquiescence to his desires: “dejó que el sol me acribillara por todos lados y puso su mano sobre mi pequeña teta izquierda” (p. 76).¹⁰ The girl does not surrender, and in her rebellion she urges the three doll-servants to rebel as well. She says to her doll Amalia before she dies, “Tú trataste lo que más pudiste hacer que se rebelaran, echándoles en cara dos y tres veces al día su condición, despreciable, su complaciente manumisión de 25 dollars a fuck . . .” (p. 77).¹¹ However the three servants have so fully embraced their status as ‘Covergirl’ dolls that they cannot imagine changing the conditions of their service to their Lord and his guests.

⁸ “The representation of the house is characterized by distinct forms of transgression: these houses are saturated with scandal and perversity.”

⁹ “He made them sit with them to chat and to show them that in Puerto Rico there are also pretty women who do their hair and use long fake eyelashes and wear Covergirl makeup and shave themselves with Noxema.”

¹⁰ “He let the sun roast me while he put his hand on my little left tit.”

¹¹ “You did what you could do to exhort them to rebel and remind them over and over again of their pathetic situation and complacent readiness to please them, charging 25 dollars a fuck.”

The young protagonist decides to put an end to her uncle/general's abuse by putting an end to her doll-like self, knowing that her sweat and subsequent death will be her liberation. The girl destroys her house and her doll, and chooses to die. Although she is abandoned by her uncle, she hugs her doll tightly and waits for her death: "poco a poco fui abriendo los brazos sobre el cemento que late y estiré con mucho cuidado las piernas . . . y ahora vuelvo la cara hacia arriba y me sonrío porque ahora si voy a saber como es" (p. 80).¹² The doll and girl become one Amalia freed of the life they have lived under a man's protection. Lagos-Pope observes that "La niña protegida, de cera como su muñeca, ha dejado de existir. . . y por fin suda. Tiene funciones corporales, vida, ha dejado de ser una muñeca de cera. Ahora es una mujer." (p. 747).¹³

Amalia is no longer a wax doll. She is able to sweat and thus finally becomes a woman, even if exposure to the sun (and the darkening of the skin and the perspiration that ensue) is not the fashion for ladies of a certain class and privilege. Many of Ferré's female characters finally find their freedom in a liberatory death, that symbolically destroys the world that patriarchy, racism, and colonization have created and re-created through them. As a national allegory, "Amalia" encourages Puerto Ricans to continue the sweaty work of fighting for their independence and identity.

Haiti's Marie Vieux-Chauvet also portrays upper class women working to author their own freedom by rejecting the "protected" social status created for them by plantocratic patriarchy. Her novella *Amour* is the opening piece of the famed trilogy *Amour, colère et folie* originally published by Galliard in 1968, and quickly withdrawn from circulation after concerns for her family's safety because of the book's scarcely veiled critique of the Duvalier dictatorship. Réjouis and Vinokur note that the "avatars" of the virtual reality created in *Amour* incessantly struggle to "slip their racial, social, political, and religious bonds" (p. xxi). The novella's protagonist Claire, who belongs the Haitian planter aristocracy, feels suffocated by her protected status: "No husband. Doesn't know love. Hasn't lived really....I am thirty-nine years old and still a virgin" (p. 3). Claire suffers her gendered social death because she is the darker complexioned "surprise that mixed blood had in store" for her aristocratic near-white parents (p. 6). The text of *Amour* dramatizes the high price that she pays for her complicity with the rules of her class, caste, and gender.

Amour exposes the Church as a full supporter of the racially stratified and fully militarized plantation order. Independent thinking is prohibited: "Father Paul says I have poisoned my mind with education" (p. 4). Education is to be taken in moderation – just enough for proper socialization, but not enough to trigger critical questioning. Father Paul condemns the local slaves by declaring that "The good Lord is unhappy with you.....You are giving in to superstition. You practice voodoo. God has punished

¹² "Little by little I opened my arms on the hot cement and straightened my legs carefully... and now I look at the sky smiling because I am finally going to know what it is, how it feels."

¹³ "The protected girl, made out of wax like her doll, dies and finally sweats. She now has bodily functions, life, because she has stopped being a doll. Now she is a woman."

you” (p. 10). Claire, however, notes that “even my own father, the Parisian mulatto, served the *loas* regularly” (p. 10).

Claire steadfastly refuses to serve the spirits herself, however, and not because “[t]he Catholic priests and nuns have stuffed her head and talked of voodoo as if it were damnation” (p. 95) as her coffee-planter father’s *houngan* claims. The fact that her father “was rash enough”, in her mother’s words, “to accept the legacy of his black grandmother and... [is] afraid not to keep his promises” is scandalous enough for the family (p. 96). But the legacy of his black grandmother has been turned against the revolutionary agency of the people. “I rule like a lion king over my land”, the planter-father laughingly asserts: “The peasants are afraid of my ‘voodoo spells’” (p. 113). Because Claire, his eldest child, is not a son, he sees her as a disappointment and a failure. He assaults her and whips her as he “swore he would break me” (p. 96).

Eventually Claire begins to protect herself by creating a secret inner life much that of Ferré’s Amalia. It is a life of the imagination, a mode of resistance that veers over the edges of sanity in the context of a diseased post-plantation bourgeois society of obedience. Ironically, the Catholic priest licenses this disobedience: “Resist my child....Resist with all your might. In such a case as this, disobedience is permitted” (p. 96).

Amour turns out to be a spectacular imaginative act of disobedience – not simply against the father and his power schemes, but against the church, the restrictions of class, and against a new threat – American business interests. This disobedience takes on a revolutionary power as “all the former mulatto-bourgeois-aristocrats” have begun to lose their old smugness in the face of a police force in league with the Americans represented by “Commandant Calédu, a ferocious black man who has been terrorizing us for about eight years now” (p. 8). There is little desire to return to the old codes of honor. Here “love is a sin”, and the family’s colonial-style home “a cloister” (p. 12). The protagonist notes, “I learned to repress my instincts. Any intimacy with those who did not belong to the highest level of society meant dishonor for my parents” (p. 12). Her disobedience against “the stupidity of social classifications based on wealth and color” (p. 12), against a “society [that] isn’t worth shit”, “a killer of liberty” constructed around “fear of scandal”, brings Claire to see that she has “repressed an ocean of love within me” (p. 25). She retreats behind the facades of the family home and her own bedroom – where “pornographic post cards offer me instruction in lovemaking: they attend to basic needs” (p. 25). Jealous of her light-skinned/blonde-haired younger sister’s pregnancy and French husband, Claire rocks a doll in her bedroom as if it were her child. In this claustrophobic plantation town-house, she faces a common predicament: “a matter of will and action. Of choosing to be puppets or to be human beings” (p. 69). Like Ferré, Vieux-Chauvet must address not only her island’s patriarchal-racial-class hierarchies but also the onslaught of North American hegemony. These are all depicted as acts of rape.

In *Amour*, M. Long represents the American business interests in Haiti. He loads a ship once a week “with fish, coffee, and precious wood” (p. 9). “M. Long, who buys anything that grows at low prices... has cleverly found shelter under the wings of the authorities in order to better suck our blood” (p. 18). This “hideous American” preys on the island’s extraordinary “timber stock” (p. 21) and hastens Haiti’s deforestation and loss of soil due to erosion. Soon enough folk realize “Our land is finished...we cut down too many trees” (p. 46). Following “the extensive clear-cutting of trees”, “[a]valanches of soil slid down the mountains” till – with the wood and soil depleted – “the human trade” (p. 129) was revived. Edwidge Danticat notes that although the novella is set in the immediate aftermath of US occupation [when the Marines were replaced by a US-trained gendarmerie that “proceeded to form juntas, organize coups, and terrorize Haitians for decades” (p. x)], the novella speaks profoundly to the Duvalier regime that was in power at the moment when it was written and looks prophetically to the immediate aftermath of the dictatorship, to the foreign investment “nurturing an atrocious sweatshop culture” and to government deals shipping impoverished Haitians “like slaves” to Dominican sugarcane fields (p. xiv).

Marie Vieux-Chauvet, and her protagonist Claire Clamont, combat the forces that lay claim to the land, women, and labor of Haiti. Claire is forced into re-affiliations of sensibility as she writes in her journal of “the hunger of the body and that of the soul” and asserts that “[a]ll sufferings are equal” (p. 7). As Danticat notes, *Amour* forces readers to ask themselves if “all suffering [is] equal when the people who suffer are not considered equal?” (p. xi). So the text of *Amour* moves steadily towards a “rising up against” the enshrined inequalities of “our proper bourgeois nonsense” (p. 33). We see the many ways that Claire and women of her own class have preyed upon those below them in rank: “In a prominent family, what is the place of a house slave who called the babies mademoiselle and conceded to their every whim for fear of being beaten?” (p. 59). She recognizes her acquiescence and passivity: “A kind of automaton. I no longer have a soul” (p. 65). *Amour* thus moves towards violent fury as Claire stabs Commandant Calédu to death after he has been backed into her porch by a mob. *Amour*’s closing words convey the revolutionary energy of Vieux-Chauvet’s dangerous fictional act of imagination: “From the window, I catch a glimpse of the torches wavering in the wind. The doors of the house are open and the entire town has risen” (p. 156).

In both “Amalia” and *Amour*, we see how post-plantation women writers have worked to destroy one version of the world by laying bare its illegitimacies. Ferré’s “protected” daughters and wives shape new alliances across class and color lines and refuse to be the dolls of the plantocracy’s old game of church-and-state backed honor. A carnivalesque drama of new scripts fosters the dolls’ rejection of old excesses to usher in a vision of self-determination in the face of new threats. Vieux-Chauvet’s novel of defiance, though withdrawn from wider circulation for fear of its impact, is

fierce in its refusal of subservience to patriarchy, class, color, and the terrorizing alliance of Yankee business interests with a brutal dictatorship. Women's bodies become the site where these violent and zombifying struggles are played out in the literatures of the old plantation zones. Here, we are reminded of Jean Rhys's Antoinette in *Wide Sargasso Sea*, who, reduced to the status of a marionette, is nonetheless able to summon the imaginative power to burn down the House of Rochester. We are also reminded of Zora Neale Hurston's Janie in *Their eyes were watching God*, refusing the role of light-complexioned "doll-baby" placed as trophy wife on the gallery above her all-black town. We recall how Faulkner's repeated return to the themes of incest, of white women as pure vessels, of the notion that one is either a lady or its other (virgin/whore, pure/impure), has – as Édouard Glissant has shown – undone the West's very notion of legitimacy (and its long patriarchal lists of "begats"). The New World was indeed built from violent intercourse, an "art of colonialism" by which, as Wilson Harris's Jonah Jones says of his son's heathen mother in *Jonestown*, "when I fuck her I save you Francisco from taint. I recruit you in her into the Church" (p. 123). In Cortes's "go-between," La Chingada (the Fucked), we meet that mother of hybridities whose "taint is constitutional" according to Octavio Paz, the one whose "passivity... causes her to lose her identity: she is the Fucked" (p. 72). We see that in the wake of the conquistadors and plantocracy it is not only the "heathen" native or slave who is "the Fucked". It is her children, the land itself, the planet. And it is also, though via other routes of incestuous violence, the colonizer's wife and legitimized children who – in their inheritance of an impossible purity (a confining virginity of knowledge that never allows them to sweat) – are also "Fucked"...though they may be masqueraded in the doll-like mantle of the Mother-of-God. It should hardly surprise then, that in spite – or *because* – of their complicities, the wives and daughters of a post-plantation bourgeoisie have been among the most furious, recreative avatars of possibilities of life beyond Covergirl, Noxema, and chloroform-cauliflower.

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DRAWING DOWN HER[STORY]: MALE RE-PRESENTATIONS IN CLAIRE HARRIS' *DRAWING DOWN A DAUGHTER*

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“They dreamed dreams that no one knew-not even themselves, in any coherent fashion-and saw visions no one could understand. They wandered or sat about the countryside crooning lullabies to ghosts, and drawing the mother of Christ in charcoal on courthouse walls [...] They forced their minds to desert their bodies and their striving spirits sought to rise [...] They waited for a day when the unknown thing that was in them would be made known...” (Walker, 1994: 402)

“In the nature of myths, it goes largely uncriticized and unquestioned. The pervasiveness and seeming permanence of masculinism is explained by the fact that gender, like other areas of oppression, “is not only ‘out there’ structuring activities and institutions, and ‘in our heads’ structuring discourse and ideologies; it is also ‘in here’ – in our hearts and bodies – structuring our intimate desires, our sexuality, our self esteem and our dreams. (Peterson quoted in Nurse, 2004: 6)

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These two excerpts can represent the two seeming polarities that are inherent in Claire Harris's book of poems, *Drawing down a daughter* (1992). Considered Harris's “best-known work” (Sanders) the text is not so much a collection of poems, but the successful outpouring of that “garden” which American writer Alice Walker is in search of – that space that silently lies within all women, but is difficult to attain. It is difficult to attain not because it is unreachable, but because it is in another tongue, in an unacknowledged code. The mission of the woman, in this case Harris, is to translate that woman tongue accurately into the father language, the universally accepted code, in this case represented through English. Therefore, language becomes the battle site for two seemingly opposing discourses, where the world of woman's only medium of survival is to infiltrate itself into the world of man. Harris does this, but takes it further by not only infiltrating the language, but by subverting the power structure, making the world of woman the unquestioned myth and keeping the male in the outskirts, hence putting man in the role that women have occupied since time immemorial.

There has been much scholarship on Harris, from her earliest collections, *Fables from the women's quarters* and *Translations into fiction* to *Dipped in shadow*. But mostly there has been a tendency to focus on matters of “colonialism and racism [...] the situation of women both as victims of oppression and as agents” (Sanders) and on issues of “race, access, and the appropriateness of the verbal tradition” (Hunter: 256). Many academics have also delved into the themes of resistance through the female community (Kuwabong, 1998; 1999), liminality (Kruk, 2001; Rudy, 1996), and naming (Becker, 1999). Nevertheless, I felt that something was still not being addressed directly, in the open, and for me, that is Harris’ portrayal of men in *Drawing down a daughter*. In contrast to her earlier poems where men were more actively present, e.g. “Peter Petrus” in the final poem of *Translation into fiction*, the men in *Drawing* are not “all there”. The focus of this paper then is to address the portrayal of the male figure in *Drawing down a daughter*, particularly through the character of the poet/mother/speaker’s nameless husband, along with other male representations in the collection. By keeping these male characters/figures at bay, Harris is, in Lynette Hunter’s words, “critically rework[ing] the cruel and persistent romantic metaphor of woman as source of poetry and man as articulator or poet” (Hunter: 264).

480 “In the dominant masculinist phallogocentric discourse, the ‘feminine’ is conceptualized and actualized as the ‘ontological Other’” (Persram quoted in Nurse: 7). Based on this premise, the poet/mother/speaker’s husband in *Drawing* assumes this very stance. He addresses the pregnant woman almost like a parent speaks to a child to the extent that he truly believes that he is the one with the true knowledge, ignoring, like in Walker’s excerpt, that garden of knowledge and wealth pertinent only to women. The speaker/mother/poet goes beyond him, by telling her daughter “he doesn’t really know anything about us...” (Harris, 1992: 80, emphasis in original). This re-positioning of the male is further magnified, for the father is not only unaware of their true essence, but believes himself to be the one in the right. He belittles her condition, by adopting the stance of the superior observer, “She wakes to find him watching her ‘okay?’ [...] ‘my woman!/finished your blues yet?’” (p. 109). He does not understand at all what she is going through, the physical and emotional pregnancy, nevertheless he is sure that his perspective is perfectly all right, as if the “blues” could be turned off at the switch of a button. The reader can also infer this since the famous baby blues, or post partum depression, usually come after birth. Not to mention that this “illness” itself was created in the post Victorian male dominated field of medicine; before this male intrusion, women attended to all female health issues. So not only is he diminishing her condition, but he is naming it, and exerting control over the woman: “‘my woman!’” [...] as if he had somehow “acquired her” (p. 109).

Yet little does he realize that his masculinity is subjected to the overarching white masculinity, his sense of superiority being an illusion. As a result, her husband is at the lower end of the masculinity hierarchy due to his Afro-Canadian race and ethnicity (Nurse: 7). In other words, he is assuming a doubly imposed societal role, by aiming to perform and believe that he is the white hegemonic mythical power male. Harris subverts this by becoming the storyteller, the herstory maker, placing the male in the position of the physical, objectified “other”, making him the object “in the judo robe his dark chocolate chest/ Afro-smooth delicious” (Harris, 1992: 109). In *Drawing*, her husband is the body, while the woman assumes the “logocentric posture” creating the “powerful narrative by which [she] organize[s] our understanding of social reality” (Johnson quoted in Nurse: 7).

The husband is therefore described by the speaker/mother/poet as a handsome, sensuous, loving and caring man who looks after her and wants what he considers to be best for their yet to arrive child. But the one speaking *motherese*, the language from the mother to the child is not he. The father of the baby only directs himself to the mother, and she in turn, through *motherese*, communicates or translates his code into theirs. This might signify the power exerted through language, as the colonizer’s language was automatically deemed superior over the natives’ languages, making no effort to learn their codes from the solid belief that they had no language. The father in *Drawing* is oblivious to the fact that his wife has an entire language and realm of her own in which he has no authority. This is evident in the poem “He finds her”. The speaker in this section is the husband; he is describing his wife or the mother/poet. He states: “love you are my landscape my map [...] and all its secret springs mine to explore” (p. 93). Although he says this, he only accomplishes the possessive, for although he explores her secret springs, these are physical, i.e. her body. But the emotional, the true self, he makes no note of. This entire section only alludes to the female body, not the soul, metaphorically represented by woman as soil, as earth, as territory, and with territory comes power.

“Oh Girl! . . . your father’s right . . . i’m right

right has nothing to do with it

Baby it’s all about power!” (Harris, 1992: 73)

The above line of advice from mother to daughter is in response to one of the many storylines in the book, the struggle between husband and wife concerning a move to the poet/mother/speaker’s homeland, Trinidad. What the mother is alluding to is the concept of power through language in general. She acknowledges that they are both in the right to want the best for their child, which for each parent means different things. Up to this point it makes sense for the mother to assert that they are both right. But the key word, as she very clearly points out, is power. She understands that the husband represents power, English, the language of rationality and western logic, the one who speaks in the universal code of authority, hence the reason why she teaches

the daughter this lesson. Once the daughter knows that it is all about power, then she will be able to use the tools of power, i.e. language to her advantage, to speak and use and command the oppressor's tongue. Geography then becomes the metaphor for the battleground between the man/woman struggle for power through nationalistic preference.

For Homi Bhabha there is a direct relation between masculinity and nationalism where the nation becomes the father figure, while the foreign is feminized (Nurse: 16). In the case of *Drawing*, the father wants the child to serve the nation, i.e. Trinidad. The mother, being a child of Father Trinidad, fled its patronizing ways, preferring Canada. In sum, the father is forcing the two females back to patriarchy, ignorantly believing that this is what is best for his child, while the mother is acutely aware that subjection awaits her and her daughter in Trinidad.

"I'm telling you Girl you have to watch men..." (Harris, 1992: 23). The mother warns the daughter that all men, including the father the child will come to love so much, just as the mother/speaker/poet loves him in the same way "she came to love English" (Sanders) can be dangerous. Hence she teaches her daughter that that love must be cautious, alert to the fact that the father she will grow to love can also be her prison. The mother thus equates English with male, calling it by the male third person possessive pronoun "his" (p. 24). She muses:

"she should have insisted on Yoruba not given in to the
angry gaze the wanting to be rid of this North American
threatening to squeeze herself in to *his* ancient space

did *he* fear her lilt
that she would have taken over *his*
language made it chip
to the beat of calypso

a woman without forest gods without red earth or sullen
rivers without shame or any tongue to exchange for *his*
harsh imperatives the quick curd consonants

Child all i have to give
is English which hates/fears your
black skin" (pp. 24-25, my emphasis)

In this excerpt it becomes clear that English is the father tongue, the only accepted medium for existence, and the only language that the child will inherit. But by going through the mother to the daughter, it becomes a tool of resistance. The child will

therefore take it and make it “dance to sunlight in the Caribbean” (p. 25). She will womanize the masculine code and transform it into the language of women through which women’s herstory will be passed down from generation to generation, unbeknownst to men.

Not directed at the husband, but still representative of the male is the speaker’s assertion that just like woman has been invaded by man and language and therefore reduced to an illogical incomprehensible other, God has also been “manified.” “have reduced Him / to the cool / deceptive logic / of symbol / who make terrible the darkness with endless unknowing” (Harris: 41-42). God is manified as woman is manified, both reduced to the male rationalistic gaze and hence language that truly cannot accurately describe them, resulting in the cruel reality people, especially black women, have suffered and still suffer through. The damage men have caused might be irreparable, unless women take Creation back. The mother/poet’s thoughts continue:

“God dispersed
while we
confined by words
trapped in numbers
and time
seek
to deconstruct creation (my emphasis)

lost the power of orbiting hips of ceremony
and chant lost the drums that could tempt Him
to join us in shaping a world our feet stamping
out the rhythms of life” (p. 42)

This highly compelling section cries out for the myth of woman that will become the natural, the universal as opposed to the myth of masculinity, which is regarded as “the prototype of human behavior” (Rutherford: 23). This is made real through the poetry collage itself and ultimately in “Here on this” (p. 48) where the creation myth is rewritten to have “sweet hips intricate veined feet design/ worlds.” In this same refashioning of creation that the mother is instilling in her daughter, she concludes with advice that once again appeals to female critical awareness:

“Drink often remembering there
is mystery in spite of perception
truth despite the word” (Harris: 49)

In other words, the mother is teaching the daughter that there is more behind the limiting constraints of language; there is an entire unknown world that only women

know and that truth lies beyond patriarchal language. El Dorado has always been there, but not found only because of ignorance and neglect.

The short narrative, *A matter of fact*, follows the above poem. In this section the audience comes to know the story of Burri and Jocelyn that takes place in Trinidad. The narrator in this case is not only the poet/mother, but also her Great Aunt the storyteller, who is recounting the story of Burri to a group of children; among whom is the poet/mother/speaker as a child listening. The story is told in Trinidadian vernacular and in the custom of Afro-Caribbean folk storytelling. Throughout the Great Aunt's narrative a boy wants to take charge of the story process by constantly interrupting her. He urges her to speed up the process shouting: "Crick-crack", "know[ing] his role" as male to control (Harris: 54). In response to the boy's insistence the Great Aunt answers: "You is man, all you don't have no real sense. Is not only what you see that there [...] And not all what smell sweet does taste sweet" (Harris: 54). It is clear that such a lesson is given in vain to the boy, directly alluding to the piece of advice the mother gives the daughter in the preceding poem. "There is truth despite the word" (Harris: 49), meaning that male rationality, by focusing only on the scientifically verifiable, misses a lot in life. The character of Burri, because he judges based on what he sees, on supposed reality, and *facts* falls into the grip of La Diabliesse, almost loosing his life.

484 Further on in the narrative the boy interjects once again, urging the Great Aunt to continue but again receives a lesson, this time in the form of public ridicule concerning his "pee" in front of the girls (Harris: 56); with a quick phrase that tears away his masculine mask, she silences him. The superficial, concrete realm of existence then, usually associated with woman, represents the male in the text, while the abstract world of culture and knowledge belongs to the woman (Mohammed: 43). However, the world of woman is not a direct reflection of the universally accepted world of man, for what is valued here are the stories not told, and the facts that cannot be validated through traditional means. When Burri goes to the speaker/poet/mother's father for advice he asks him at the end: "But if a thing like that could happen what kind of world is this?" (Harris: 61). He cannot grasp a world beyond the facts, and that world that lies beyond male comprehension is in fact the world that Burri and all men live in, brought to concrete reality through the actual text. Patricia Mohammed notes:

"The hegemony of these ideological discourses can be traced as far back as the ideas of Plato and Aristotle who, formulating reason over emotion, and culture over nature, justified the domination of women by men, enslaving women in domestic activities and excluding them from public life in the name of reason and objectivity." (p. 43)

By inverting the hierarchy of these realms, Harris is reconfiguring the "safe space" (Rudy: 9) she wants for her daughter; she is making sure that her teachings are clear in

that this female world is theirs only, raising her with an awareness of both, ensuring that the daughter understands that despite the wonders and power of this realm, power in the end will belong to man. So the child is indeed growing up to be liminal, occupying “the space between two worlds” but nevertheless this becomes a site of resistance for “it is a potent space of creativity and fullness” (Harris, 1986: 125).

Other interactions between the poet/mother/speaker and her husband show the positioning of the male figure. In the preceding poem sequences the reader is brought closer into the turmoil between mother and father regarding the move to Trinidad. But in this final section, the reader discovers that the “husband father man” (Harris: 92) has been reading the poet/mother’s collage to her daughter. Yet, he does not comprehend it, reading it through the male lens he simply reads what is literally written on the page: “He tosses the book onto her bed, ‘Read what you write!’ At/ the door he turns, ‘How many other cars did you kill?’” (Harris: 75). The mother does not give him an answer; but instead she pulls the covers over her head in silence. Later after he leaves, in the poem “She begins” she realizes that “she will not be able to convince/ him” (Harris: 77), having full awareness that all attempts at having a man comprehend the female world are futile. Perhaps this is the reason why the book ends in a pessimistic tone, for the mother knows that despite all her teachings, this daughter will unequivocally live in a male world.

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The final poem “She wakes” depicts a still oblivious man in midst of his wife’s labor pains; who obnoxiously asks her in a father-like patronizing tone: “‘my woman! / finished your blues yet?’” As the mother/poet/speaker says, he means well and yet she cannot help but feel like an object, a possession: “she is thinking of all his ‘my’/ as if he had somehow acquired her” (Harris: 109). But the poet/mother/speaker subverts this immediately when she once again places the man in the role of object: “Girl *his body my brain*” (p. 110, my emphasis). She thus reverts the

“[S]chema of male-to-female” that is present in “both Western and Eastern thought” that is “embedded in language through dichotomies which symbolize man/woman as culture/nature, rational/emotional, assertive/passive, strong/weak, or public/private.” (Mohammed: 42)

Harris is reclaiming the lost agency of woman, transgressing the dominant dichotomies. As in Gloria Anzaldúa’s *La frontera*, she teaches her daughter to become a crossroads, a liminal entity capable of existing in two realms. She is also subverting the universal order by placing herself, her daughter and all women in the position of power and most importantly, knowledge; women need to know that although men are the oppressors, by women creating stories, they are creating resistance.

The immensity of Claire Harris’s *Drawing down a daughter* calls for perhaps interminable scholarship. I feel like I have only just begun to *draw* meaning from this drawing that far from being a one-dimensional set of characters on a page, it is a

three-dimensional world, the world of woman. This is not to be interpreted as a denial of the possibility of the entry of man into this world, but instead a proclamation that this world, this garden does indeed truly exist. The problem lies in the system, the code in which we live where the world of woman becomes lost in translation. Claire Harris thus becomes the interpreter and the guide that leads us to find this universe, hence turning us all into her daughters. As our mother she demands us “to act to do something wild/ furious full of meaning/ to make a language that [will] rend and wrack” (p. 91) a place where woman is poet and man is muse.

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THE ROLE OF THE OLDER SISTER IN CARIBBEAN LIFE AND LITERATURE

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Caribbean fictional writing often engages issues of growing up, coming of age and confronting personal, family and cultural issues in a new and often stifling environment. Searching for an identity, escaping the burden of social constructs imposed by one's heritage and discovering new world views drive the characters to create new lives for themselves while reminiscing over the past, however tragic it might have been (Santiago, 1993; Espinet, 2003). In the aftermath of colonialism we read about the effect and repercussions that colonization had on Caribbean families and the roles of different family members. A role not often explored is that of the older sister. In this article, I will explore the role of the older sister in the Caribbean family as portrayed in two Caribbean texts: *The swinging bridge* by Ramabai Espinet and *When I was Puerto Rican* by Esmeralda Santiago.

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The Caribbean family typically confronts a noxious mix of patriarchal ideologies imposed both by European missionaries and colonizers and what passes for African or Indian tradition in the Americas. In describing Trinidadian families, Herskovitz and Herskovitz mention the "looseness of the conjugal bonds, the close nucleus of mother and child, the importance of family support to the individual, and the peripheral status of the father" (cited in Barrow, 1998: 5). Because of the peripheral status of the father, Caribbean families often revolve around the mother or grandmother, making them matrifocal and matricentric. Because of the growing number of absent fathers and even absent mothers, due to divorce or as a consequence of migration (Sharpe, 1996), many Caribbean parents today still depend on their oldest female offspring to take on major responsibilities in the rearing of their younger siblings. In the Caribbean, children are expected to take on chores and responsibilities at a much younger age than children in the US and Europe and older sisters in particular are responsible for raising their younger brothers and sisters (Abrams, 2010).

In *The swinging bridge* Mona lives in Canada, away from the life she once knew in Trinidad. Raised in an Indo-Trinidadian family in the Caribbean, she knew that some day she would be expected to follow Indo-Caribbean marriage traditions. Her father would select her husband and she would be subservient to a man who could abuse her

verbally and physically. Married according to Indo-Trinidadian tradition, her parents had stayed together all their lives in spite of their constant fights. Divorce was not an option since it is totally unacceptable under Indo-Trinidadian custom. Her mother Muddie performed her role as the loyal wife without ever complaining, in contrast to her Auntie Alice who spoke openly about the beatings her husband gave her and about the way he forced her to have intercourse (Espineta, 2003: 89).

Mona had nearly been raped as a child, and could not imagine herself in a loveless relationship where even intimate relations would be marred by abuse. Muddie also suffered the abuses of her alcoholic husband Da Da, Mona's father, who had been married previously to a woman he loved in what was called a bamboo wedding; a marriage unrecognized by Christian laws (p. 63). Mona knew since she was a young girl that if she remained in Trinidad, she would be obliged to marry and become the subservient wife and mother who would be attentive to her husband's every need and totally dedicated to nurturing and caring for his children. Her desires and needs would always be secondary. She would perform as expected and "know her place" (p. 163).

Mona knew that *her place* was not the one accepted by her mother. Her place was not to perform the roles from which she had escaped to Canada years ago under the pretense of obtaining a better education. She had become a successful writer, who shared a romantic relationship with a man who loved her and whom she loved, but to whom she could not see herself married. Not even living together was an option because she would feel tied up and would eventually want to untie herself (p. 13). She thought of marriage as a millstone that would hold her down.

But her brother Kello is dying of AIDS and needs her to come back to Trinidad to care for him. In her role as sister, Mona is thus drawn out of her self-imposed exile to fulfill his request. She is even asked to reclaim the land that once belonged to the family, a task that in other circumstances would have been done by her male relatives. Without expecting it, she is thrust into the whirlwind of feelings provoked by the memories of her past. She automatically assumes the role of the caregiver, the nurturing older sister who looks after her younger siblings. She has to speak for Kello. She must protect him from what the people might say if they knew of his condition and his sexual orientation. She is expected to perform the part of the sister/mother who holds together the fragments of the lives of her siblings/children (p. 39). She has to keep all of the dark secrets locked within the family walls just as her mother had done years ago (p. 15).

Kello has Mona and Mona has Bess. Bess is her cousin, a beautiful woman who teaches her to be proud of who she is and about what family means. "Family was not just breeding and reproducing- it was a work of art in itself, as carved and sculpted as any other legacy that one could leave behind." (p. 123). It is through Bess' eyes that Mona comes to understand the value of the land, the rituals of life and the strategies for surviving without losing oneself in the process.

When I was Puerto Rican is Esmeralda Santiago's autobiographic memoir. Through it we follow her life as a child in Puerto Rico and her eventual migration to New York, where just as Mona in *The swinging bridge*, she not only acquires a new life but also an education which has reshaped her worldview and the image that she has of who she is (Personal communication, 2007).

"Negi" as she is lovingly called by her mother and family, was the oldest of eight children who lived with her mother and father in the poverty stricken Puerto Rico of the 1950s. Her story starts in the rural community of Macun, where the house she lived in consisted of tin walls and dirt floors (Santiago, 1996: 7). The water system was limited to a public fountain from which they collected water in cans to use for the daily chores. The children slept in hammocks while the parents slept in the adjoining room with a piece of cloth hung on the door for some privacy. Negi's family found it necessary to move from place to place in Puerto Rico in search of employment. Her absent father would disappear for weeks and months at a time, leaving Negi's mother to tend for herself and the children. It was at these moments that the extended family, as well as Negi herself as older sister, began to assume the role of caregiver to her younger siblings.

Negi protested and asked why her younger siblings did not have to help with the firewood, but Mami just told her not to talk back. Negi assumed her role as the big sister but questioned it. On occasions, because of her insistence on staying close to her father, she was allowed to help him with the tasks he was performing. In that sense she assumed another role, one that would have been performed by the oldest son if there had been one. But even during these short moments she was reminded of her need to obediently follow prescribed family roles. On one of these occasions, although her mother had told her to come into the house to help her, she insisted on staying out in the yard helping her father, when suddenly a swarm of termites covered her body and bit her all over. Her mother came to her rescue and even as she comforted Negi, she reminded her of the need to be obedient so that things such as these would not happen to her. Negi hugged her mother and acknowledged her wisdom and her soothing embrace (p. 11). In the future there would be many opportunities for Esmeralda to perform her role as the sister-mother.

Another major task that the oldest sister is expected to perform is that of role model for her younger siblings. Women's modeling of prescribed roles is essential for the maintenance and transmission of the patriarchal system that has done so much damage to the Caribbean family. In relation to role-modeling Weaver states, "Women have been socialized from childhood in this model, relegated to secondary citizenship, made to defer to males, not as well educated and made into caretakers and servants of men." (Weaver, 1994). But educational opportunities have contributed towards the emergence of new models of Caribbean womanhood, as presented through Negi's life in New York, where she not only learned English, but she also eventually graduated

from Harvard University. In the same manner, Mona in *The swinging bridge* becomes an educated woman who continues to question the roles she is assigned by society.

Interviews that I have conducted with women over the age of 60 in Puerto Rico provide evidence from real life of the plight of the older sister depicted in *The swinging bridge* and *When I was Puerto Rican*. Some of the themes that constantly resurface include grinding poverty, responsibility for rearing younger siblings, the subservient role society imposes on Caribbean women, obedience to parents and the need to be constantly reaffirming oneself. Although some of these women were somehow able to get an education, they did not inspire many of their brothers or sisters to become educated. Instead, many of their younger brothers have continued exploiting the women with whom they live and many of their younger sisters are exploited by the men they married.

Even when they migrate these big sisters are not able to leave behind who they are. Mona is astonished that “Those old -time words were calling out to me, words like *carilee*, *sem*, *macajuel*, *mammy-sepote*, arising unbidden out of parts of my life no longer in use. Signals beckoning me to the past” (Espinet: 5). Mona’s interview with a group of Haitian women who are eager to share their experiences, history, and proverbs and her own enthusiasm about publishing an article about them attests to her need to continue to establish and re-establish connections to her “Caribbeanness” even in the most hostile new environments. On the other hand, Negi grabs a guava and is tempted by its color and aroma but puts it aside and continues to the apples and pears of her new identity (Santiago: 3-4). The life that Negi and her family found in New York deprived them of the warmth and freedom that their poverty stricken land ironically offered them. “I didn’t expect the streets of New York to be paved with gold, but I did expect them to be bright and cheerful, clean, lively. Instead, they are dark and forbidding, empty, hard” (Santiago: 217-218).

Negi and Mona are both Caribbean women who migrate in search of new opportunities, trying not to lose themselves in the process of asserting their identities as women. It is by crossing the *kala pani* or dark waters of uncertainty that both Mona and Esmeralda assume their new lives. These are the same dark waters of uncertainty that all immigrants must cross; some many, many times in a lifetime. But, even when they travel as far as Canada or New York, they do not travel lightly. In a very special way, if they are women, they will carry with them their dreams, and fears, their needs and hopes but above all their identities as Caribbean women, mothers, daughters and big sisters.

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**RHIZOMATIC HISTORY, EDUCATION AND SOCIETY
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WALTER RODNEY'S *GROUNDINGS*: "A MAN WHO KNEW ABOUT AFRICA"¹ FROM LIBERATION TO APARTHEID

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The Guyanese historian Walter Rodney's *The groundings with my brothers* (1969) presents cogent arguments in favor of the ideas of Marcus Garvey, the founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, and his advocacy of the value of African history and culture as well as of the militancy of Stokely Carmichael's Black Power Movement in the African-American fight for Civil Rights in the United States. Rodney, who was assassinated in a car-bombing in 1980, "believed that history", in George Lamming's words, "was a way of ordering knowledge which could become an active part of the consciousness of an uncertified mass of ordinary people and which could be used by all as an instrument of social change" (quoted in Lewis, 1981: 183).

Like Steve Biko, the anti-apartheid activist who was murdered by the South African police, Rodney was a "selfless revolutionary" with a passion for "the liberation not only of the oppressed but of the oppressor" (Biko, 2002: 214). He is associated with Frantz Fanon and Amílcar Cabral in his approach to breaking the chains of what he called the "Babylonian captivity" (Rodney, 1969: 62) of discrimination and poverty and understood that in contemporary Africa and the Caribbean "The present human condition of black people relative to that of white people [was] appalling" and that it was necessary, in Ewart Thomas' words, to recognize one's "belongingness to the black camp" (Rodney, 1969: 5). In an essay published in the *Monthly Review*, Rodney noted that in his *Imperialism: the*



Figure 1 Walter Rodney. Source: Ann Albuyeh

¹ Richard Small's assessment in his Introduction to *The groundings with my brothers* (Rodney, 1969: 9).

highest stage of capitalism (1917) Lenin “very rarely mentioned Africa in his writings on colonialism” (Rodney, 1970: 1). Similarly, in Rodney’s political writings, the implied critique, for example, of South Africa’s racist policy of apartheid or separate development, which he embedded in a litany of indictments of “the ramshackle nature of the neo-colonialist structure” (Rodney, 1969: 14) in the Caribbean, is simply nuanced by inference. That *The groundings with my brothers* became, like Amílcar Cabral’s² *Unity and struggle* (1976) and Frantz Fanon’s *The wretched of the earth* (1961), an ur-text for the down-trodden is testament to Rodney’s professed ability to “ground together” with *all* people whether they were in the Caribbean or Africa. Sitting down “in the midst of garbage” with those who lived in the “dark, dismal places” and the “rubbish dumps” of Kingston, Jamaica’s capital, Rodney wrote altruistically in *The groundings with my brothers* that he wanted to “contribute something” by sharing his “traveling”, his “reading”, and the “analysis” of that “experience” with the poor and the marginalized (Rodney, 1969: 64).

Having inveighed against the University of the West Indies for once being the most “bourgeois campus in the world” where students occasionally demonstrated “about bad food”, or in “solidarity with South Africans” (Rodney, 1969: 65) because they were “quite harmless issues as far as the [Hugh Shearer] Government was concerned”, Rodney, on his return to Jamaica from teaching at University College, Tanzania, initiated a series of off-campus lectures which sought to inspire the desperately poor in the so-called “dungles” of the Kingston slums by interpreting and praising the ideas of the “Rastafari and Black political militancy”. This “sparked”, Ian Thomson writes in *The dead yard: a story of modern Jamaica* (2009), “the greatest upheaval in Jamaican society since independence in 1962” (2009: 97) as students from the Mona campus joined their Rastafarian³ brothers and the urban poor in sometimes violent protests that spread into the center of the capital.

With the masses motivated by other *harmless issues*, the so-called ‘Rodney Affair’ – temporarily, at least – “served to unite Jamaicans of all backgrounds in an uptown-downtown alliance that called for an end to foreign investment and, even, the nationalization of certain key industries” (Thomson, 2009: 98-99). After the disturbances, “the Dishonorable H. L. Shearer, Prime Minister of Jamaica” and “traitor to the Black Race” (Rodney, 1969: 65) took steps to “embrace a dilute form of Black Power, and promoted Jamaican cultural ‘self-awareness’ on a national scale” (Thomson, 2009: 99). Wary of this apparent sea-change in policy, Rodney argued that this should be the signal for all “Black Brothers in Kingston” to finally move against

² Cabral (1924-1973) was the theoretical mind behind the cause for liberation in the Portuguese colonies of Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. Like Rodney, he was murdered for his political views.

³ According to George Lamming “Rastafari has extended from a small and formerly undesirable cult into a dominant force which influences all levels of national life; and it has done so against formidable odds, political harassment and general condemnation. The Rastafari has dramatised the question that has always been uncomfortable in Caribbean history, and the question is where you stand in relation to blackness” (quoted in Campbell, 1994: 1).

the “white-hearted black men” (Rodney, 1969: 66, 33) of Shearer’s supposedly left-leaning Jamaica Labour Party.

While Rodney had written of South Africa as “a laboratory in which the white racist virus was cultivated” (Rodney, 1970: 9), his critique of apartheid was sublimated in what he writes is “a deepening interest in things African” (Rodney, 1969: 15). Taking his cue from both Garvey’s emphasis on “black economic self-reliance” and “black people’s rights to political self-determination” (Appiah, 2003: 329) as well as “the Black Liberation struggle taking place against white racist American society”, Rodney declares war not only on “The local lackeys of imperialism” but also on “the essence of White Power . . . that is exercised over black peoples – whether or not they are minority or majority, whether it was a country belonging originally to whites or to blacks” (Rodney, 1969: 13, 17).

In deciding to publish the plain-spoken ‘lectures’ that Rodney gave during a nine month period in 1968 in Jamaica, Bogle-L’Ouverture⁴ in effect circulated what might be called a *gully* book, one containing deliberately ‘popularized’ political ideas in the form of a slim sixty eight page pamphlet to be passed from hand to hand in “the rubbish dumps . . . where people live” in Santo Domingo or Maputo or Johannesburg. Consequently, *The groundings with my brothers* sets out its agenda as if both author and reader are ‘grounding’ “wherever there was a possibility to get together”: an extramural center, a sports club, a schoolroom, a church, one of gullies of Kingston’s Zone 12. The ensuing “family discussions” encouraged black brothers and sisters to “talk to each other” in “the epochal march forward of the Black Humanity of Jamaica” and elsewhere (Rodney, 1969: 64, 13).

While he was “demagogic and dangerous” to the colonial establishment and the plantation owners, Garvey, whose middle name was Mosiah, was “a prophet and a leader” to the “poor and disenfranchised” who insisted that “a race without power and authority is a race without respect” and who believed that there were no national boundaries where blacks were concerned, writing: “The whole world is my province until Africa is free” (Campbell, 1997: 53). Garvey, who had grown up with “a powerful sense of racial awareness and grievance”, had “originally intended to ‘regenerate’ and encourage the English-speaking black Diaspora to ‘return’ to Africa.” Despite his personal flamboyance and an imprudent intolerance towards other groups and having inadvertently “anticipated Mugabe, Amin, Bokassa, and other (originally well-intentioned) African leaders who ravaged Africa” (Thomson, 2009, 103-104), Garvey’s contribution to black consciousness belongs in the same company as W.E.B du Bois, George Padmore, and C.L.R James.

⁴ A publishing house in London named after Paul Bogle and Toussaint L’Ouverture, two slaves who became freedom fighters in their respective countries of Jamaica and Haiti. Bogle-L’Ouverture was founded by Jessica and Eric Huntley in 1969. Rodney was one of the first writers on Bogle-L’Ouverture’s list.

Writing that Jamaica's first national hero ⁵ "spoke to all Africans on earth, whether they lived in Africa, South America, the West Indies or North America" and "made all blacks aware of their strength when united" (Rodney, 1969, 21), Rodney prepares the *groundings* for the more radical and often violent ideas of "Brothers Stokely Carmichael⁶, H. Rap Brown ⁷ and James Forman"⁸ whose work was banned in Jamaica together with that of Malcolm X and Elijah Mohammed⁹ while the world was "celebrating International Human Rights Year piously sponsored by the Jamaican Government" (Rodney, 1969: 13).

"Black Power", Rodney writes, "is a doctrine about black people, for black people, preached by black people", and that he was "biggin-up", in Kamau Brathwaite's phrase¹⁰ (Williams, 2004:306) "my black brothers and sisters that the color of our skins is the most fundamental thing about us." Pouring his invective on "the white imperialist beast" who continues to crouch "over miserable blacks" in the Caribbean and Africa by keeping its "Power . . . pure milky white", Rodney introduces the aims embodied in Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton's influential *Black Power: the politics of liberation in America* (1967) as "a rejection of hopelessness" (Rodney, 1969: 16, 20). While synopsising Carmichael and Hamilton's book "to present an opportunity to work out the racial question without resort to force", Rodney reinforces the premise that if that opportunity is missed, then society – in the United States, in Jamaica, in the still-colonized countries of Africa – is "moving towards destructive racial war." Invoking Jean Paul Sartre's famous introduction to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, Rodney writes: "Violence aimed at the recovery of human dignity and at equality cannot be judged by the same yardstick as violence aimed at maintenance of discrimination and oppression" (Rodney, 1969: 22-23).

Attesting to his "full sympathy" with the objectives of Black Power and its relevance to the Caribbean, Rodney initiates the idea of "Black Power and You" and, in "defining the West Indian scene", challenges his audience as to whether they "want to think black or to *remain* as a dirty version of white." Reacting to a charge of "Black supremacy," Rodney defended the objectives of his African-American brothers as "a call to black peoples to throw off white domination and resume the handling of their own destinies" (Rodney, 1969: 24).¹¹ Similarly, he argues that if blacks continue "thinking white" (Rodney, 1969: 32) and believing that they have been created to "bring water and hew wood for the white man", then they will continue to be

⁵ An honor initiated in Jamaica in 1969.

⁶ While not the first person to use it, Carmichael made the phrase "Black Power" famous.

⁷ A civil rights activist and out-spoken advocate of Black Power.

⁸ A grassroots organizer for the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

⁹ A black separatist who was leader of the Nation of Islam.

¹⁰ The full context is "I was *biggin-up* Black People & Africa & the Diaspora in a way that had never been *bigg-up* before in English and not since, perhaps *negritude* in French."

¹¹ The thesis developed in Rodney's *How Europe underdeveloped Africa* (1972).

“convinced of their own inferiority” (Rodney, 1969: 25). Cautioning against “white cultural imperialism” in the universities, Rodney warns against the brainwashing process” that has been “so stupendous that it has convinced so many black men of their inferiority.” Ending his discussion of “Black Power and You”, Rodney touches on “our African appearance” and the assumption that white Europeans have the monopoly of beauty” with the rallying assertion, derived from Garvey who like Rodney ironically grew up in a “multi-racial, many-coloured nation” (Thomson, 2009: 104), that politically at least “BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL” (Rodney, 1969: 32-33). “The road to Black Power”, Rodney concludes, “in the West Indies and elsewhere must begin with a revaluation of the world from our own standpoint” (Rodney, 1969: 34).

In his nine month *grounding* in Jamaica, Rodney continues to emphasize that “Africans in the West have been *deliberately* kept ignorant of African achievements by the white men for centuries” (Rodney, 1969: 35). As a Marxist historian trained initially in what he contemptuously called “a colonial out-house in the Caribbean called the University College of the West Indies” (Rodney, 1990: 36) and then later at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, he honed his message that Africa had both a history and a culture and that both were pertinent to the liberation of his working-class birthplace in Georgetown and to the mean streets of Sophiatown in Johannesburg. Learning about one’s history, Rodney argues, is “one of the most important steps towards creating unity among Africans at home and abroad” (Rodney, 1968: 35).

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Reminding people that “Africa is the home of mankind”, Rodney writes that “human society and culture reached great heights in Africa before the white man arrived” and then encourages first, an overall study of the “African kingdoms and empires”(Rodney, 1969: 35) and, second, a more detailed one of Ethiopia, the spiritual home of the Rastafarians. Just as Garvey preached “the value of African history and culture”, so Rodney encouraged “A knowledge of African achievements in art, education, religion, politics, agriculture and the mining of metals” to help gain the “necessary confidence which has been removed by slavery and colonialism.” By accepting oneself as African, Rodney contends, “we can make a contribution to the development of African culture, helping to free it from European imperialism” (Rodney, 1969, 37). Anticipating an argument he put forward in *How Europe underdeveloped Africa* (1972), Rodney ends his popular history of the continent with the following: “All over the world, the greatest challenge to man was his environment or physical surroundings. Man in Africa learnt to overcome the problems of his own environment. Advanced methods of agriculture developed in Africa many hundreds of years before Europeans went to that continent. Irrigation, terracing and crop rotation were all practiced” (Rodney, 1969: 38).

As a revolutionary text, *The groundings with my brothers* provides a political and racial up-lift for people in the Caribbean because Rodney understood that a Marxist

historian like himself had a political and moral duty to prosecute. Falsehoods related to the “Integrated Nigger” of Ted Joans’¹² eponymous poem and the harmonious multi-racial society that “nobody on a *theoretical* level would oppose” (Rodney, 1969: 61) were Gordian knots tied by the ruling white class in Jamaica or Guinea Bissau or South Africa for the black intellectual to unravel. On his duty to the poor and the subjugated, Rodney, the self-styled “guerrilla intellectual” (Rodney, 1990: 111), is unequivocal:

1. The intellectual, the academic, within his own discipline, has to attack those distortions which white imperialism, white cultural imperialism, have produced in all branches of scholarship.
2. The black intellectual has to move beyond his own discipline to challenge the social myth, which exists in society as a whole.
3. The black intellectual, the black academic must attach himself to the activity of the black masses.

Understanding that the struggle was there “long before” he went to Jamaica and that it would continue “long after” he had left, Rodney writes that his *groundings* with students and ordinary folk from the variegated environs of Kingston had allowed him to “analyse that particular conjunction of forces” as he saw them when he attempted to both get in touch with people and work with them to make sure, by any means necessary, that the system “aimed at killing us” is resisted and overcome so that “black people who have suffered all these years *create*” (Rodney, 1969: 68).

Grounding with his brothers and sisters in Jamaica during the heady times of student protest in the United States over the Vietnam war and in Paris over the need for social change in France, Rodney understood that the struggle for freedom from inequity, bigotry, and poverty had “still a very low level of organization and advance in the Caribbean and that he did not feel free to speak with the kind of authority which people seem to expect” (Rodney, 1990: 82). Guyana had become, in George Lamming’s words, “a land of horrors” where democracy in the former British colony seemed unable to survive an “official crucifixion”¹³(quoted in Campbell, 1987: xvii) while apartheid in South Africa had made the black man “a foreigner in the country of his birth” (Biko, 1996: 3). Nevertheless, Rodney believed that black people would take “a stand of solidarity” – as in the case of Portuguese colonies – and “become aware of the possibilities of unleashing armed struggle in their own interests” (Rodney, 1969: 5). Consequently, it is the appeal for a revision of “ourselves as black” and “a redefinition of the world from our own standpoint” (Rodney, 1969: 34) that

¹² An African-American Jazz poet associated with the Beat Movement of the 1950’s and 1960’s.

¹³ To Rodney’s detriment in Guyana, he “elaborated these themes in a society where the rut of neocolonialism had engendered the growth of *rude bwoys*, armed thugs, and political leaders [like Prime Minister Forbes Burnham who is generally thought to have ordered Rodney’s assassination]who exploited these tendencies” (Campbell, 1997: 129).

makes Walter Rodney's *The groundings with my brothers* a ground-breaking combat¹⁴ text to which later versions promoting what Byron called "Freedom's battle" (Byron, 2008: 211) can be compared.

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¹⁴ Frantz Fanon uses the phrase "combat literature" in *The wretched of the earth*, writing that such literature "informs the national consciousness, gives it shape, and opens up new, unlimited horizons" (Fanon, 2004: 173).

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GUYANA-BRAZIL BORDER RELATIONS AND CROSS CULTURAL FERTILIZATION: OPPORTUNITY OR THREAT TO GUYANESE NATIONAL IDENTITY?

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Guyana is a small country located in the south west Caribbean on the continent of South America. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north, Venezuela to its West, Suriname to its east and Brazil to its south. Its colonial legacy has left it with six main ethnic groups. However, a seventh is currently being forged out of social interactions among Guyanese and Brazilians: the ‘Guy-Braz’ group. Their hybridised culture is very evident on both sides of the 720 mile Guyana-Brazil border, which runs adjacent to the Brazilian states of Roraima and Para.

Guyanese Region Nine (Upper Takutu/Upper Essequibo) directly connects Guyana with Brazil. In the heart of this region is the town of Lethem, centrally located in the Rupununi Savannahs and the gateway to the Brazilian town of Bonfim. Lethem’s population consists principally of Macushi and Wapisiana Amerindians, Guyanese of mixed ancestry and Brazilians. St. Ignatius Village, Tapatinga and Culvert City are the principal villages in Lethem. For decades, residents of North, South and Central Rupununi have been crossing the border to Bonfim, Brazil in their quest for improved livelihoods. Observable similarities in physical characteristics and cultural-linguistic practices among the Macushi of the Rupununi Savanahs and the Macushi of Bonfim have simplified the integration process for the migrant indigenous populations on both sides of the border.

Economic considerations are the main push-pull factors motivating movement across the border by nationals from both countries. Many Brazilians cross the border daily to conduct business in Lethem’s bustling commercial zone. The Brazilian currency has replaced the Guyanese dollar in business transactions there to cater for this transient population. On September 15, 2009, the Takutu Bridge, linking Lethem in Guyana and Bonfim in northern Brazil was officially commissioned modernizing movement between the two countries. According to official Guyana Government records, in 2010 an estimated 3,500 legalized Brazilians were believed to be resident in Guyana, mainly through employment in the mining sector (Hinds, 2010). However, officials

believe that a more accurate estimate which includes undocumented residents is perhaps triple this number.

With Guyana's small population of 751,223 (Guyana National Census Bureau, 2002), most living on the narrow northern coastal strip of the country, the Brazilians' significant mining experience, expertise and equipment give them a decided advantage when they migrate to the mining areas of southern Guyana. On the other hand, Guyanese, particularly those who reside in the Rupununi region, have found northern Brazil to be easily accessible for employment and other opportunities. Before the visa abolition agreement between Guyana and Brazil, there was an unspoken agreement that residents of the Rupununi – mostly but not exclusively Amerindians – could cross freely between Guyana and Brazil (Myles, 2012). Cheryl Myles, a former Director General of Guyana's Foreign Affairs Ministry also noted that many Guyanese have obtained Brazilian identification documents, having lived and worked not only in the townships of Bonfim and Boa Vista but in the State of Roraima. Other Guyanese have travelled over 3000km to the metropolitan areas of Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Brasilia, and their children born in Brazil are automatically registered as Brazilian nationals.

Guyana and Brazil have historically shared informal relations dating back to the opening up of Guyana's hinterland region in the 1920s, when traditional mining, known as 'pork knocking', began (Hinds, 2012). Some miners came from Guyana but a majority came from the Brazilian Amazon region and initiated diving, missile dredging, and cutter head dredging in the Kurupung mining district (Hinds, 2010). It was not until 1968, two years after Guyana gained its independence from Britain, that formal diplomatic relations were established with Brazil. Mining activities spiked by the 1980s with the arrival of the Brazilian jig lavador washing technique which enhanced diamond recovery (Hinds, 2010). Migration from Brazil surged in the mid 1990s as the new entrants became residents in the gold and diamond mining areas. As a result of this migratory trend, the population of Brazilians resident in Guyana accounted for 12.6 percent of Guyana's foreign-born population by 2002, the second largest number of migrants after Surinamese nationals (Guyana National Bureau of Statistics, 2000). Close to 70 percent of these migrants are male and they gravitate toward the hinterland mining districts of Guyana.

While there are studies (Forte, 1996; Chester, 2010) that have examined the environmental and potential economic impact of the Takutu Bridge on Guyana's economy, there are no known studies besides that of Corbin (2009) which have probed the socio-cultural impact of Brazilian culture on Guyana. To help fill this gap, the present study, which commenced in 2010 with a focus on Brazilian migrants in Guyana's capital city Georgetown, was expanded in scope after a two-year hiatus, with a focus on the influences of Brazilian culture on indigenous Guyanese living in the border regions. The main research questions addressed in this research are: (1)

What major factors have led to cross border migration?, and (2) How has cross border migration influenced culture and identity? This article includes some preliminary qualitative findings of this study that will be expanded upon later.

The results obtained thus far confirm the general perception that Lethem seems to be evolving into a GuyBraz township with Brazilian cultural influences predominating. Many Brazilians have migrated to the border region of Lethem for economic reasons, and they have employed indigenous Guyanese with whom they easily identify through the local indigenous language. Most restaurants in Lethem's commercial zone offer Brazilian cuisine and musical entertainment, which reflects a level of acculturation among both clients and entrepreneurs, some of whom are in fact Guyanese. The children play Brazilian football, rather than Guyanese cricket.

The Guyanese government welcomes the capital investments made by Brazilians as positive for its economy and society (Benn, 2010). The tireless work of the Guyana Office for Investment (GOINVEST), the Rupununi Chamber of Commerce and by the indigenous communities in the border region (Dharamlall, 2012) must be credited for Lethem's accelerated economic growth and its continued attractiveness to investors. Up until the present, however, there has been no organized initiative on the part of the government of Guyana to address the cultural impacts of these economic trends.

The findings of this research also suggest that loss of indigenous languages is happening faster in Lethem than elsewhere. One interviewee explains: "Lethem is the town for Rupununi, but come out from Lethem, you have the villages and in those villages people have maintained their culture. The people who live in Lethem might have changed, but not in the villages. The people have maintained their cultures.... We have people who look at that and maintain that culture."

The village captain of St Ignatius, the only indigenous village located in Central Rupununi, admitted that there has been a loss of language and cultural practices among the older generation, inhibiting knowledge and cultural transfer. Another official from Region Nine unhappily compared Lethem residents to V.S Naipaul's 'Mimic Men': "The people indeed in Lethem have adapted the Brazilian culture.... We're too much of a copycat, we need to have our identity and be proud of it. Guyanese are not proud of themselves. We need to work on develop[ing] that sense of ownership and value for the land that we live on."

An 11 year-old interviewee who attends a local primary school wants to learn Portuguese, because some children in his class of 26 students speak the language. One indigenous interviewee with whom I interacted during my research in Lethem, speaks Portuguese and a bit of Macushi, but admitted that she had lost some of the Macushi language:

"I'm not speaking it because I'm not relating to ... people who speak it. Older folks speak Macushi. I learned from my parents. Some people are ashamed of their own dialect... they have lost their culture to Brazil...some of them when

they go over they pretend to be Brazilian... There is a loss of culture and this is bothering the older generation but no one speaks about it perhaps because of a lack of support from policy.”

One interviewee said, “People actually think Lethem is not part of Guyana. When you go to Georgetown they say you come to Guyana.” Some Guyanese in the border region have difficulty recalling key milestones in Guyana’s history such as independence from Britain, attainment of republican status, etc. The absence of Guyanese national radio and/or television stations and the preponderance of Brazilian satellite television further shut out Guyanese residents in the Rupununi frontier region from the rest of the country. This is a limiting factor in the promotion of knowledge about Guyana and national consciousness. Apart from Radio Paiwomak that covers only North Rupununi and mainly uses the local Amerindian Macushi and Wapisiana languages and English, the main access to the electronic media is through Brazilian cable and satellite television. This has fostered a one-way flow of cultural transmission.

According to Myles (2102), Brazil’s size and degree of development can explain its citizens’ patronizing attitude toward Guyanese. She argues for the promotion of Guyanese culture “as much as possible in the border regions so as to balance the effect of Brazilian influence”, stressing the importance of improved road transportation to the coast “so that border regions are not perceived to be interior outposts but rather as intrinsically Guyanese.” One interviewee noted that: “[The new cultural influences are] a healthy thing because you have that influence on both sides. What we as Guyanese need to do is find our own identity and work towards getting it strong.”

On the Brazilian side of the border, from Bonfim northwards, small enclaves of third generation autochthonous Guyanese form a modest, but significant, presence in this region of Brazil. Out of linguistic necessity, they have adopted Portuguese as their second language, and, unlike their first generation counterparts who have retained their indigenous languages, English is their first language. According to one senior resident of Saint Ignatius, in some cases, knowledge about the indigenous culture, including the Macushi language, is not passed down. Just as in Lethem, youths there also opt to play football rather than cricket, a sport that marks Caribbean identity.

Identity considerations do indeed play a key role in this process. One focus group participant stated: “Guyanese-ness is maintained but it is human to associate yourself with people who are better off than you... The Amerindians that cross the border, they tend to pick up the language, culture and the way they live. In Bonfim I observe that people look like me [Amerindian] ... similar ethnic makeup. They are Guyanese, but they have been living there for so many years they look like Brazilians.”

Many young indigenous Guyanese from the central Rupununi region consider crossing the border to Brazil a better option for employment than traveling to the capital city of Georgetown. As one male interviewee noted: “Opportunities were

always there. My parents and bigger relatives used to go over to Brazil and work because of bigger opportunities over there, especially for the females.” While some traverse the border to Brazil for jobs, there are others who travel there for educational opportunities. A young, female senior high school interviewee feels that educational opportunities are more favorable in Brazil for those indigenous youths seeking better livelihoods.

Linguistically, Guyanese have some advantages on the Brazilian market. One female interviewee noted that being bilingual was a great advantage for Guyanese since it created job opportunities for English translation and educational services in Brazil. She said: “Because jobs out there are more comfortable, the job would be more reliable and something in the nearer future to come. I would like to do teaching over there ...because teachers over there and people over there would like to learn English, coming over to Guyana.”

Although acculturation has occurred in terms of language, music and food, these do not necessarily pose a threat to Guyanese national identity. There appears to be a strong will among the indigenous community to give expression to their culture and also to participate in programs specifically created to increase Guyanese national awareness. Enhanced information, communication and social services could create opportunities for fostering such national awareness and consciousness. In this vein, there is room for cultural transfer from Guyana to Brazil thus leading to higher levels of cultural exchange among border inhabitants. These steps could mark the beginning of creating a sense of Guyanese national identity among indigenous groups that for years have struggled on the margins of Guyanese society.

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FUGAS Y FRONTERAS: THE POLITICS OF INCLUSION IN SAN MATEO DE CANGREJOS, A FUGITIVE SETTLEMENT OF AFRO-CARIBBEAN SLAVES IN PUERTO RICO

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Puerto Rico's geographic location in the Caribbean is, surprisingly, not always borne out by Puerto Ricans' self-image, divided as it is between the large American landmasses to the north and south. Maps, music, and tourism brochures from across the region all attest to the fact that Puerto Rico has a great deal in common with the other nations of the Caribbean – more, perhaps, than it does with, say, some of the landlocked nations of South America. And yet, the idea persists in Puerto Rico that this is not the case – that, whether by virtue of language or demographics or political status, Puerto Ricans do not share significant portions of their history with nations such as Haiti or Antigua. This, however, is untrue. Since the beginning of the European colonization of the New World, the histories of the islands of the Caribbean have been linked.

This is an article about the connections between Puerto Rico and the other islands of the Caribbean, connections that have gone largely unacknowledged but without which the political, social, and cultural history of Puerto Rico cannot be fully understood. This paper takes as its focal point the reality of African slavery in the Caribbean, and examines the ways in which the African slaves of the Caribbean came to reflect, and shape, the material and artistic foundations of Puerto Rican society. It will do so by looking at one particular example of the African presence in Puerto Rico: the development of San Mateo de Cangrejos, the urban area directly outside of the colonial hub of San Juan¹. San Mateo de Cangrejos, now known as Santurce, evolved as a settlement for escaped slaves and freedmen arriving from other islands in the Caribbean. The residents of Cangrejos were at once involved in, and operated outside of, the colonial Spanish order. On the one hand, they grew crops that would feed the

¹ Today, the name “San Juan” refers to the entire metropolitan area surrounding, and extending past, the original colonial settlement of the same name. That part of the city is now known as Viejo San Juan, and what used to be known as San Mateo de Cangrejos is now called “Santurce” and is considered part of San Juan. In this paper, to avoid confusion, I use the name “San Juan” to describe what is now known as Viejo San Juan. San Mateo de Cangrejos, meanwhile, will be referred to as “Cangrejos,” except in cases when I am referring to later moments in its history.

Spanish residents of San Juan, and their residence in Puerto Rico was contingent upon their conversion to Catholicism. In these senses, the residents of Cangrejos became easily incorporated into a colonial hierarchy, though certainly not at the top.

Yet on the other hand, their stories reveal the fact that, even though legal and economic histories often create the impression that colonial orders were effectively legitimized through law and economic imperative, the reality was slightly more complicated. The cultural and artistic life of Puerto Rico derives in significant measure from Africans, beginning perhaps with those who settled in Cangrejos in the early decades of the island's colonial history. Today's most popular music – such as salsa and bomba – directly originates from the traditions that were brought to the island in this period. And yet, although these heritages are acknowledged culturally, very rarely are they acknowledged politically. Puerto Rico is considered a solidly Catholic country, and with this comes the assumption that its common ground with other nations of the Caribbean, whose religious traditions are more openly syncretic, is minimal. My argument in this article is that, in the story of San Mateo de Cangrejos, we see the discrepancy between what law mandates and what actually happens culturally. I further argue that understanding this discrepancy makes it much easier for us to understand why there continues to be such a disconnect in Puerto Rico between cultural and political discourses: in Puerto Rico, as in other areas of the Americas, there is a long tradition of marginalizing the same people who contribute most to the cultural 'capital' of those at the top of the social hierarchy.

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The first portion of the article provides an overview of Caribbean slavery and politics in the early colonial period, and it provides information on the development of Puerto Rico in relation to these broader histories. This section provides factual information that will be brought to bear on my analysis of Cangrejos throughout the paper. The second portion provides information on San Mateo de Cangrejos itself, and explores the ways in which the settlement was at once marginal and essential to the defense and stability of the island, from the perspective of the Spanish colonial authorities. It further explores the policies that shaped the lives of those escaped slaves and freedmen who arrived to Puerto Rico in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I focus in particular on the role of the Catholic Church in this respect, and I draw attention to the legal and cultural dimensions of Catholicism and their influence in the peripheral urban space that was Cangrejos.

In the third and final section, I explore the ways in which Cangrejos did and did not become integrated into San Juan in the nineteenth, twentieth, and even twenty-first centuries, focusing in particular on the processes of gentrification that increasingly came to define the settlement. I discuss the recalcitrance on the part of Puerto Ricans today to talk about slavery and Afro-Caribbean politics, and I argue that it is because of examples like Cangrejos that Puerto Ricans often assert that they do not share a history with the (other) slave societies of the Caribbean.

Given this, I use this section to develop my own position about Cangrejos and its place in broader narratives of Puerto Rican race relations. I argue that the interactions between the residents of San Juan and Cangrejos took place within a colonial order, where hierarchies were firmly established, exploitation was taken as a given, and segregation was a natural dimension of the urban landscape. I explore the possibility of at once understanding and appreciating the multiplicity of experiences that Afro-Puerto Ricans have had on the island, while not using that multiplicity as an excuse to not look closely at the ways in which Puerto Rico has been shaped by the same exploitative and painful processes that touched the rest of the Caribbean. I maintain that recognizing the ways in which Puerto Ricans have always been locked in the same exploitative and painful processes as everybody else in the Caribbean is necessary if social justice is to be attained. I end by urging readers to consider Cangrejos for what it was: an attempt on the part of the colonial Spanish government to undermine the other European powers in the region by sheltering their escaped slaves, not a testament to the idea that Puerto Rico was in no way connected to the very processes that created an impetus for the enslavement of people. To believe this latter proposal is at once common and absurd, and I take this paper as an opportunity to show this and urge that all people unite in a movement towards a fundamentally anti-colonial order.

By the time the first fugitives arrived to San Mateo de Cangrejos in 1663, the Caribbean islands had already had over a century of “contact” with European colonizers. Indigenous populations in Puerto Rico and elsewhere had been devastated by war and disease, and the transatlantic slave trade was underway. The transatlantic slave trade is, without question, the most important feature of the history of the Caribbean. As Franklin Knight puts it, “slavery and the plantation society were, without much doubt, the overwhelming crucible that fashioned the indelible mould of the present Caribbean reality” (1997: 1). Slavery reached its peak in the Caribbean well before it reached its peak in the United States – by the end of the eighteenth century the Caribbean no longer represented the center of economic activity for European powers in the Americas (Knight, 1997: 3). By this point, though, the slave trade in the Caribbean had already transformed the region in fundamental ways. Most of the islands of the Caribbean experienced a demographic shift from predominantly white to predominantly black from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. As the plantation system expanded in nations like Jamaica and Trinidad, African slave labor came to outnumber white plantation owners to an overwhelming degree. This, however, was not true in Puerto Rico. Knight explains:

“The demographic trajectory of Puerto Rico varied from the rest. In 1530 the Puerto Rican population had only 327 white settlers and 2292 slaves. In 1775 the white population remained a modest 7437. The sugar revolution of the

nineteenth century in Puerto Rico, mainly localized in the Ponce valley, failed to follow the normal pattern elsewhere in the Caribbean. Slaves failed to dominate the labour force or to become a significant proportion of the population. Puerto Rico, then, failed to make the full transformation to the classical Caribbean slave society, at least in the demographic sense.” (Knight, 1997: 5)

But the fact that slaves failed to dominate the labor force in Puerto Rico in no way means that Puerto Rican society somehow developed in isolation from the transatlantic slave trade and the processes of racialization and exploitation that were taking place in other parts of the Caribbean. On the contrary, the colonial government of Puerto Rico was very much aware of these processes, and simply responded to them differently. This is an important point that plays into the ways in which Cangrejos is remembered, and so I just wanted to bring it up in these opening pages. I will revisit it later, but for now I wish to make the observation that these demographic differences between Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands should not engender the belief that Puerto Rico’s history is separate from that of the others. Indeed, its history – and perhaps in particular moments such as the settlement of Cangrejos – cannot be understood without understanding what was happening in the region as a whole. In any case, it should be borne in mind that people of African descent represented the majority (though not the overwhelming majority found elsewhere in the Caribbean) of the population of Puerto Rico until the mid-nineteenth century (José Luis González in China, 2002; see below).

Slavery existed in Puerto Rico throughout the island’s history, but large-scale plantation slavery did not become firmly established until the nineteenth century, when coffee and sugar industries developed on the island. This is also when larger numbers of settlers from Spain and other parts of Europe arrived, and the demographic shift that Knight describes took place. In the meantime, though, Puerto Rico sat in the middle of the Caribbean, and because of its geographic location, the island witnessed the arrival of many people to its shores. Slaves were among these people, and the ways in which they were received upon their arrival to Puerto Rico was contingent upon the political and economic demands of the Spanish colonial authorities. The movement of Africans throughout the region, therefore, cannot be understood without an awareness of the ways in which European powers did or did not want them to move.

The competition between European powers therefore becomes an integral part of the story of Cangrejos, and of the escaped African slaves who settled there. The early colonial period was a period of intense rivalry between the Spanish, French, Dutch, and English. In the Caribbean, this played out through both economic competition and military engagement. Both of these, it turns out, bore directly on the lives of slaves. Puerto Rico was in no way exempt from this history, either. It was, first and foremost,

a military outpost in its early years, defined in large measure by the need to protect itself and the Spanish fleet from the other European colonial powers and their proxies. Its strategic location and comparative lack of natural resources made it so.

The capital city of San Juan was established in 1508 in what is now the municipality of Guaynabo. A year later, the settlement was moved several miles to the east-northeast to its current site, which was then called Puerto Rico. In 1521, this newer settlement was given its formal name, San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico.² San Juan in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was used by merchant and military ships as their first stopover in the Americas. It was heavily fortified to protect the transport of gold and silver from the Americas to Europe. The city's original walls remain intact today. Because of the valuable cargoes that passed through the city, San Juan became the frequent target of foreign powers. The French alone invaded San Juan four times, in 1528, 1538, 1554, and 1569. And there were others. The English generals Drake and Cumberland led invasions of Puerto Rico, as did the Dutch general Hendriksz (Chinea, 2002: 176). All of these attacks left the city of San Juan weakened and unable to support itself. The militarization of San Juan had taken place at the expense of housing, gardening, and small stock raising spaces (Chinea, 2002: 176). Conveniently, there were those elsewhere in the Caribbean whose arrival in Puerto Rico would make life easier for those already living there.

In the summer of 1664, four slaves arrived in Puerto Rico from the then French-controlled island of St. Croix, seeking asylum. As David Stark writes, “over the next century a growing number of runaways made their way to Puerto Rico, ‘*buscando el bautismo*’, in search of freedom through baptism and subsequent conversion to Catholicism. Many settled just outside the city walls of San Juan at a site known as Cangrejos” (2007: 553). Cangrejos was, as Stark implies, not part of San Juan itself. Its location – close to the city and yet outside of its borders – would help to determine the relationship that the inhabitants of Cangrejos would have with the inhabitants of San Juan. As was the case in many parts of the Americas, in Puerto Rico areas such as San Juan, where the European colonial powers could project their authority had very different developmental trajectories than areas where colonial authority was weaker, such as Cangrejos. In fact, they often developed in opposition to each other. Stark observes:

“This bipolar development began to take form in the early years of the Spanish conquest of Puerto Rico in reaction to the attempts by the Spanish state to impose Roman Catholicism, forced labor, and Iberian cultural principles on the island's indigenous populations and, later on, on Africans. Surviving Indians, fleeing Africans, as well as Jews, Moors, Gypsies, and foreigners, sought to

² By 1746, the names that we currently use to describe the city and the island were solidly in place – the name Puerto Rico referred to the island, and San Juan referred to the city, even though in earlier decades the names had been reversed.

distance themselves from these repressive or exploitative conditions by evading the authorities, trying to conceal their identity, and taking up residence in the island's remote regions.” (Stark, 2007: 575)

While some urban centers, San Juan being the most important, grew in subordination to the Spanish colonial administration, other areas of the island emerged as more peripheral zones, where Spanish colonial authority held less sway. Even some urban centers, such as the contraband port of Ponce managed to subvert colonial rule. Some of these peripheral areas existed effectively beyond the reach of the Spanish colonial administration, as was the case with renegade and maroon communities in the mountainous regions of the island. Others evolved to support the urban centers, as was the case with Cangrejos, which was neither completely removed from Spanish colonial urban planning – indeed, it helped to reinforce it – nor was its architecture and layout the result of careful planning on the part of the colonial administration. It was at once fundamental and marginal.

The way in which Cangrejos is remembered reveals a great deal about national consciousness in Puerto Rico, and the extent to which people link the island's cultural history to its political history. Cangrejos was not established with the intention of giving newly arrived Africans an opportunity to live free from colonial influence. Spanish policies in Puerto Rico with respect to escaped slaves from other islands were constantly evolving, and colonial authorities on the island were just as likely to participate in the slave trade as their counterparts elsewhere in the region. In fact, until about 1664, runaway slaves who were apprehended and taken to San Juan were sold and re-enslaved. The revenue from these sales proved useful for the inhabitants of San Juan, who relied upon support from the Spanish administrators in Mexico but often did not receive that support in a timely manner. As the years passed, though, Spain began to allow an influx of refugees from other Caribbean islands, “hoping to weaken or otherwise obstruct the expansionist plans of its European rivals” (Chinae, 2002: 176-177). These refugees included escaped slaves, as well as European indentured workers and military deserters. As Jorge Chinae writes, “by sheltering [these] escapees, who were expected to remain in the immediate vicinity of the capital, Spain disrupted its rivals' economic activities, derived valuable intelligence on its belligerent neighbors, helped to provision the city, and acquired manpower for the island's defense” (pp. 176-177).

In 1664 the Spanish Crown issued a *cédula* decreeing that slaves who escaped from English, Dutch, and Danish Caribbean islands would be given asylum in Puerto Rico and granted land outside of the walls of San Juan (Berríos-Miranda & Dudley, 2008: 131). The policy that emerged from about 1664 to the mid-1750s with respect to these refugees involved assigning them to military installations in San Juan for one year before releasing them. Upon their release, Spanish governors would make land available to them in Cangrejos. The refugees could use this land to grow their own

food, with the expectation that they also grow food to feed the population of San Juan. And they did. The inhabitants of Cangrejos grew plantains, bananas, and manioc as well as fish and livestock (Stark, 2007: 576). Cangrejos also provided Sanjuaneros with a labor supply for bridge-building, killing stray dogs, and other tasks that the residents were “unable or unwilling to do” (Berríos-Miranda & Dudley, 2008: 132). Furthermore, throughout the seventeenth century Cangrejos was used to raise cattle for meat and hides for the military garrison stationed in the city.

In the year prior to receiving land in Cangrejos, refugees also received religious instruction and gained familiarity with the social and doctrinal dimensions of the Catholic Church (Stark, 2007: 557). Just as it is impossible to write about Spanish colonialism broadly without mentioning the Church, so too is it impossible to discuss the development of Cangrejos without calling attention to the central role that the Church played in organizing life for the Afro-Caribbean settlers. Stark writes that it was Church officials who came up with the idea to settle all of the refugees in Cangrejos so that they would be easier to organize. The obligations that the refugees had were to both the Crown and to the Church. Indeed, it seems difficult to separate these dual obligations from each other. Fugitives demonstrated their loyalty to the Spanish Crown through service in the militia, and they also participated in religious organizations. As the town acquired legitimacy in the eyes of the colonial authorities, a chapel was erected there (Stark, 2007: 557).

The information available about the demographics of Cangrejos comes from church records. Since most fugitives were not legally documented, the most reliable sources of information about them are baptism records (Stark, 2007: 554). These records also contain information about the fugitives’ religious and civil activities, as well as their marriages and family formations. In other words, the Church was not only an important influence in the lives of the Afro-Caribbean residents of Cangrejos, but it also held absolute cultural authority in the region. That is to say, families and larger communities were made “legitimate” through engagement with the Catholic Church. This means that, when we now attempt to learn about Cangrejos, much of the information that we have comes from colonial authorities, and their categories of legitimacy of meaning have been passed along to us.

This, in and of itself, makes clear that the central intention of the colonial authorities in establishing this space for escaped slaves was not to liberate them or allow them to live away from any sort of colonial gaze. On the contrary, their freedom to grow food and associate amongst themselves was conditional upon the presence of colonial authorities in their lives. Their relationship to San Juan was thus twofold. On the one hand, the residents of Cangrejos provided the support that the city needed in material and military terms. On the other hand, the residents of Cangrejos served as a foil of sorts to the residents of San Juan. Their legitimacy as an urban community was contingent upon their faithful adoption of a religion that was not theirs, and the

construction of structures that in no way undermined the exploitative relations that were already affecting Africans in the Caribbean – including the residents of Cangrejos themselves, prior to their escape!

Arlene Torres observes that the fugitives in Cangrejos “engaged in strategies to gain acceptance by non-blacks, on the one hand, while maintaining their black autonomy, on the other hand, in particular and specifiable social and economic arenas” (Stark, 2007: 556). The positive legacies of those struggles to maintain autonomy persist in Puerto Rico. Music is a clear example – the Afro-Puerto Rican style known as bomba can trace its origins to Cangrejos and others areas of the island where Africans predominated. That these forms existed, however, is not to say that they – or the people who developed them – were considered legitimate. This is what I mean when I write of the distinction between political and cultural history. Cultural historians in Puerto Rico can celebrate bomba while political historians can comment on anti-colonial resistance in Cangrejos. The inhabitants of Cangrejos were given land but not political authority, and it continues to be the case that the descendants of these inhabitants are not taken seriously as citizens with rights and political resources. From the beginning, the status of Cangrejos as an urban community was below that of the residents of San Juan, and that would never change. Since the terms for their inclusion were set by the same powers that enslaved them and their brothers, they would always be at a disadvantage in the urban history of the San Juan metropolitan area.

518 In 1773, the local military commander – a freedman named Pedro Cortijo – successfully petitioned to have the community of San Mateo de Cangrejos officially recognized (Stark, 2007: 553). The sanctuary policy, meanwhile, was gradually abandoned during the eighteenth century after Spain agreed to sign restitution accords with the French, Danish, and Dutch (Chinea, 2002: 177). With these two developments Cangrejos entered into a new moment in its history. Contact between the inhabitants of San Juan and the inhabitants of Cangrejos would continue, but in different ways. As Marisol Berríos-Miranda and Shannon Dudley write,

“During the nineteenth century the culture of Cangrejos had increasing contact with the colonial culture of San Juan, as a growing number of well-to-do whites moved outside of the old city’s walls into the open spaces of Cangrejos. In 1861 (12 years before the abolition of slavery in Puerto Rico) free blacks still outnumbered whites in Cangrejos ten to one, but white settlement and economic investment had grown to the point where the municipal government saw fit to annex a large portion of Cangrejos into San Juan in 1862.” (p. 135)

At this time, an aristocratic businessman named Pablo Ubarri began to energetically promote development in Cangrejos. In 1880 he completed construction of a steam engine railroad along the main road of Cangrejos. Changes like these had the effect of supporting the demographic changes – most aptly described as gentrification – that was taking place in this part of the city. As Puerto Rico entered the early decades of

the twentieth century, Cangrejos – now known as Santurce – experienced an influx of people from other parts of the island. Some were en route to the U.S., and others were there to stay. In 1910 black and mulatto residents were still a majority in Santurce, but several decades later this would not be so (Berríos-Miranda & Dudley, 2008: 135).

Gentrification continues to be an issue these days. In the past few years, the municipal government has spearheaded initiatives to “improve” Santurce, increasing the value of real estate there and making the area more appealing to tourists. These initiatives have resulted in the displacing of Santurce’s long-standing inhabitants in the name of “development.” It seems that history repeats itself. And it also seems that these narratives of “development” are, like the criteria for legitimacy that shaped the lives of the original inhabitants of Cangrejos, inextricably linked to the disenfranchisement of some and the unwarranted profiting of others. We would all do well to be highly critical of words like “development” and “legitimacy” and understand who does and does not benefit from these discourses. Development, in my view, can only be considered so if it is beneficial to the lives of all. Otherwise, it is not development, but simply a means for the acquisition of power by some at the expense of others. We should not use these words unless we know what exactly they are referring to.

Puerto Ricans are as familiar with concepts such as gentrification as anybody else. However, very rarely do political conversations in Puerto Rico engage with race – which is arguably central to any conversations about gentrification in the Caribbean. And when Puerto Ricans discuss colonialism, they usually describe themselves in opposition to USAmericans. Given Puerto Rico’s current political situation, this is only natural. And yet, although race is such a central dimension of the history of the United States as well, it remains largely unmentioned by Puerto Ricans. The legacies of African slavery, then, rarely make their way into political conversations in Puerto Rico. The story of Cangrejos, however, requires that we engage with the reality that Puerto Rico was just as implicated in, and touched by, the transatlantic slave trade as any of the other islands in the Caribbean. In this final section I explore some of the reasons why Puerto Ricans might not discuss race relations, and I use the example of Cangrejos to demonstrate precisely why they must discuss race relations. I end with the thought that statistics and national discourses cannot distract us from the fact that Puerto Rico’s liberation is linked to the liberation of the other nations of the Caribbean, and that all of those nations must deal with the ways in which race has shaped their own political and social histories. Cangrejos provides an example of what has been lost, but also what can be gained by continuing these efforts to link the histories of the peoples of the Caribbean.

In his book *El País de Cuatro Pisos*, José Luis González discusses race relations in Puerto Rico in ways that today, three decades after the book’s publication, are still not widely discussed. González writes about the preponderantly black-mulatto-mestizo composition of Puerto Rico’s population following the demographic collapse of the

Taino population (Chinea, 2002: 170). He observes that prior to 1850, there was a relative scarcity of whites in Puerto Rico, and that the majority of the population was of African descent. The demographic shift from black to white that Knight described took place in the early nineteenth century, when large-scale European immigration led to a gradual “whitening” of Puerto Rico. The 1815 Real Cédula de Gracias, aimed at boosting the sugar industry, helped to cause this demographic shift. And after 1850, Catalans, Corsicans, and Majorcans arrived to participate in commercial coffee production (Chinea, 2002: 173).

These demographic shifts were closely linked to the currents of change underway in the Caribbean more broadly, and for this reason it is absurd for Puerto Ricans to believe that their history is in no way connected to that of the rest of the Caribbean. The decision to encourage European immigration to Puerto Rico was inspired by growing fears on the part of Spanish colonial authorities that the island was becoming “too black.” As Chinea writes,

“From about 1700, the growing presence of slaves, maroons, and free-coloreds began to draw the attention of Spaniards and the creole elite, who stepped up their efforts to police racial boundaries, discourage marriages between whites and nonwhites, or otherwise halt widespread *mestizaje* and *mulataje*. After 1778, Spain encouraged white immigration in the Hispanic Caribbean as well, both to further its exploitation of the island’s agricultural wealth and to remedy the growing racial imbalance, which was seen as tilting dangerously in favor of nonwhites.” (pp. 173-174)

After the Haitian Revolution, too, Spanish colonial authorities started to fear with new intensity the free movement of Africans. All of these factors contributed to the halting of African immigration to the island, and the encouragement of European settlement there instead. The status of Puerto Ricans, for better or worse, was largely contingent upon where they fell in the racial hierarchy that was so firmly in place in the Americas. A caste system existed on the island, as it did in most of Latin America, in which *peninsulares* and lighter-skinned individuals were favored over the rest. (Chinea, 2002: 172). The fact that the percentage of Europeans in Puerto Rico is higher than elsewhere in the Caribbean creates definite tensions between Puerto Ricans and others in the region. And yet, the case of Cangrejos shows that, first, Africans are central to the history and culture of the island, and that second, the island continues to suffer under the legacies of dehumanization that were part and parcel of the slave trade.

A persistent idea in Puerto Rico is that, to a greater extent than the other islands of the Caribbean, its history is that of the bringing together of many people of different backgrounds to form a vibrant culture and community. As Berríos-Miranda and Dudley write, “[the] networks of exchange within the island, combined with four centuries of diverse immigration from beyond Puerto Rico’s shores, are the foundation

for a musical culture in Cangrejos that is inclusive, flexible, and attuned to the wider Caribbean” (Berríos-Miranda & Dudley, 2008: 134). An obstacle, then, to the exploration of the racial history of Puerto Rico is that people believe that exploring that history will somehow undermine this narrative of diversity. I believe that it does not have to.

Cangrejos was indeed a space where cultural innovation took place. But it was also a space that was largely controlled by a colonial government that encouraged, and participated in, the slave trade. The real cultural innovations in Puerto Rico and elsewhere in the Caribbean took place in spite of colonial power, not because of it. To acknowledge, then, that Puerto Rico was a slave society like any other in the Americas is not to downplay the positive dimensions of the story of Cangrejos. It is simply to say that Cangrejos in no way, shape, or form testifies to any sort of munificence on the part of the Spanish colonial administration. It was a means through which the Spanish could gain a political advantage over other colonial powers, and whatever rights and legitimacies it granted to refugees were carefully considered and approved by the powers that be. It would not, and did not, disrupt the colonial balance of power.

However, that is not to say that the story of Cangrejos does not carry the potential to disrupt continued colonial dynamics in the Caribbean. Cultural innovation – particularly in the form of music – did take place in Cangrejos. Some of the most prominent salsa musicians today hail from this part of San Juan, and it is most likely their relatives who are now being forced to leave Santurce to make way for new “development.” The story of Cangrejos – as it remains in the salsa music that all Puerto Ricans know and love – can testify to the resilience of Africans on the island. It can provide a reason to look more closely at the political history of the island, to better understand the reasons for the exclusions and hierarchies that have developed there, and to inspire us to join hands in the movement towards a better world, where power does not rest in the hands of the few and “legitimacy” is not synonymous with “chauvinism” or “exclusion.”

Cangrejos should not be considered evidence of the benevolence of the Spanish. It should be instead seen as an example of contact between Africans and Europeans, one of many – all of which confirm the fact that the hierarchies of the early colonial period were arbitrary and unfair. Cangrejos was a marginal space, but also a highly convenient one. If we can remember this and work together to explore the ways in which urban spaces can be truly free, then we are on the right track. Like the other nations of the Caribbean (and indeed, the Americas), Puerto Rico must contend with the fact that its present is built upon colonial foundations. Puerto Ricans, like all others in the Americas, must learn how to look critically at their own history in order to transform it from its foundations. It is my opinion that nothing will be lost in this process. Instead, as the colonial foundations of present realities are revealed and transformed, people will finally be able to live freely. Puerto Rico, in spite of its

demographics, has nothing to lose in this process. Indeed, because of the beauty of what can be created to replace what exists, it has everything to gain.

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CXC ENGLISH A & B: IS A AVERAGE AND B BAD?

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In English, the grapheme <a> can represent: [a] in ‘apple’, [e] in ‘ape’, [ɛ] in ‘any’, [ɔ] in ‘altar’, etc. causing confusion to the uninitiated or new English speaker. The English A examination of the Caribbean Examinations Council’s (CXC’s) Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examination battery causes similar confusion. Students are graduating with distinctions and passes in English A who are unfamiliar with the basic ground rules of the English language in which they have been certified. B is for ‘butter’ and ‘better’ and ‘batter’ and ‘barter’ and ‘bitter’. The CXC English B examination should be providing a rich experience of Literature to students, but instead the batter is bitter and students run like melting butter from English B. Can we barter with the teachers to make it better?

So, does a mark of ‘A’ in English A mean AVERAGE (i.e. not excellent and less than good)? And does a mark of ‘B’ in English B mean BAD (i.e. not worth doing therefore, not compulsory and not encouraged)? The language situation existing in Trinidadian society and therefore, in the schools, is one of bi-dialectalism. Citizens speak Trinidadian Creole in its more or less English-influenced varieties in their daily living, using Standard English in formal and academic settings. Solomon (1993) has noted that in Trinidad, “the speech of an individual [has] largely depended on the context of use” (p.189), and described the dichotomy of language use there as “an example of bilingualism” (p.189).

The battle has been fought for making a meaningful distinction between English and the varieties most commonly used by Caribbean peoples by linguists, educators, and historians. There is no need to engage that conflict in this article, except to note that the CXC English A and B syllabuses are taught in classrooms in which the language situations are neither homogenous nor clearly defined. Winer (1993) described Trinidad as having “the most varied ethno-cultural and linguistic history of any island in the Caribbean” (p.8).

The examining body for the CXC examinations in English provides the following rationale and guidelines for the pursuance of studies in English. The body also recommends a modus operandi for successful completion of the study programme.

CXC ENGLISH A:

Rationale: The ability of students to understand fully what they listen to, read and view as well as to express themselves clearly in speech and in writing are critical factors in managing their personal and social well-being. The study of language provides opportunity for students to develop competence and confidence in speaking and writing for personal and public purposes in everyday activities....The English Syllabus...for English A...emphasises the development of students' oral and written language skills among students through a variety of strategies. (p.1).

It is recommended that in order to satisfy the requirements of the English A examinations, a minimum of six sessions should be allocated to English A per week. It is important that individual institutions develop an allocation of time taking the following into consideration:

(i) Language competence levels of students at point of entry into the examination class;

(ii) Learning styles of students (p.4)

Students will be expected to demonstrate good control of the mechanisms of language, write good, clear prose, and to communicate easily, precisely and fluently. The importance of the oral aspects of English A should be emphasised. (p.5)

CXC ENGLISH B

The English Syllabus...for English B...provides opportunities for students to explore and respond critically to specific literary texts as they observe and appreciate the author's craft. (p.1)

It is recommended that in order to satisfy the requirements of the English B examinations, a minimum of four sessions should be allocated to English B per week. It is important that individual institutions develop an allocation of time taking the following into consideration:

(i) Normal timetable concerns; and

(ii) Balance among skills needed in English A and English B (p.4)

Communicative competence is a critical issue in any classroom and is the focus of the aims outlined earlier in this syllabus. (p.5)

Detailed observations in a wide cross-section of secondary schools in Trinidad reveal that the process of preparation for CXC English examinations when students begin form five is the writing of examination papers from previous years. In the lower forms the preparation takes the method of text book exercises on topics as printed. Typically, the teacher walks in to the classroom, opens the text, and calls out the page number and lesson topic. The teacher then instructs the students to read the lesson and complete the exercise. The exercise, if completed, is either collected from the students for correction or corrected orally. If it is not completed, it is given as homework to be completed: end of English teaching for the day.

In research carried out in six secondary schools in Trinidad, it was noted that in spite of the guidelines quoted above, Literature (English B) is taught one day per week in forms 1-3; the other four days being reserved for Language (English A). Yet, when students reach form four and they are asked to choose subjects that they want to study for the CXC examinations – in 3 of the 6 schools, nobody chooses Literature (English B), and in the other 3 schools, there is just one small group doing Literature (English B).

The absence or miniscule numbers of students opting for Literature (English B) is directly related to the nature and extent of their exposure to the subject as well as to their teachers' methods of teaching it in the lower forms. The selection of English A is compulsory, therefore the class size is not an issue. However, the examination results in English A also reflect the methodology employed by teachers in the secondary system and their ignoring of the guidelines and recommendations of the examining body. Moreover, the competencies of the students certified in English A belie the prognosis of the examining body, which claims that students with grades 1 – 3 are competent to pursue higher learning.

The CXC document recommends that grades 1 – 3 identify students who are competent to pursue higher learning or to be employed in the formal sector. The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) accepts students with grade 3. An applicant needs 5 CXC subjects including Mathematics, English A, and Science to be accepted into the programme. If a person has 5 grade 3s, he/she is eligible to be accepted into the UTT Centre for Education Programmes to pursue the Bachelor of Education degree. The student intake for the UTT Centre for Education Programmes includes persons with bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, certificate programmes, diploma programmes, A levels, CAPE, O levels, and CSEC. CSEC and O levels, and where relevant, CAPE and A levels provide the language skills training and competencies of the students.

It has been found over the years that more and more students are coming into the Bachelor of Education programme lacking basic language competencies. Students are unable to: 1) identify the noun and the verb in a sentence; 2) follow the English rules for agreement of subjects and verbs in sentences; 3) use prepositions, conjunctions, and other words appropriately, etc. This has led to the development of a language proficiency programme for year one students – an attempt to improve basic competencies in the English language. The analysis of a post-entry assessment of students in September 2011 yielded the following data.

In the assessment of the basic language skills of students entering the Bachelor of Education programme, out of a possible 50 marks: 29 students (9%) scored 15 marks and less, 108 students (33%) scored between 16 and 25, 158 students (49%) scored between 26 and 35, and 28 students (9%) scored between 36 and 45. Only 1 student scored above 45, receiving 47 marks.

In the CXC reports of 2009 to 2012, there is the repeated call for teachers to **teach** writing, comprehension, and summary, to **teach** language through literature, to **teach** strategies, and to **teach** for transfer of knowledge and skills rather than for the examination. The reports from 2009 and 2010 highlight the absence of student competence with “proper use of conjunctions, adverbs...words such as however, although, consequently”. The reports from 2010 and 2011 emphasize the necessity on the part of teachers to recognize and acknowledge students’ need to understand “on the one hand, for Standard English mastery as their international currency, and on the other, the value of their own dialect in identifying with the local and regional space.” The report from 2012 repeats with greater emphasis the call for oral language strategies such as “listening...presentation of speeches, debates, improvised situations such as talk shows.” In its comments on English B results, the CXC repeatedly bemoans candidates’ having “very little knowledge in critical analysis...the demands of the comparative essay...the devices.”

The CXC syllabus and examination section identify students with grades 1 to 3 as having the competencies necessary for higher education and the formal job market. Based on their performance on proficiency tests administered by the language proficiency programme at UTT, three cohorts of UTT entry level students have been identified,

Cohort 3 (Capable): Student is able to control subject-verb agreement in most structures, uses punctuation and capitalization accurately on most occasions; able to manipulate a variety of sentence forms. In the Comprehension section the student provides accurate responses for more than the literal questions, using appropriate sentence forms in most instances.

Cohort 2 (Intermediate): Student is able to control subject-verb agreement in simple structures, shows some knowledge of the function of punctuation and capitalization; uses at least TWO sentence structure types effectively. In the Comprehension section the student responds correctly to at least three of the questions; one of which must be ... [one of the] non-literal questions.

Cohort 1 (Beginner): Student demonstrates minimal control of subject-verb agreement, punctuation and basic sentence forms; uses capitals arbitrarily throughout. In the Comprehension section the student provides correct responses for the literal questions only.

The majority of students fell in the intermediate group, despite the fact that all of the students in all of the cohorts had received grades 1 to 3 certificates in English A.

Teacher attitude is the key to success in teaching and learning. This is even more evident in the teaching and learning of language. Until teachers accept the diversity of the language situation in Trinidad without prejudice against the Creole varieties problems will abound because the classroom remains “an environment hostile to the

development of language” (Solomon, 1993: 188). When such prejudices are dropped, “the traditional subtractive approach...seeking to replace...Creole languages with English” (Devonish & Carpenter, 2007: 5) will be replaced by approaches in the teaching of English such as accommodation and awareness (Siegel: 2006) which are more conducive to student learning. Positive teacher attitude will also provide high motivation for student learning. When teachers take the advice of the CXC examining body and begin to teach for the transfer of knowledge and skills, then the competencies described by the examining body will be displayed by the graduates with the CXC certification.

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CULTURAL AWARENESS: CONNECTING COURSEWORK TO LOCAL TOPICS AND STUDENTS TO PROFESSORS

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Although each Caribbean territory or nation has its own unique culture as a result of colonization, trade, and immigration, nearly all the textbooks used for college-level courses are published either outside of the Caribbean. Teaching strictly from the textbook, without taking the extra step to render material culturally relevant, leaves both students and teachers at a disadvantage. Not only will students fail to connect with the material, but instructors will also miss opportunities to encourage critical and reflective thought on the part of their students. When students have a cultural and historical investment in course material, whether in composition, in literature, or outside of the Humanities, they are more likely to pursue further inquiry into the material, rather than absorbing the minimum required in order to pass a course. If instructors truly wish to mold students into life-long pursuers of knowledge, then instilling curiosity and connecting cultural references are essential, both in and out of the classroom. In English language and literature courses, this often requires extra research on the part of the educator, interactive class sessions, and drawing upon local and archival resources.

As professors – as teachers – we have two major problems connecting to our students. First: No matter how hard they try to be relevant, textbooks are inherently boring to and disconnected from our students. Second: The divide between our students and us is an ever-growing gap that we must address – priority differences, lifestyle differences, technology and communication gaps, and most glaringly, the age gap. Teaching in the Caribbean carries additional difficulties within both of these larger problems, as our textbooks are usually published in the colonial or former colonial metropolises for schools and students familiar with the metropolitan nation's culture and history, and because our students call such a variety of islands and nations "home". Professors must take the extra step to connect coursework to our students' cultures and interests in order to convey course material most effectively.

Teaching strictly from the textbook, without taking the extra step to render material culturally relevant, leaves both students and teachers at a disadvantage. Ideally, once students are working on material germane to their majors, they are more invested in

the coursework; however, this is not true for all students, and for those professors teaching core subjects to students of all majors, this is rarely true. I teach English courses, starting at the remedial grammar and composition level, all the way through freshman composition and research and applied writing to World Literature. Every student at the University of the Virgin Islands (as at most universities and colleges) is required to take at least two English courses, and many must take World Literature I and II, as well. Unfortunately for those of us teaching 100 and 200 level English courses, the majority of these students do not think of English as their favorite subject – to the contrary, they hate it.

I strive to engage my students in the course material, but often find even my reminders to read the text to be half-hearted, at best. I have read the textbooks I use, too, and quite often *I* have a difficult time making it through the reading. How can I expect my students to fare better? I find the English language fascinating. My students do not. In order to appeal to students, textbooks attempt to include pop culture references, current events, and relevant articles. In many cases, these texts probably do succeed in engaging the average, eighteen to twenty-something student attending a U.S. college or university, but my students do not fit this target audience. While I do have some freshman students who are eighteen years old, fresh out of high school, and focused only on college (although perhaps working part-time), many more of my students are already in their early to mid-twenties the first time they take a college class. These students work full-time or multiple jobs, some support multi-generational families, and a rather high number are raising children under the age of ten. These students simply do not fit the portrait of the college students that the publishing industry seeks to engage.

In addition to these surface demographic differences, UVI students hail from all over the Caribbean, as well as from the US mainland. History and culture are summarized and glossed over in the course of some students' K-12 educations, but most of my students have never lived in the US, let alone understand its history or political system. My students know about their home islands and nations, as well as about the nations that colonized or conquered them. They are well-versed in local history, traditions, politics and culture, but they know little about the US in these respects. The solution, then, is to replace an article about how music and dance influenced the recovery of the United States during the Great Depression¹ with one about the origins of the Jumbies and their continued role in West Indian culture today. Of course, if the professor is from the mainland US as I am, she is going to need to do her own research in order to conduct informed discussions of the material. Rather than struggle to introduce dozens of students to history and culture that are essentially foreign, both

¹My students read Morris Dickstein's 2009 *Los Angeles Times* article "How song, dance, and movies bailed us out of the Great Depression."

the students and the professor are best served if the professor invests time into learning more about her students' islands, histories, and cultures.

Truth be told, I stumbled upon this realization around midterm of my first semester teaching as an adjunct instructor at UVI. I was teaching my ENG 100 students how to write "Process" paragraphs and essays. There are two types of process writing: informative and directional. In order to give an interactive example of a directional process – in which the writer instructs the reader on how to complete a task – I asked my students to tell me how to make a pot of coffee. I was met with a silence so awkward it could hardly have been worsened by the metaphoric crickets. Puzzled for a moment, it then dawned on me that coffee simply is not the daily hot drink choice in the USVI. Regrouping, I asked, "How do we make a pot of bush tea?" I immediately had to calm the babble of voices excitedly talking over one another. The lesson was very simple, but very clear for me: I needed to become more familiar with my students, their culture, and their way of life if I was to teach them effectively.

Students who are invested in the examples, material, and dialogue with which their professors are asking them to engage will, ultimately, be more engaged in their own learning. Including local pop culture or political issues as class discussion foci or essay topics serves two important purposes in addition to connecting relevant local topics to course work. First, it encourages students to become more involved in their own communities. Civic and community engagement ought not to be limited to students majoring in service disciplines. All students at the university level should be encouraged to live as productive members of their communities; this means they must be engaged in their communities. Second, it will serve as a demonstration to the students that their professor is also engaged in the community and striving to understand the issues with which students are faced daily. If students sense that their professors do not care, the students will not care. Illustrating our own involvement and interest in locally-relevant topics shows students that we are not only affected by many of the same issues, but that we are also concerned about those issues affecting our students. This tactic may not engage all students equally, but it will engage more students than irrelevant textbook material written for students from a different world altogether.

As teachers, we must always keep in mind that every class section has a unique personality, so even though we find examples or exercises to which we become very attached, we must be willing to let them go and find new ones if and when our favorites clearly will not work with a particular group of students. As an English composition and literature professor, I constantly change my assignments – not for fear that my students will borrow work from former students, but because my students are, well, students. This is partly because I constantly strive to create assignments that students actually *want* to complete; the more interested students are in the work they are completing, the better their end product will be. Inevitably, when I read through

suggested essay topics in a textbook published in the US, I find that the prompts rely on assumed prior knowledge or experience. An essay prompt asking students to evaluate the validity of the claim that the arts played a significant role in rescuing the American people from the Great Depression assumes that students are aware that the Great Depression was a twelve-year period of the most serious economic downturn in US history. Most mainland US students would know this; my students, however, likely do not. Even when assignments do not require background knowledge, professors in the Caribbean must be aware that students' responses will be quite different here than they would be in the US. Asking my students at UVI, for example, to write a comparison and contrast essay on how the reality of their college experience sizes up against their expectations will yield a much different result than asking students in Florida or Maryland to write the same essay.

The bottom line: if our students do not understand the references a textbook makes or the prior knowledge it assumes, they will not connect to the information we are trying to teach them. Not only will students fail to connect with and understand the material, but instructors will also miss opportunities to encourage critical and reflective thought in their students. Additionally, students will grow frustrated with the assignments, labeling them as "busy work" because they cannot see a clear connection between what the professor is asking them to do and their long-term learning goals. Frustration often dissolves into sullenness, making it increasingly difficult for the professor to engage her students, who believe she does not "get" them. When students have a cultural and historical investment in course material, whether in composition, in literature, or outside of the Humanities, they are more likely to pursue further inquiry into the material, rather than absorbing the minimum required in order to pass a course.

Now to the second problem: Us. The more experienced we are at teaching, the bigger the gap between our students and us grows. As teachers, we are guilty of believing that our classes are more important than anything else in our students' lives – including their other classes. This difference appears to be insurmountable. One method to attempt to breach these differences is to find common ground for course discussions and assignments, such as current events. However, if we strive to connect our course and text material to local current events, this connection is only effective if our students care, too. I might use the cancellation of several major Caribbean sailing regattas as an example of our struggling local economy, but none of my students sails, so I will have wasted my breath. Discussing rising gas, grocery, or inter-island travel prices, on the other hand, will engage my students because the examples are relevant to them. This example also points to the lifestyle differences between professors and students. At the very least, our students are juggling multiple classes and assignments and worrying about book prices and tuition. More likely, students also have personal, family, and job struggles with which they are dealing. We cannot ignore our students'

lives outside the classroom; rather, we ought to embrace them. We must take into consideration that students do have lives outside classroom doors, and attempt to incorporate those lives into our assignments and discussions.

The next areas creating the gap between professors and students are really all tied together: technology, communication, and age. Technology advances at such a rapid pace that keeping up is daunting even for the most tech-savvy among us. Our students, however, adapt easily to new technologies, adopting them into their repertoire with grace and ease. If we want to equip our students for their careers, we must also learn how to use the newest technology. The most obvious use for technology both in academia and in the professional world is communication. Students are conditioned to expect instant gratification in communication, so waiting until office hours to ask a question or leaving a voicemail on a professor's office phone are not the obvious choices for most students. The question, then, is whether these methods really still serve our students' needs. There is no reason for any professor who teaches research to spend entire classes on where to find "academic" sources, because students can find almost any information conceivable via Google. Requiring students to trek to the library to find an outdated book relevant to their research is pointless if we can, instead, teach them how to use academic and professional databases to support their work. If we do not wish to isolate our students with our heavy-handed insistence on outdated methodology, then we must embrace new technology and learn to use it effectively. Not only will students appreciate that we are attempting to communicate via media they use and understand, but often we can also help them to discover broader uses for the tools they already utilize – and use them ourselves.

The last gap between our students and us is the age gap. While we cannot physically change this reality, we *can* attempt to adapt mentally to our students. No one wants to repeat the mistakes she made in college, but if we understand what catches our students' attention, what matters to them, and what interests them, we can integrate all of that into our course materials and teaching methods. This last piece of the cultural bridge we, as educators, ought to be building, colors all the rest. My students may not be concerned about their local government retirement systems yet, but they are concerned about violence, drugs, and job opportunities. Many college students in the Caribbean will be the first of their families to earn college degrees – or even high school diplomas, so they have few mentors whom they can approach with questions or fears about their college education. Addressing some of these common questions or fears will draw students into class discussion, while at the same time quietly reminding students that we are not the enemy.

If instructors truly wish to mold students into life-long pursuers of knowledge, then instilling curiosity and connecting cultural references are essential, both in and out of the classroom. In English language and literature courses, this often requires extra research on the part of the educator, interactive class sessions, and drawing upon local

and archival resources. Ultimately, professors must be willing to change both their material and methodology and be willing to learn new technology in order to communicate with and reach out to their students effectively.

CONVERSATION: IT'S MORE THAN CHATTER

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Speech is deemed the most basic means of human communication (Lazaraton, 2001: 103). As a consequence, for most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language. In fact, persons involved in language teaching perceive generally that if a learner is unable to use a language effectively in speech then he or she creates a distance between that language and its inherent meaning and social value (Wilkins, 1983: 33-34). To this end, conversation is defined as a constant process of adjustment between participants as they negotiate, interact and use appropriate language.

In this regard, some language instructors still utilise strategies based on the traditional language methods which do not focus on the meaningful use of language. These conventional methods deal with speech production which is rigidly controlled to reinforce correct habit formation of linguistic rules. They promote the instructor as the major speaker and learners as mere passive listeners. In such contexts the learners' perceptions that conversation is stilted and unnatural impact negatively on their level of motivation and interest. Ideally, learners should be allowed and encouraged to initiate communication whenever possible, to determine the content of their responses and to evaluate their own production and learning progress (Lazaraton, 2001: 104).

With the advent of the theory of communicative competence and the Communicative Approach to language instruction, oral communication skills were contextualized as a socio-cultural activity. Hence, as there is a more holistic concept of fluency as the natural use of language which deals with effective speaking strategies and negotiation of meaning, it is no longer acceptable that instruction should focus only on developing grammatical or linguistic competence. However, with the continued application of orthodox methods, some instructors show no evidence of such innovation in their teaching.

Furthermore, effective teaching in oral communication stipulates that learners must be able to interpret the social situation in which communication is taking place. This suggests that they must possess the ability to relate language to the social meaning it carries and use it as a tool for social interaction (Littlewood, 1996: 12). In other words, along with acquiring discourse and linguistic competence, learners need to possess sociolinguistic, actional and strategic competence. According to Hall, they

should be afforded the opportunity to engage in meaningful activity to facilitate their acquisition of these necessary communicative skills (p. 25). Based on these views, language instruction which is geared towards interactive speaking must employ strategies that prescribe a direct focus on the concept of communicative competence, which is outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Outline of the components of communicative competence and the criteria for each component. Source: Joan Kelly Hall, 2001: 156-157

Communicative Competence	Criteria
Discourse Competence	Ability to use appropriate sustained utterances to communicate within an interaction
Linguistic Competence	Ability to use grammatical structure, vocabulary and phonology- the form of the language to assist in communication
Actional Competence	Use of the language for appropriate speech acts to facilitate communication within the situational context
Socio-cultural Competence	Knowledge of the norms- relates to social roles and conventions
Strategic Competence	Ability to negotiate, correct and resolve any language difficulties that hinder communication.

Based on the set criteria associated with effective conversation instruction, perhaps the most disturbing situation occurs when individuals with no knowledge of linguistics or language teaching are requested to conduct conversation sessions simply because they speak the target language with a high level of proficiency. In such instances, these native-like speakers integrate little or no organisational structure or methodology to the conversational sessions. They just ‘chatter’ as they are expected to, with disregard for the learners’ need to acquire the necessary components of communicative competence. Thus, while a communicative approach to speaking emphasizes the use of language above the level of sentences or beyond a mere focus on linguistic competence, learners who are exposed to such sessions of “non-teaching” often complain that their entire lesson could be based on the analysis of a single sentence.

It is important to note that the utilisation of components of communicative competence does not in any way nullify the importance of learners possessing knowledge of the form of the language and being proficient in its appropriate use. In fact, Communicative Approach strategies are most effective when learners possess linguistic competence. For this reason, they should also be exposed to activities based on bottom-up processing which deals with discrete units such as words and clauses as

important aspects in the language learning experience. The importance of this component notwithstanding, instructors must avoid the situation in which priority is given to bottom-up processing while there is neglect of top-down processing. In other words, effective conversation instruction also dictates an emphasis on meaning in relation to understanding the topic and the situational context (Nunan, 1995: 45).

By the same token, instructors must be aware that learners will be faced with situations in which they are required to use both the interactional and transactional modes in their communicative interactions (Browne & Yule, 1989: 53). In this regard, Nunan points out that learners come into the conversation with cultural norms such as turn-taking and selection of the topic which determine how they set about to manage the conversation (p. 68). Students must be assisted in developing the appropriate conversation skills which will enable them to be active participants in varied situational contexts. Furthermore learners' socio-cultural environment and how this aspect influences their discourse also deserves systematic attention.

There is a perception that instructors who teach from the premise that conversation is just chatter are more likely to ignore the crucial aspects which enhance the learners' acquisition of oral communication skills. For this reason, it was deemed necessary to conduct the present research with a purposive sample comprising four participants in the Anglophone setting at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus during the 2006 six week summer programme. The research sought to analyse the effectiveness of the systematic intervention of methods and strategies associated with the Communicative Approach in conversation instruction on learners' oral proficiency. Accordingly, the study utilised a single subject research design with an A-B- B variant which stipulated a pre-Communicative Approach Baseline Phase and two intervention or treatment phases where the Communicative Approach was utilised, identified as the Formative Intervention Phase 1 and Summative Intervention Phase 2.

While performing the dual role as instructor and observer, the researcher "participated fully in the activities of each participant" (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003: 450). That being the case, one of the main data collection instruments was the observation schedule which was formulated to describe some of the features of communication that occur in the second language classroom and to measure these as precisely as possible. Correspondingly, the methodology involved measurement of the variation and level of communication which occurred within communicative activities. One distinctive aspect of Spada's Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT) Observation Scheme which was selected and modified for the research was systematic recording, which provides both qualitative and quantitative data. It is noteworthy that the environment in which Spada used COLT to carry out her 1990 study exhibited similarities to this 2006 study. For instance, both studies were done within the duration of six weeks of a summer programme and the participants were adults.

Added to this, there was a focus on the Communicative Approach which highlighted the significance of making language learning as real as possible for the learners. Table 2 presents a comparison of the two models of the Observation Schedule; Spada's model and this researcher's model.

Table 2 Outline and comparison of the two models of “COLT” observation schedules: Spada's Original Design and the Modified Design. Source: Nina M. Spada, 1987: 142

Spada's Original Model	Researcher's Model
Part B 1. Use of Target Language a. L1 b. L2 3. Restricted/Sustained Speech a. ultra minimal b. minimal c. sustained	Part B 1. Use of Target Language a. L1 b. L2 c. Not codified 3. Restricted/Sustained Speech a. minimal word b. phrase c. clause d. sustained

With the application of the prescribed criteria, the category “Use of Target Language” analysed the communicative features of verbal exchange. For this reason, along with the original subcategories “First Language” and “Second Language”, data from the sub-category, “Not Codified” were included and documented to present a more precise description of the number of utterances participants actually made during the interactions, including their unintelligible utterances as well as when they failed to offer responses.

The category “Sustained or Restricted Speech” measured the participants' speech during communicative interactions. Accordingly, the subcategories “Ultra Minimal”, “Minimal” and “Sustained” from the original COLT were modified and replaced with “Minimal word” to represent exchanges of only one or two words, “Phrase” for utterances of more than two words, “Clause” described a sentence, and “Sustained” defined discourse comprising more than one sentence. These features ensured reliable measurement because in second or foreign language learning only a few speakers in every group can be regarded as using sustained speech. In addition, the researcher's field notes presented an overall description of the participant's language behaviour within the teaching-learning environment. *Descriptive notes* highlighted chronological data of the events that occurred as well as information about the physical setting while

reflective notes focused on the researcher's thoughts, experiences and personal reactions.

A duration recording timing system was used to carry out the methodical collection of numerical data to systematically measure each participant's oral language. This system enabled the time for each specific communicative activity to be recorded and calculated against the total length of time each participant engaged in the specific category of the interaction. That result was expressed as a fraction and converted to a percentage. The relevant data were graphically represented on a bar graph to indicate how long each participant took part in an activity as well as his or her level of involvement and progress in acquisition of oral proficiency in the target language.

This combined data collected via the field notes and systematic measurement served mainly to describe and reflect on the conditions of the teaching-learning process and the oral language behaviour of each participant. A key feature of the observation instrument is that it facilitated measurement of several areas that could not be described comprehensively by numerical data. It also provided qualitative information significant to foreign language teaching in general and Communicative Language Teaching in particular.

Table 3 provides a numerical description of each participant's discourse during the Baseline Phase, before the introduction of the Communicative Approach. The duration was recorded in hours and minutes with a total time of 11 hours and 20 minutes for instruction over the entire Baseline Phase.

Table 3 Participants' discourse from sample two during the Baseline Phase

Participants 2006	Minimal Duration %	Phrase Duration %	Clause Duration %	Sustained Duration %
E	3.09 45.4	3.38 32	1.58 17.3	0.36 5.3
F	6.06 53.8	3.03 26.9	1.52 16.5	0.19 2.8
G	2.19 20.5	5.11 45.7	2.02 17.9	1.48 15.9
H	1.26 12.6	3.43 32.8	3.37 31.9	2.34 22.7

The data revealed that during the Baseline Phase prior to the application of strategies associated with the Communicative Approach, Participants E and F were challenged to use the target language effectively during their communicative interactions. In fact, just over 45 % of Participant E's oral language consisted of one or two word responses which indicates that 74 percent of his speech was restricted discourse. During this phrase, Participant F attempted to use the target language in sentences and sustained discourse for just over 19% of the oral interactions. Although Participants G

and H attempted to speak in English for long turns, only Participant H showed some ability to use clauses and sustained discourse.

Tables 4 and 5 present results at the Formative and Summative Intervention Phases respectively after the application of Communicative Approach strategies. The total time of the intervention was twenty-seven hours (27 hrs).

Table 4 Participants' discourse from sample two during the Formative Intervention Phase

Participants 2006	Minimal Duration %	Phrase Duration %	Clause Duration %	Sustained Duration %
E	8.10 30.5	10.30 39.5	5.05 17.5	3.15 12.5
F	8.50 32.5	11.35 42.3	4.20 16.7	2.15 8.5
G	3.15 12.7	6.00 22.2	11.50 43.6	5.55 21.5
H	1.45 5.5	5.50 21.4	10.38 39.6	8.47 33.5

According to the data, during the first intervention phase, Participant E increased his use of sentences and sustained speech by 7.4 percent. The comparison shows that at the Baseline Phase, he used these features in his language for 22.6% of the period and at the Formative Intervention Phase the total percentage was 30%. Participant F produced sentences and sustained discourse for 19.3% of the total duration at the Baseline Phase compared to 25.2% at the Formative Intervention Phase for an increase of 5.9%. The results showed also that Participants G and H decreased their restricted speech and made greater utilisation of sentences and extended speech. At this phase, they were capable of speaking using clauses and sustained discourse in over fifty percent of their oral communication.

Table 5 Participants' discourse from sample two during the Summative Intervention Phase

Participants 2006	Minimal Duration %	Phrase Duration %	Clause Duration %	Sustained Duration %
E	5.19 9.7	8.47 32.5	7.53 29.2	5.01 18.6
F	4.58 18.4	7.16 26.9	9.16 34.4	5.29 20.3
G	1.27 5.4	3.25 12.7	10.03 37.2	12.04 44.7
H	0.44 2.7	0.35 2.2	9.35 35.5	16.06 59.6

The comparison of the data from the final Summative Intervention Phase in Table 5 with the data from the Baseline and Formative Intervention Phases revealed that all

participants improved in their ability to use sentence structures and sustained discourse for oral communication. With the exception of Participant E, all participants used long turns for most of their speech. Although Participant E spoke in sentences and sustained discourse for only 47.8% of his oral communication, he continued to show steady improvement from the Formative through to the Summative Intervention Phase. It is important to note that according to the data, 95.1 percent of Participant H's discourse comprised sentences and clauses in the Summative Phase. Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the classification of the discourse of each participant at the Baseline Phase, the Formative Intervention Phase and the Summative Intervention Phase.

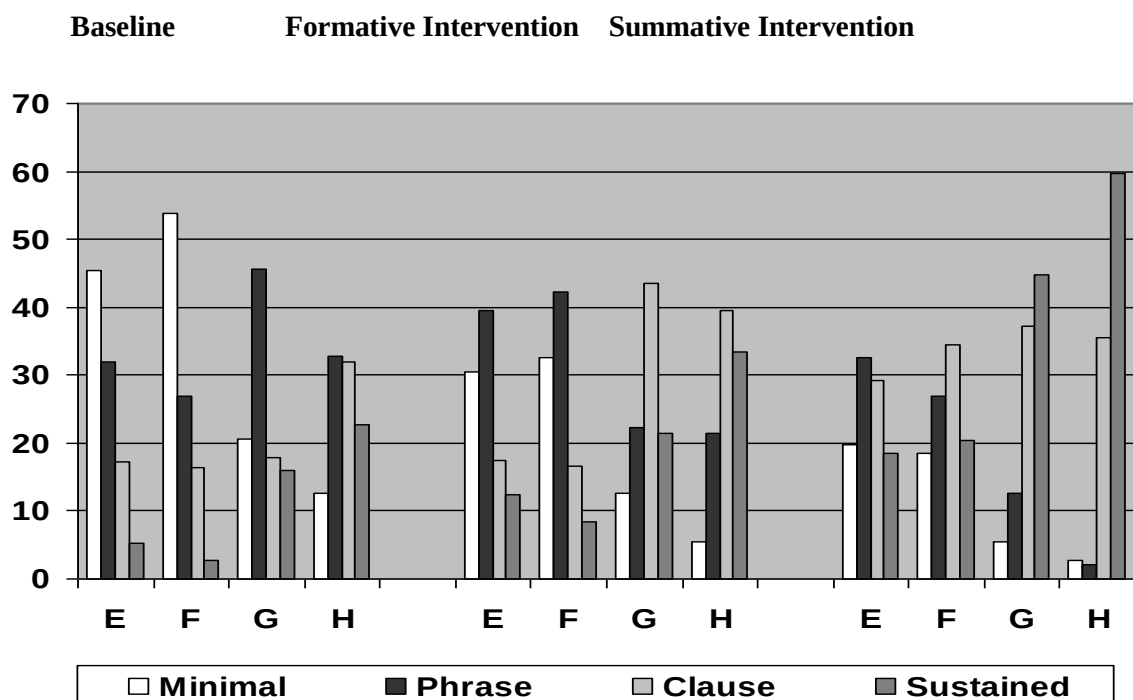


Fig. 1 Discourse for participants at Baseline, Formative and Summative Phases.

These results demonstrate that during the Formative Phase Participants E and F showed some increase in their use of sentences and sustained speech as compared to the Baseline Phase in which the largest percentage of their verbal language consisted of one or two word utterances and phrases. Participant F showed marked improvement in the Summative Phase so that most of her oral language consisted of sentences and extended speech. Although Participant E continued to use more minimal speech and phrases, some improvement was noted in his oral language production, with the utilisation of clauses and sustained discourse. When compared to the Baseline, at the Formative Phase, Participant G reduced the quantity of phrases in his oral language so that the majority consisted of complete sentences. During the Summative Intervention Phase, his language comprised principally of extended discourse. In the Formative

Phase, most of Participant H's oral communication was long turns with sentences and sustained speech. At the Summative Phase, she reduced her exchanges of one or two word answers and phrases to less than 5% to indicate that extended discourse dominated her oral communication.

A central conclusion that can be drawn from an analysis of the results presented above is that the Communicative Approach helped the participants to experience and use real language appropriately and meaningfully within varied contexts. In this regard, Wilcox-Peterson asserts that the aim is to develop skills in interactive communication with the broader goal of producing learners with effective critical thinking skills, critical listening and speaking skills (p. 99). The data suggests that the use of strategies related to the Communicative Approach in the process of conversational instruction can effectively improve learners' oral proficiency in the target language. This validates the contention that conversation is much more than mere chatter.

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THE GROWTH OF LINGUISTICS AS A DISCIPLINE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES CAVE HILL CAMPUS 1974-2011

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Over the last three years I completed a history of the development of linguistics in the Commonwealth Caribbean for my PhD dissertation. The work focused specifically on the University of the West Indies, the University of Guyana and the Society for Caribbean Linguistics. While conducting this research project, I realized that the department of linguistics at Cave Hill was losing substantial institutional continuity with the retirement of Prof. Peter Roberts. I therefore wrote this article as a qualitative reflection on linguistics at Cave Hill during the career of Prof. Roberts. While all of the shortcomings or successes of the Department can not be attributed solely to Prof. Roberts, he deserves acknowledgement for his leadership and for his outstanding contributions to the department during his tenure.

According to Taylor (1950) tertiary education planning in the former British colonies began with a series of commissions and reports. The Moyne Commission was established in response to a number of concerns about the living conditions in the colonies, including limited access to health care and education and high poverty rates. Subsequent to the Moyne Commission, the Asquith Commission was established survey the educational needs across all British territories. The Commission found that the challenges to the successful development of educational facilities was greater in the Caribbean than elsewhere in the Empire, given its traumatic history of genocide against the indigenous peoples and enslavement of the African descended majority.

Taylor reports that one of the first major recommendations was that a university college be established in the British Caribbean colonies to serve Barbados, British Guiana (now Guyana), British Honduras (now Belize), Jamaica, The Leeward islands, Trinidad and Tobago and the Windward Islands, with a focus on Arts, Natural Science and Medicine. It was also proposed and agreed that this new University College be affiliated to the University of London. In 1948, the first campus of the University College of the West Indies was opened at Mona, Jamaica (see Taylor). The University College of the West Indies gained independent status as the University of the West Indies in 1962. The campus at St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago was created out

of a merger with the Imperial College of Agriculture in 1960 and in 1963 a third campus was established at Cave Hill in Barbados.

Linguistics at Cave Hill emerged as a part of a wider project to streamline linguistics programmes across all the UWI campuses. Initially, there were four departments in the Arts Faculty at Mona – Classics, English, History and Modern Languages. Linguistics courses were offered from very early on, but these were facilitated by lecturers assigned to other departments. In order to begin to organize a space specifically for linguistics, these lecturers started an informal research group that included Mervyn Alleyne, Dennis Craig and Jean D’Costa. There was a growing awareness of the importance of Linguistics as a discipline of study in the Caribbean, and Phillip Sherlock, the Vice Chancellor at the time, was interested in developing some kind of linguistics centre. The University secured a Ford Foundation grant for the development of linguistics departments and linguistic research. The unofficial group of lecturers became the Senate Sub-Committee on Linguistics which was responsible for administering the funds of the Ford grant. The first hire for the sole purpose of teaching linguistics was made in 1970. According to the 1977 Vice Chancellor’s report the re-organization process to develop linguistics and other departments was concluded in September 1975. According to the report, “Cave Hill [was granted] a department of Use of English and Linguistics” (see Hinds-Layne, forthcoming, for more information).

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One of the mandates of the Ford Foundation grant was to ensure that opportunities were provided for young Caribbean students to receive graduate training in linguistics. Peter Roberts was completing his Masters degree in 1971 at just about the time that the Ford foundation grant was moving into its second phase. Roberts was thus able to register for PhD studies as a junior research fellow at the Ford supported Caribbean Language and Research Programme (CLRP) directed by Dennis Craig. Roberts completed his PhD in 1977.

Roberts did his fieldwork at Mona, but in 1974 he returned to his native Barbados to join the Unit of Use of English and Linguistics as an assistant lecturer (Departmental Records 1974: 37). Roberts remained active in linguistic research and teaching at Cave Hill from 1974 until his retirement in 2011. Over the nearly four decades that Peter Roberts spent at Cave Hill, he was either the Head of the Unit/Department or the Dean of the Faculty to which the Unit/Department belonged.

The *Academic and Senior Administrative Staff List* of 1978-79 and 1979-80 show that teaching and research in linguistics at Cave Hill was structured as Unit in the Department of English (1978: 2, 1979: 2). The 1984-85 Departmental Reports show that linguistics was still being administered under a unit structure (1985:14). There were 109 students registered in undergraduate programmes involving Linguistics in the 1984-85 academic year at UWI (Departmental Reports 1985: 15).

The Departmental Reports for 1989-1990 mention that “at the beginning of the academic year 1989-90 the Unit of Use of English and Linguistics was upgraded to the Department of Use of English and Linguistics” (p. 22). The Report also notes that Dr. P Roberts was the Head of the Department. There were 298 mostly part time students enrolled in the Use of English and 139 students were registered across the three levels of linguistics courses (first, second and third year). The Departmental Records from 1991-1992 (p. 25) state that “many students work and so register for courses which are partly or wholly timetabled in normal non-working hours or they register for day classes and attend very seldom. The result of this is either that important classes are not done or that performance suffers.” In that academic year, 349 students were registered in linguistics courses at UWI Cave Hill. This number probably includes single students registered simultaneously in several linguistics courses

The Departmental Records of 1992-1993 report that the Department of Use of English and Linguistics had become the Department of Language and Linguistics (p. 23). At the time there were a total of 187 students registered in first semester linguistics courses and 148 in the second semester offerings. By the time I entered the faculty in 2003, the name of the Department had been modified to that of the Department of Language, Linguistics and Literature.

In an interview conducted with Prof. Roberts he indicated that sometime around the 2009 academic year, the final separation was made between University foundation courses in English and the teaching of linguistics. As a result, for the first time in the history of the Cave Hill Campus, linguists were not required to divide their energies and lecture time between linguistics and University foundation courses.

Because of the nature of the data presented below and the absence of aggregates, it would be wrong to draw definitive conclusions from it concerning the state of linguistics at Cave Hill. However, by comparing the figures over the years, broad trends can be noted. Since the Departmental records were difficult to source, I examined the Campus statistics for registrations in linguistics to try to follow the trends numerically. In the academic year 2008-9, there were 164 new and continuing students registered as majors in linguistics; in 2009-10 there were 165; in 2010-11, there were 148; in 2011-12 there were 162; and in 2012-13, there were 146. While these figures do not show any significant decline in student interest, they also do not show that interest in linguistics is growing. This is in the context of overall student intake at Cave Hill expanding by about 2000 new students over the period under discussion. It may be worthwhile for the Department to consider ideas for diversifying of the programme to encourage growth in student numbers.

The trend toward part time student majors mentioned above for academic year 1992-1993 has persisted until the present. In each year between 2008 and 2013, the number of part time students registered for majors in linguistics outnumbered those registered

full time. This suggests that the Department needs to do more to ensure that part time students are not asked to choose between a quality degree and their jobs, which they need in order to pay their way through their programme of study.

The course offerings in linguistics have steadily continued to increase, but the tendency for offerings and content to be weighted toward language in education persists. This tendency dates back to the early development of linguistics with Ford Foundation funding, where emphasis was placed on applying linguistic study to solving educational issues (such as developing programmes to educate Creole speakers) in the Commonwealth territories. Although there is some evidence that efforts have been made to diversify in non-traditional ways, more needs to be done in that direction.

The Department now has a complement of six individuals with specialist training in linguistics and some part-time staff. There has been no large scale linguistics project housed in the Department since the *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* was completed in the mid 1990s. Now that the linguistics staff in the Department no longer divides its time between the use of English and Linguistics, there should be more time available for major undertakings in linguistic research.

Although Cave Hill has had a Department that specializes in linguistics for just about four decades, there is little evidence of change in the perception of Creole and Creole speakers in Barbados. While there has been a slight effort to include non-Standard linguistic content in teacher training programmes, Barbados is still without a language policy and other institutional structures that are necessary for the legitimization of Barbadian Creole. Many Barbadians still deny being mother tongue speakers of Barbadian Creole and much of the country still undervalues the potential and creativity that Creole speakers have. The Department has not been very successful at disseminating the findings of its work so that Barbados could benefit in the same way that Jamaican Creole has from work at Mona, or in the way that St. Lucia and Dominica have benefitted from research on French Creole through various Caribbean universities, including UWI. Further outreach work needs to be done to ensure a more substantial impact on Barbadian society.

At its meeting in 2012, the Society for Caribbean Linguistics celebrated its 40th Anniversary. The state of record keeping within the Society and at the University of the West Indies is unacceptable. Now that there are linguists at Cave Hill who do not have to divide their time with other disciplines, a project could be initiated to better preserve the documents related to linguistics in Barbados in particular and the Caribbean in general, a task that has grown more urgent since the death of Richard Allsopp and the retirement of Peter Roberts. The personal collection of Prof. Allsopp which has been vested in the Federal Archive at Cave Hill could be expanded to include all documents related to linguistics. An undergraduate level course could be introduced in the history of linguistics as a discipline as well.

Over his 37 year tenure, Prof Roberts' work resulted in Cave Hill becoming recognized worldwide as a centre for research on creole languages. Prof. Peter Roberts' retirement in 2012 left Cave Hill without a specialist in creole linguistics who could supervise students at the PhD level and the direction of my dissertation project was taken over by the University of the West Indies Mona Campus in Jamaica. The University of the West Indies has not escaped the effects of the global economic crisis. Added to the decrease in funds for research and sponsorship from the private sector, Caribbean Governments' monetary support for the University has been problematic. The government of Barbados owes the University millions of dollars and has embarked on a number of austerity measures aimed at reducing costs. Some of these measures include a reduction in the amount of time that a part time student can be funded to complete a degree. The Department of Language, Linguistics and Literature has thus far remained silent about these proposals and the impact that they will have on its majors.

The overall trend in developing new programmes at Cave Hill reveals a heavy emphasis on medicine, computers and management. To more fully diversify its programmes, linguistics must find creative ways to forge links with these disciplines. Courses in forensic linguistics, in linguistics for computer programmers and applied linguistics courses for professionals including doctors, lawyers and managers need to be brought on stream. In the final analysis, my biggest hope is that the solid foundations put in place by Prof. Peter Roberts and the other founding fathers of Caribbean linguistics during the nationalist era be strengthened and built upon to better serve the needs of Barbados and the rest of the Commonwealth Caribbean.

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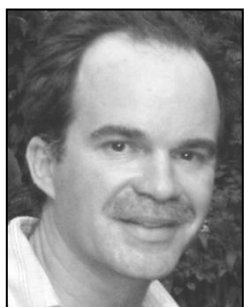
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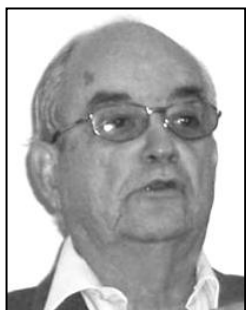
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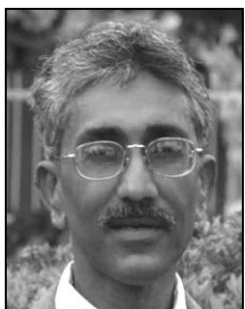
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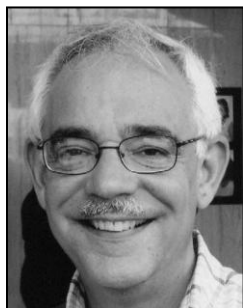
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