

This book, *Creolization and Commonalities: Transgressing Neocolonial Boundaries in the Languages, Literatures and Cultures of the Caribbean and the Rest of the African Diaspora* is a collection of articles that present a critical perspective on the languages, literatures, and cultures of the Caribbean Islands and the rest of the African Diaspora. The volume incorporates invited papers as well as presentations made to the 16th annual Eastern Caribbean Islands Cultures Conference which was held in Aruba from 6 to 10 November 2013. The contributing authors include a wide range of voices old and new from the Caribbean and beyond.

Creolization and Commonalities

Faradlas | Severing | Weijer
Echteld | Rutgers

Creolization and Commonalities

Transgressing Neocolonial Boundaries in the Languages, Literatures and Cultures of the Caribbean and the Rest of the African Diaspora



Edited by
Nicholas Faradlas
Ronald Severing
Christa Weijer
Elisabeth Echteld
Wim Rutgers

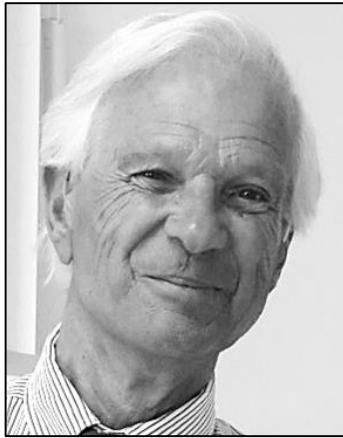
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Creolization and Commonalities:
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Caribbean and the Rest of the African Diaspora

Dedication

We humbly dedicate this volume to



Paul Dijkstra

whose expertise in publishing and enthusiasm for the promotion of the languages and cultures of the ABC-Islands made this series of publications possible

Creolization and Commonalities

Transgressing Neocolonial Boundaries in the Languages, Literatures and Cultures of the Caribbean and the Rest of the African Diaspora

Volume 2

Edited by

Nicholas Faraclas
Ronald Severing
Christa Weijer
Elisabeth Echteld
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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 (former) Dutch Caribbean, and this second volume focusing on the rest of the Caribbean region. 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 Aruba conference was co-organized and co-sponsored by the University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras, the Instituto Pedagógico Arubano, the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill in Barbados, and the Virgin Islands and Caribbean Cultural Center of the University of the Virgin Islands. We wish to thank the conference organizers, especially Gregory Richardson, Ava Thodé, Joyce Pereira and the local organizing committee from the Instituto Pedagógico Arubano 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.

We take this opportunity to pay special tribute to Paul Dijkstra, who was the publisher responsible for the very high quality production of the preceding 10 volumes in this series, all of whose covers are depicted on the cover of this volume. Thanks to Paul's superb expertise in publishing and his selfless dedication to this series, he never failed to have the volumes of the papers from each year's Islands in Between Conference ready for distribution at the following year's conference. Sadly Paul passed away unexpectedly on March 26 2014 in Curaçao. By way of gratitude, recognition and friendship we dedicate the two 2014 volumes to him. We wish his daughter, Wietske Dijkstra, who took over this enormous responsibility, all the best.

The Editors

**TRANSGRESSING GENDER AND SPATIAL
BOUNDARIES IN LITERATURE**

THE ARTIST AS GRIOT: TWO KNIVES IN THE WIDOW'S HOUSE

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Although some literary scholars have previously focused their studies on West Africa as a region, their treatment of the material dwells more on their perception of the authors (or texts) as belonging to the same geographical area arbitrarily put together by former colonial masters, rather than as sharing common political, economic and cultural affinities. We realize that this interpretation of the theme may be seen by some colleagues as unnecessarily tilting it towards the notion of literature as a phenomenon whose referentiality touches on various dimensions of social life rather than existing *sui generis* with its meaning being immanent in the text. However, it is reassuring that the issue which is multidimensional in character (and not just restricted to the two perspectives) has defied satisfactory resolution in most national literatures of the world.

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Equally intriguing is the relative importance accorded the various literatures in European and West African languages such as Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Tiv, Izon, Ibibio, Kanuri, Akan, Ewe, Baule, Wolof etc. The practice of stressing the literatures in (what is regarded as) international languages (especially English and French) at the expense of those in the West African languages ought to be de-emphasized. It is necessary for the various countries of the region to develop policies that would enable these languages and the literatures in them to play a role in national development (see Maduka, 2003).

But the interest of this paper focuses on another issue: the criticism of the literature. The current trends in the criticism of African/West African/Nigerian texts call for reflection. What makes it imperative for me is the accumulated experiences I have gathered as an observer of the various performances of oral literature in my community, and as a member of the panel of judges for the annual awards in literature organized by the Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA). The title of my paper is now taking shape.

First, the griot. Many scholars (e.g. Okpewho, Blair, Finnegan, Awoonor, Sekoni, Azuonye, Senghor) have reminded us that the artist in the oral tradition is basically a griot who is so multitalented that he can be at once a singer, a dancer, a poet, a novelist, a dramatist, a historian and even the living community library. This paper

argues that contemporary writers in various languages are all griots (or should be so). Second, the sub-title which is an Igbo proverb telling us that the widow is so poor that she lacks the means to have a well-functioning knife at home, hence the one that is sharp has no handle and the one that has a handle is not sharp. With respect to the knife that is sharp but has no handle, the theories being currently used in studying African/West African/Nigerian literatures are not only far removed from the African/West African/Nigerian cultural experience but are also becoming so sophisticated that they disfigure rather than explain the significance of the texts. Abiola Irele feels so uncomfortable with them that he refuses to use them in his recent study dealing with the variegated strategies deployed by selected authors of African ancestry in coming to terms with the contemporary obfuscating European cultural presence in Africa and the Diaspora. In the introduction to the book, *The African imagination: literature in Africa and the black diaspora*, he tells the reader that the philosophy of literature used in such studies is informed by the ideas characteristic of the traditional approach to sociology of literature. On the other hand, the knife that has a handle is very poorly developed as a viable option for studying African/West African/Nigerian literatures in foreign and indigenous languages. It is now opportune to give the trajectory of the varieties of positions taken by scholars within the two camps.

Africa/West Africa is virtually a cultural satellite of the West in this era of globalization. The process indeed dates back to the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 where European colonialists met (over drinks and plaisanteries?) to carve out spheres of influence for themselves in Africa populated by the “sub-human natives” as they perceived the inhabitants. With time the subject peoples adjusted their mindsets to the thought processes dictated by the demands of the institutions of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism. The crucible of this type of socialization reached its apex after the Second World War when the colonialists consolidated their imperialistic interests in world politics by deciding to form such international bodies as World Bank, Paris Club, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Trade Organization, and ensuring that they effectively control their operations. It is not surprising that Africa/West Africa finds it extremely difficult to wriggle out of the economic, political and cultural subjugation in which it has found itself, even though the situation would have been different if our rulers had patriotically flexed their muscles much harder.

The values that shape the people’s lifestyle in Africa/West Africa do not basically derive their force from African cultural heritage, thereby turning the people into aliens in their various countries. In Nigeria, for example, it has become edifying to model the country’s constitution on those from Britain and the United States of America, to proudly adopt English and French as the nation’s lingua francas without thinking seriously about developing the indigenous languages and the literatures in them, to lionize foreign goods to the detriment of the locally made ones, to collude with

multinational companies in looting the people's treasury and even to relish in investing the loot abroad and to unwittingly denude the country of the top professionals who flee the nation for the rich, creative soils overseas where they eventually constitute a new breed of citizens fondly called the Nigerians in the Diaspora. The situation is even worse in the Francophone zone where many of the countries have proudly signed military pacts with their former colonial overlords and where the Senghors have elevated French language to the echelon of being the harbinger of African/West African civilization.

The emigration of many of seasoned critics to Europe has quickened the pace of the Europeanization of the literary scholarship in the region. The general practice both in the classroom and personal research has been for the critics to use theoretical frameworks and concepts developed by European practitioners. Classicism (with Aristototele's *Poetics* as the anchor piece), Romanticism, Realism, Symbolism, Myth Criticism, Formalism, Marxism, Sociology of Literature, Psychoanalytical approaches, Structuralism are all used with abandon. Now contemporary approaches are religiously added to the list: thus all shades of Poststructuralism, Postmodernism, Postcolonial Aesthetics and Feminism are all cherished by the scholars. African texts are scrupulously subjected to analysis with these models and often African authors are battered with criticism for not writing to their preconceived ideas.

Many African/West African scholars and Africanist scholars have produced works of enduring significance with these theories. However, the works are generally of limited importance to Africa because of their relative marginality to African cultural experience. For instance, Sunday Anozie has used the methodologies of structuralist poetics in making erudite studies of the works of Soyinka, Okigbo, Tutuola and Senghor. His accomplishments forced him into a memorable encounter with Achebe whom he accused of stressing content at the expense of form in his works, provoking Achebe to call him a sterile imitator of European critical models.

Marxism has endeared its revolutionary aesthetics to many African/West African scholars. Biodun Jeyifo, for example, has fruitfully used it in many of his thought-provoking publications, especially *The truthful lie: essays in a sociology of African drama*. Unfortunately, in this rigorously-argued book, he erroneously assumes that what he has developed as the three great moments in the development of the theory of literature in Europe (Aristotle, Hegel and Marx-Engels) applies equally to Africa, for Europe is merely a fragment of the universe. He concludes that Marx-Engels' moment stands for the ideal one valid for all humanity, since in it, "protagonist and antagonist forces are not agents who carry an ineluctable 'tragic flaw' which destroys them". "Rather", he continues, "they are individuals who carry the concrete goals and aspirations of social groups, forces or classes" (Jeyifo: 26).

He then uses it to evaluate Soyinka's *Death and the King's horseman* which he finds inferior to Hussein's *Kinjeketile*, a Kiswahili play in which the protagonist incarnates

the spirit of the African resistance against German colonialism in East Africa, a representation that forcefully dramatizes the gallant historical exploits of the followers of the Maji Maji Movement. Such a parallel historical movement does not characterize the segment of Yoruba cultural history which provides the sub-soil of Soyinka's play. It would be hegemonic to impose a Marxist view of history on it: an alternative theory to account for its particularity needs to be developed. A look at Godwin Darah's *The political-economic factor in Urhobo song-poetry* and Tanure Ojaide's *Poetry, performance, and art: udje dance songs of Nigeria's Urhobo people* points to the inadequacy of scholars privileging the methodology of moving from deduction (informed by, e.g., Marxist ideology) to induction (featuring the specific character of a people's culture) over the inductive-deductive paradigm which accords full space of being to the object of study. Darah's study which is predicated on Marxist methodology tends to restrict the free flow of Urhobo oral poetry by forcing it to revolve around its economic features as is usually the case with Marxist aesthetics, thus reducing the impact of its impressive erudite rendition. This may explain why African/West African/Nigerian historians generally prefer the use of the inductive-deductive methodology in studying the histories of local communities.

Other studies by Marxist scholars generally fall short of the ideal because of their dogmatic bent which overdetermines the role of economics in a people's social life, a phenomenon that a careful study of the African oral literature does not reveal. The limitation of this mode of criticism centres on its penchant for authoritarianism. The historic rebellion of some writers against it is recorded in *The God that failed* edited by Richard Crossman.

Many African/Western critics incisively use the discoveries made in poststructuralism, a movement with many strands rooted in Saussure's postulations on the nature of the *signe* (sign), *signifiant* (signifier) and the *signifié* (signified). According to Saussure, a linguistic sign is a complex whole made up of the signifier and the signified. The signifier is the word-image and the signified the concept evoked by the word-image. But the post-structuralists basically argue that truth or meaning is unstable since there is a perpetual cycle of the signifier undercutting meaning embedded in the signified, thus creating a world of multiplicity of meanings or even nihilism. Derrida celebrates this speech event in his deconstruction, Barthes in his pleasure of the text, Lacan in his psychoanalysis, Foucault in his archaeology of power, Kristeva in her intertextuality of texts, Bakhtin in his dialogism, and Deleuze and Quattari in their types of *délire* (desire).

All are rooted in relativism, a philosophical view of the world dating back to the sophist, Protagoras, noted for his aphorism that "man is the measure of all things". In spite of its various strands in philosophical thought, Robert C. Solomon's definition is pertinent: "Relativism ... seems to deny the obvious similarities among people and imply that we will never be able to understand one another – or find the truth – at all"

(Solomon: 260). This view of the world is opposed to the African's/West African's who believes that truth can be discovered, however difficult it may be, and this for the sake of group interests. In spite of individual differences, the quest for locating the centre of meaning in the text beyond the caprices of possible solipsism is a worthy venture in African/West African criticism.

Postcolonial aesthetics is not yet acceptable to some African/West African scholars probably because of its undue dependence on the wild conjectures of the reader (it is also rooted in Western relativism). Niyi Osundare, a vigorous opponent of the movement believes that the concept should be used to designate the period succeeding the era of colonial rule in Africa.

Feminism stretches its roots to poststructuralism, especially the variant of Derridean deconstruction which uses aporia – a form of irony – to undercut the essential character of propositions by revealing contradictions within them. It derives its radical posture of individualism to the movement's attachment to the philosophy of relativism. Women find it attractive because it enables them to discard the oppressive yoke of patriarchy which phallogcentrically elevates male status in society as God-given (natural) and unassailable.

African/West African female critics feel alienated from the Western model of feminism which is rather arrogantly projected as being international in character. They reject some of its tenets as un-African because they negate the principle of the complementarity of the Male and the Female in the creative order. This notable stance, however, has brought in its wake a medley of terms that call for proper articulation and possible harmonization: womanism, black womanism, femalism, gynism, sitwanism, liberal feminism, radical feminism and motherism. Of great interest is Catherine Acholonu's *Motherism: the Afrocentric alternative to feminism* which boldly attempts to inject an African character into the theory, even though the execution does not match the grandeur of the vision (which derives its force from African cultural heritage). The orientation seems to me much more attractive than the one in the book edited by Obioma Nnaemeka, one of the Nigerians living in the Diaspora. Entitled *The politics of (m)othering: womanhood, identity and resistance in African literature*, it contains many articles informed by the sophisticated, current European cultural and literary theories which are oblivious of African cultural view of life. African/West African critics are yet to produce satisfactory works imbued with the character of African/West African way of life.

Sociology of literature, as practiced by Irele and most critics in the region generally captures the spirit of the African/West African mode of perceiving reality. For its application in Africa/West Africa, it needs, however, to probe more into the tenets of African oral tradition in order to domesticate it fully rather than depending solely on theories developed in Europe.

Of great historical importance is the recent influential magnum opus, *The Routledge encyclopedia of African literature* scrupulously edited by the erudite scholar Simon Gikandi and appealingly packaged by the well-financed publishers Routledge. It clearly demonstrates the impotence of Africa with regard to the future development of her literature. Out of the 115 contributors, only 25 are resident in Africa. The well-researched comments provided in places by Simon Gikandi on such movements as Marxism, Structuralism, Poststructuralism and Postcolonial aesthetics reveal the preponderant influence of European culture on the development of African literature in this era of globalization. Although attention is given to the literatures in African languages they appear in the text more as museum pieces than vibrant aspects of peoples' natural life.

The various departments of English and French in West Africa are more or less cultural extensions of Europe in the region. The lecturers, the students and the curricula need to be decolonized to make sure that African/West African blood is satisfactorily injected into them. Literary scholarship should be made to derive its force from the West African cultural experience. Bernth Lindfors's observation is incisive: "Literary criticism remains the most underdeveloped of African arts." (p. 6)

The artists that the critics study are themselves generally well-informed about the oral tradition of their various peoples, as can be seen from the literary and critical outputs of (e.g.) Soyinka, Achebe, Clark-Bekederemo, Rotimi, Okara, Amadi, Awoonor, Senghor, Dadié and Diop. It is necessary that the critics take steps to develop theories of literature rooted in the oral literatures of the various West African peoples. These theories will then be used fruitfully in studying all the literatures in European and West African languages. It is not sufficient for the critics to feel satisfied with making occasional forays into texts for the presence of the techniques of oral literature in them, as Kester Ogeni Echenim seems to be saying in the introduction to his book *Études critiques du roman africain francophone* [*Critical Studies of the Francophone African Novel*] (p. x).

It is not necessary to rehash the arguments that characterized the struggle for the de-Europeanization of the criticism of African literature some decades ago. (The struggle was more pronounced in the Anglophone sector of the African literary experience). The point to remember is that after the encounter between African scholars and the European critics who were establishing the canons for the criticism of the texts, the latter became more cautious and less impassioned in making oracular pronouncements on the texts. The issue was so pervasive in the critical scene at the time that Dan Izevbye, one of the pillars of African literary criticism, had to base his doctoral thesis on it, hence the topic "The relevance of modern literary theory in English to poetry and fiction in English-speaking West Africa". It helped to shape his views which contributed much to the development of the literature of the Anglophone West Africa. Other Anglophone scholars whose works have made an impact on the literature of the

region are Emmanuel Obiechina, Romanus Egudu and Robert Fraser. Obiechina, who is very strong in popular culture, uses his thought-provoking book *Culture, tradition and society in the West African novel* to basically stress the power of literacy on the development of the novel (among the members of the literate middle class) in West Africa. Egudu bases his work on the four West African poets: Okigbo, John Pepper Clark, Kofi Awoonor and Lenrie Peters and rightly observes that they

... do not constitute a school in the conventional sense of the word; and there is neither the intention or (sic) the attempt to present them as belonging to one. An accident of history has merely located them together in the same geographical environment and cultural milieu, where historical forces have fostered for them similar intellectual growth and experiences in a very general sense (Egudu, 1977: ii).

And Robert Fraser takes the reader on a rewarding intellectual tour of West Africa while making his study of the poetry of the region. He passionately yearns for a theoretical work on... “an integrated African poetic which would enable us to make sense of written literature in European languages within a context determined by oral performances in the vernacular” (Fraser: 7). Many scholars anxiously await the realization of this dream.

The Francophone segment is alive with publications of theoretical significance, some of which use the primary texts by Anglophone authors (e.g. Achebe, Soyinka, Armah, Tutuola and Ekwensi) translated into French for the illustration of their points. Sunday Anozie’s text on the sociology of the West African novel written in French makes rewarding reading. A section of it delineates a typology of the West African hero, fruitfully using the methodology of Lucien Goldmann’s Marxist-oriented “genetic structuralism”. Besides Thomas Melone’s landmark performances in his three books on Negritude, Mongo Beti and Chinua Achebe, some Nigerian critics in Francophone studies have also edified the critical scene of the region with their studies – Victor O. Aire with his work on three Francophone novels and Echenim with his on the African Francophone novel in which he includes a comparative study of four heroes from the fiction of Kourouma, Achebe, Soyinka, Armah and Lundu.¹

These selected critical works on West African Anglophone and Francophone literatures underscore the necessity for developing a strong theoretical base for examining the literary life of the region. It is equally incumbent on scholars to think seriously of incorporating the literary texts in the indigenous languages into their research agendas because the region needs an integrated literary presence in Africa and the global village. It is therefore pertinent to discuss some critical works focusing on the study of the literatures in indigenous languages in West Africa because they

¹ The author has just seen a copy of *African literature: an anthology of criticism and theory*, edited by Tejumola Olaniyan and Ato Quayson, whose contents seem pertinent to the issues under discussion. Unfortunately, he has not read it. It is published abroad, hence the difficulty of his having seen it in time.

illuminate the quest for an integrated body of knowledge embodying the collection of texts constituting the literature of the region.

The works of Egudu, Olatunji, Ajuwon, Jega (with Bello-Kano and Saeed) and Emenyonu come readily to mind. Romanus Egudu's *African poetry of the living dead: Igbo masquerade poetry* is spectacular for its incisive grasp of the relationship between poetry, society and other art forms in Igbo traditional society. It is illuminating to learn that "Igbo masquerade poetry is essentially poetry of social control, social order and social harmony. It deals with the social, political, moral and economic aspects of life with a view to ensuring that people live well and peacefully as individuals and as a community" (Egudu, 1992: 36). This is equally the finding of Olatunji and Ajuwon in their various studies of Yoruba oral poetry and Jega (with Bello-Kano and Saeed) on that of Hausa embodied in the public poetry of Mudi Sipikon. Emenyonu's publications on the Igbo novel underscore the importance of Anglophone and Francophone scholars taking a great interest in the literatures in indigenous languages.

But the research done by the writers themselves in this area of intellectual endeavour make the achievements of the literary scholars pale into insignificance. We have in mind Soyinka's original work on literary theory *Myth, literature and the African world*, Awoonor's provocative critical work, *The breast of the earth* (on which Obi Maduakor has done a very refreshing study), Dadié's publications on oral literature and Senghor's two volumes of essays on various topics concerning language, oral literature, African worldview and socio-political issues. All point to the necessity of West African literary scholars showing more interest in doing research on oral literature so that they will be in a better position to develop valid alternative theories of literature rooted in African cultural experience and necessary for a better understanding of the texts in European and indigenous languages rather than slavishly using models developed in Europe.

Two major consequences may emerge from such a reorientation of research interests. The first will be a better appreciation for what the scholars in oral literature have been doing. For example, Isidore Okpewho, Chukwuma Azuonye, Helen Chukwuma, F.B.O. Akporobaro, Nkem Okoh and R. Finnegan, to mention but a few, have constantly stressed the integrated nature of the African art forms (e.g. song, dance, poetry, drama, tale, graphic arts, music) which the griot dramatizes during the performance sessions of his art. This fact helps in the interpretation of African literature, especially that in European languages and even throws some light on the nature of poetry as understood in European literary tradition in which the issue of lyricism is often pushed to the limit of valorizing incomprehension as a virtue in creativity, whereas in the African tradition it is tied into a context which elucidates its meaning. The second is the recognition of the importance of Comparative Literature in

the curriculum. Through the discipline one clearly understands the interrelatedness of the various art forms and their affinities with other disciplines.

To fully conclude this section it is important to mention the topical book *Toward the decolonization of African literature* by Chinweizu, Jemie and Madubuike published over thirty years ago. The book is quite strong in its keen perception of the nuances of Eurocentrism in various aspects of African writing and scholarship, its insistence on the necessity of the critic having a clear understanding of the African oral literature, its awareness of the pitfalls in the existing language and literature departments (p. 296) and its suggestions for correcting them (pp. 298-299), and its call for the establishment of departments of Comparative Literature in order to enable students to properly situate African literatures vis-à-vis the other literatures of the world (pp. 298-299). Its major weakness lies in its use of the prescriptive if abusive *bolekaja* tone in disagreeing with critics and writers, thereby forgetting that there are as many logics of interpretation as there are critics, since literary experience is not on par with science. As for writers, they constitute a special breed of mortals who generally abhor being dictated to on how to write, as clearly revealed (e.g.) by Soyinka's fury over their recommendations to him on how to become a good poet, Achebe's rebuff of Anozie's attacks on him, Armah's onslaught on Larson for daring to dictate to the African novelist on how to write, and Amadi's rejoinder to Omotoso for schooling him on what form of vision of life/society should be best for his works. Their other shortcoming is their belief that the call for authors to write works in the mother tongue is becoming anachronistic, hence their suggesting that the debate be suspended until the issue of the decolonization of African literature is settled. All in all, the book does not provide a theoretical framework that serves as a sharp knife with a handle in the hands of the African critic. It has a handle but it is rather blunt like many other works.

At this point it is necessary to sketch out a possible theoretical position for interpreting West African texts in European and indigenous languages. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's classic *Decolonizing methodologies: research and indigenous peoples* calls for reflection. Although it is specifically written for the Maori in New Zealand its observations apply equally to "indigenous Asian, American, Pacific and African forms of knowledge, systems of classification, technologies and codes of social life" (Smith: 64). When research is fully grounded in a people's culture, it tends to give a new sense of being to the people, especially when the people have previously been viewed as an object without any sense of livingness and specific identity by an alien imperial and colonial power. From this perspective, as Smith rightly asserts, "the term 'research' is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism" (p. 1).

Two major strategies come readily to mind. The first tries to domesticate European methodologies in order to make them carry the weight of West African cultural experience. One can rationalize the process by arguing that African forms of knowledge (e.g. Mathematics, Philosophy and Physics embedded in Egyptian

pyramids and art forms from African traditional religion) have previously been borrowed by the enterprising European intellectuals who used them to fertilize the healthy growth and development of European civilization from which emerge the theories in question. This approach informs the research of Frank A.O. Ugiomoh, a young and dynamic scholar in African Art History. In his inaugural lecture entitled *On African art and identity blogging: a historical perspective* he tells us that the “theoretical tools I have relied on are drawn mainly from structuralism and post-structuralism. And here particularly I mention hermeneutics incorporating deconstruction” (p. 18).

The second strategy, which the present author prefers, builds on the discoveries rooted in the artistic performances of the griot in the people’s oral tradition. From this perspective, the artist is perceived as a griot. In West Africa, as Dorothy Blair rightly tells us “... the griots were the story-tellers, chroniclers, praise singers, poets, professional entertainers” (p. 25). Whether he/she is a poet, novelist or playwright, he/she is not only an artist but also a social critic who, through a clever manipulation of words, helps to put order in society by suggesting values that will make it better. The physical and biological sciences have established the principle that order governs the complex operations of the universe. This order should implicitly prevail in society. Accordingly,

Literature ... deploys images from the physical,
metaphysical, biological and social
worlds such as stars, planets, heavenly
bodies, winds, clouds, sky, water, tides,
waves, lightning, thunder, earthquake, rains,
snow, heaven, hell, spirits, gods, goddesses,
God, satan, soil, plants, animals, human beings,
aspects of social life and other disciplines to
underscore the importance of order in the self,
relationship with the other and the functioning
of social institutions (Maduka, 2010: 20).

This position can be clarified. Proverb, which figures prominently in oral communication and equally serves as an indispensable rhetorical tool in the oral-narrative performance of the griot, is a form of epigram, a sub-genre of poetry defined by Baldick as “a short poem with a witty turn of thought; or a wittily condensed expression in prose” (Baldick: 71). Helen Chukwuma rightly asserts that “... proverb is central to Igbo oral art. Further, the oral prose narrative is the queen bee of the oral literary corpus encompassing as it does other forms as proverbs, riddles, song all in a dramatic garb” (p. 250).

One can therefore reasonably affirm that a literary work of art is an expanded proverb in which the author adroitly uses a medley of strategies to reveal his/her vision of life.² And this vision articulates values necessary for helping individuals or society operate rationally through the maximum exploitation of the principle of order regulating the mechanics of existence. It is the absence of this order in Nigerian society that is responsible for corruption in Nigeria. To contain this corruption, it is necessary first of all to tame it by ruthlessly fighting for the existence of order in the society.

Two other concepts have to be examined: prose poetry and the narrative (which can be in the form of drama or novel/short story). As the various art forms such as song, dance, narrative, poetry, drama, riddle, proverb, visual arts generally operate as an integrated body of forms, the sub-genre of prose poetry should be exhumed to operate fully in African written literature and indigenous languages. A prose poem is defined as “a short composition employing the rhythmic cadences and other devices of free verse (such as poetic imagery and figures) out printed wholly or partly in the format of prose, i.e. with a right-hand margin instead of regular line-breaks” (Baldick: 180).

It is not popular in European literary tradition even though it was practiced by such established writers as Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Oscar Wilde and T.S. Eliot. Since the African literary experience is generally rooted in the oral tradition in which prose narratives fuse gracefully with poetry and vice-versa, it can effectively operate as a sub-genre. It could thus be defined as an art-form in which the poetic is encrusted on the narrative and the narrative encrusted on the poetic. If it is the former, it can appear graphologically like prose as in the long prose poem, Gabriel Okara’s *The voice* or Keita Fodeba’s *Aube africaine (African Dawn)*; if the latter, it can have the graphological structure of a poem but reads like prose with well-crafted clusters of images embedded in it like Okara’s *The fisherman’s invocation* which has been rated poorly by many critics because of its strange format, whereas it is a very successful prose poem coming from a poet-griot like Okara versed in the Izon oral literary tradition. Tanure Ojaide’s *The tale of the harmattan* and *The beauty I have seen* read like tapestries of canvas pervaded with the complex rhythmic cadences of riddle, proverb and prose poetry crafted into them. Ojaide has a profound knowledge of the oral tradition of the Urhobo. This methodology may be very useful in reading many poems that appear at first queer when viewed from the perspective of the European tradition of poetry.

The second important issue to be examined is the place of plot in the narrative. Aristotle’s insistence that plot should be the soul of tragedy has held its force for centuries in the development of the various European literary histories. It even contributed to some degree to the emergence of formalism as an important literary theory on the continent.

² See Emenanjo’s *The generic determination of African oral literary texts* for a detailed examination of the terms in critical usage in studying oral literature.

A careful examination of the narrative in the African oral tradition shows that character is central to the representation of the vision of life/society in the texts. This is probably because in the larger society individuals matter so much in the evaluation of the orientation of moral codes of behaviour. It would therefore be useful to reconsider the narrative theories in drama and prose-fiction in order to give character delineation a privileged position in the totality of the techniques used in the representation of visions of life/society in the genres. Accordingly, all other narrative elements such as plot, setting, diction should be made to play subsidiary roles in the production of the total effect required of texts. To Jonathan Culler, the great European structuralist scholar, character should constitute the energizing force of the narrative (Culler: 12) but his fellow European theorists seem not to be interested in it.

An attempt should also be made to reorganize the programmes of West African language departments in the universities. Thus, students should be made to know how to read and write a West African language and be able to interpret the literature in it. A knowledge of oral literature should be made mandatory for both students and lecturers. And the discipline of Comparative Literature should be carefully cultivated in these departments so that literature will be properly understood as an integrated body of knowledge necessary for promoting unity among the various peoples of a country, region and the world. In addition, the concept of genres as handed down through colonialism should be re-examined in the context of the performances of the griot-artists in society.

To conclude briefly, West African scholars are urged to use European critical theories with caution in studying the literatures of the region. This is because these theories are often formulated with ideas alien to West African cultural experience. It would be preferable for scholars to closely study the discoveries so far made by their colleagues in the area of the region's oral traditions and to use them to formulate new theoretical constructs to be used for the interpretation of texts. Above all, the literatures in the indigenous languages should be made to assume their rightful place in the curriculum of the various departments engaged in the teaching of language and literature in West African universities, and to do this successfully the discipline of Comparative Literature should be encouraged to take root in the various departments.

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NAUGHTY AND NUDE: INTERROGATING DISSIDENT FEMALE SEXUALITY IN *THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MY MOTHER* AND *TONGUES ON FIRE: CARIBBEAN LESBIAN LIVES AND STORIES*

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Female sexuality has been conventionally silenced, obscured or vilified in Caribbean society. It is significant then that the intricacies, problematic prescriptions and prohibitions associated with female sexuality are uncovered, explored and critically examined through the negotiation of female centered narratives authored by contemporary creative writers in the Eastern Caribbean. This feminist paper negotiates and interrogates diverse issues pertaining to ‘dissident’ female sexuality and female sexual citizenship as portrayed in Jamaica Kincaid’s *The autobiography of my mother* and Elwin Rosamund’s *Tongues on fire: Caribbean lesbian lives and stories*. This conversation is significant as female sexuality and sexual citizenship continue to be subjects of contention, controversy and contestation in the Caribbean.

Conservative and colonial ideologies contest the expression of a liberated female sexuality. At the same time, heterosexist ideals, homophobia and government policy challenge the navigation of an alternative female sexual identity in the Caribbean. Therefore, as countries across the globe revisit legislation regarding expressions of sexuality, sexual minorities and their rights and sexual citizenship, Caribbean voices must also articulate concerns regarding captive and confined sexualities in the region.

Introduction

Caribbean historiography is characterized by the exoticism, eroticism and exploitation of female subjects by male colonial masters. Sexual violations, victimization and vilification, consequences of a problematic colonial gaze, denigrated and dehumanized the female subject. Therefore, Kamala Kempadoo in *Theorizing sexual relations in the Caribbean: prostitution and the problem of the “exotic”* states that “exoticism valorized peoples and cultures that were different and remote, concomitantly imposing a status of inferiority upon them” (p. 161). The Caribbean’s historical narrative is problematically preoccupied with the raping, ravishing and regulating of virgin territory and its sexual citizens and the silencing of their sexual rights and resistance.

Early Caribbean literary discourse is marked by androcentricism as male centered narratives silenced and submerged female subjectivity. Depictions of the construction of masculinity, male sexual exploits and performativity subordinated the female, positioning her merely at the periphery of literary texts¹. Nevertheless, the emergence of feminist ideology and Caribbean women writers in the region have paved a path for the promulgation of the complexities associated with female subjectivity, agency, identity and the construction and navigation of an autonomous female sexuality.

Jamaica Kincaid's *The autobiography of my mother* and Elwin Rosamond's *Tongue on fire: Caribbean lesbian lives and stories* published in 1996 and 1997 respectively have pushed the borders and boundaries of the Caribbean's literary terrain by placing the female at the centre of sexual discourse. Such literary texts invite the reader to gaze at the female body, observe the navigation of her sexuality within a difficult cultural space, and disrupt patriarchal proscriptions which attempt to police and confine the female body. Therefore, the texts under examination explore and endorse radical feminist values and contest patriarchal ideology. The constructions and expressions of female sexuality depicted redefine and reconstruct femininity, gender expectations and female sexual identity in the Caribbean.

Diverse and divergent epistemological perspectives emerge from contemporary feminist theorizing of female sexuality and the female body. The revisiting and reconfiguring of traditional or mainstream feminist viewpoints dominate such discourses. Hence, the celebration of an autonomous expression of female sexuality which subverts the authority of patriarchy (Lemoncheck, 1997), the significance of cultural and historical circumstances to understanding the negotiation of female sexuality and female sexual oppression (Gatens, 1992), and the consequences associated with notions and ideologies which vilify alternative female sexuality emerge as significant issues. (Zimmerman, 1986; Rubin, 1984; Butler, 1990).

Dissident sexuality and the naked female body in *The autobiography of my mother*

Jamaica Kincaid's *The autobiography of my mother* is a provocative, fictional text which depicts a female character who navigates female subjectivity and sexuality in a manner which defies traditional dictates and expectations in the Caribbean. First of all, the title of the text is explicitly dissident to the expectations of autobiography as a genre. Therefore, Louis Simon in *Triumph of ambivalence, Jamaica Kincaid's The autobiography of my mother* states, "The phrase the autobiography of my mother, embodies a contradiction – an autobiography cannot be about someone other than the writing subject. The paradox of the title signals a subversion of language, a twisting

¹ Evelyn O' Callaghan in *Woman version: theoretical approaches to West Indian fiction by women* revisits and reconceptualizes women's writings in the Caribbean and attempts to validate their valuable contribution to the Caribbean's literary canon.

and refuting of convention and conventional meaning that undergirds the entire text” (p. 31).

Female sexuality is the focal element within *The autobiography of my mother* as Kincaid constructs an erotized female subject. However, such eroticism is not entirely imposed upon the subject by external powers but also emanates from the interior. The female adolescent, Xuela, depicted in this narrative, is overtly mesmerized by and preoccupied with her body and emerging sexuality. Therefore the protagonist says: “...the smell of my underarms and between my legs changed and this pleased me... my hands almost never left those places...” (Kincaid: 58). This conspicuous fascination with and celebration of the female body culminates with masturbatory acts: “I did not wear undergarments anymore, I found them uncomfortable, and as I sat there I touched various parts of my body... I was running the fingers of my left hand through the thick patch of hair between my legs” (p. 70).

Through the subjectivity of the female protagonist, the black female body is valorized; it is lifted and presented for the reader’s gaze. The detailed account of an emerging sexuality undresses the black female body and she stands completely naked before the reader. The narrator explores and examines her body: “coarse hair appeared under my arm and in the space between my legs where there had been none, my hips widened... a deep spaced formed between my two breasts... my lips spread across my face... I used to stare at myself...” (p. 58). Xuela expresses an approval of and satisfaction with her emerging physical body and sexuality and sanctions the exploration of her body solely for physical pleasure.²

Kincaid depicts the sexual dissidence in this narrative within the confines of destructive and devastating familial and social circumstances. Xuela exhibits a severe, pathological obsession with her mother who died during child birth. This absent mother is very present in the narrative as she is resurrected persistently within the psyche of the protagonist who is on a quest to find her mother. She is alienated by her father and his wife, and ultimately dislodged and dislocated from her family. Moreover, a patriarchal, male-privileged system forecloses her ability to advance educationally or economically. She obtains financial security through entering into sexual relations with married men who are depicted as having careers and holding economic power. This pervasive system of patriarchal domination undermines her attempts to secure economic independence, but is unsuccessful in its attempts to exercise power over either her sexual or reproductive selves.

² Antonia MacDonald-Smythe in *Self-fashioning and the libidinal subject: the autobiography of my mother as sexual memoir* analyzes this erotic text as an “elegiac ode” to an absent mother. The absence of a maternal figure in the text MacDonald-Smythe posits, unleashes unregulated libidinal energies.

Xuela's acknowledgement of the power and pleasure associated with her sexuality propels her to evolve into a seductress who masturbates and undresses herself in the presence of married men who fall captive to her enticement. She describes the seduction of her guardian Monsieur LaBatte: "I removed my fingers from between my legs and brought them up to my face... This scene of me placing my hands between my legs and then enjoying the smell of myself and Monsieur LaBatte watching me lasted until the sudden falling of the dark..." (p. 70). This act of allurement which results in a sexual encounter is the first of several serial sexual relations which continue subsequent to her marriage to a doctor. The access to economic security enabled through matrimony does not preclude her pursuit of sexual satisfaction. The navigation of a promiscuous female sexuality contests the conventions of a conservative Caribbean society.

The female protagonist in *The autobiography of my mother* finds agency, authority and control by the navigation and manipulation of heterosexuality and the abortion of several pregnancies. The description of her sexual exploits allows her to claim control as she is the focal element within the exchange: "I made him stand behind me... I made him lie on top of me"... I made him kiss my entire body starting with my feet..." (p. 155). Moreover, through multiple, calculated and self-induced abortions, she asserts power over her reproductive self. As she reminisces on her life at the end of the narrative, she reflects on her marriage, infidelity and maternity: "He became all the children I could not allow to be born, some fathered by him and some of them fathered by others" (p. 224).

Therefore, *The autobiography of my mother* ends with a woman who may be pathologized or celebrated; pathologized due to the problematic familial and social circumstances which have influenced a navigation of sexuality which is traditionally objectionable; or she can be celebrated, for she has become what Linda Lemoncheck refers to in *Loose women, lecherous men: a feminist philosophy of sex* as a "threat to patriarchy by challenging the constraints of monogamy imposed upon women by an androcentric heterosexuality" (p. 67). Jamaica Kincaid in this fictional narrative *The autobiography of my mother*, writes a liberated female subject into the Caribbean's literary landscape, a subject which invites a conversation about alternative expressions of female sexuality which cannot be confined or contained by conservative ideology.

Dissident bodies on fire: Caribbean lesbians in the global north

Elwin Rosamond's *Tongues on fire: Caribbean lesbian lives and stories* deviates from conventional expectations of genre and navigates two genres in one text. The first section is a collection of autobiographical narratives constructed through interviews with lesbians who were born in the Caribbean but reside in the United States and Canada; the second section is a collection of fictional short stories authored by lesbians. This unique text which is constructed with the use of multiple lesbian voices

who speak from exile is centered on dissidence, the female homosexual body and lesbian identity. 'Queer' women in these narratives express their erotic desires for other women and describe their negotiation of sex and sexuality. The naked female homosexual body is also valorized; it is lifted and presented for the reader's gaze. Homosexual acts are celebrated and the sexual policing of a patriarchal and conservative Caribbean society is contested and subverted. At the same time, the problematic familial and social circumstances associated with being lesbian in a heterosexist and homophobic Caribbean society are brought to the fore.

In a fictional short story *Momentary lapses* by Jannett Bailey found in the collection, the bodies of lesbian women and the negotiation of female homosexual behaviors are represented for gazing by the reader. The nude, black bodies of women whose expressions of sexuality are criminalized in the Caribbean are publicly displayed in this text for the eyes of Caribbean citizens. Therefore, in *Momentary lapses* the narrator openly and explicitly describes homosexual sex occurring between two women. Moreover, she sets this narrative in Jamaica, a Caribbean territory notorious for homophobia:

“A hand on a hip, a tongue flickering over a brown nipple, then sucking; raspy uneven breath; ... an ear so soft against a twisted front tooth; fingers delving into moist pulsing places; and the sheets on the bed getting tangled and flung to the floor. And skin. All that soft brown skin everywhere, impossible not to touch it, suck on it, nibble and lick it.” (p. 167).

Also, in an autobiographical narrative entitled *Free to touch* written by Daphne (she only provides her first name) in *Tongues on fire* she openly describes and declares her sexuality as lesbian and celebrates the female body. In her story she discusses the struggles and limitations associated with navigating a confined sexuality in the Caribbean. She states “To me, that's what being a lesbian all is about. Being free to touch women, free to flirt with them, free to look at their bodies, fantasize about them and not to suppress the fantasy.” (p. 65).

It is significant that female same-sex desire is articulated in these narratives by Caribbean women in exile as this asserts their presence and sexual citizenship in the region. Government policy regulates and polices the sexuality of lesbians. Therefore, Jacqui Alexander in *Not just (any) body can be a citizen: the politics of law, sexuality and postcoloniality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas* interrogates and challenges the sexual offences acts in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas and the manner in which Caribbean laws regarding sexuality found in many territories in the region criminalize and exclude sexual citizens (male and female homosexuals) who do not conform to heteronormative standards.

Familial and social spaces aid the state in the policing of alternative sexuality in the Caribbean. Consequently, homosexuals who reside in the Caribbean are cognizant that they must not privately reveal their sexuality to their family, or publicly expose it to the society. Jennifer Rahim in *The operations of the closet and discourse of unspeakable contents in Black fauns and My brother*, examines the way in which the concept of “closet” functions in the Caribbean. Rahim states; “While for some the concealment of sexual identity functions as necessary space of survival against the fear of discrimination and rejection, the closet is primarily understood as a prison house of privacy a disciplinary apparatus, ideologically and enforced by a heterosexist culture.” (p. 2)

Christian ideology vilifies alternative sexuality and forces the ‘immoral’ to margins of the society within a closet where they remain invisible. Rhonda Sue in *Tongues on fire* narrates her personal story and writes:

“There are a lot of lesbians in Dominica, but they’re very, very shy. They don’t want you to know. They do it underneath, instead of doing it plain. But they are lesbians. It’s just that they think of what people would say before they think of themselves. I had a friend who became a Christian. I would tell her I am a lesbian, and she’d say she’s a Christian, so she’s not in the life.” (p. 24)

Moreover, lesbians in the Caribbean feign conformity to heteronormative standards to ensure that their alternative sexuality remains hidden. Hence, some lesbians pursue heterosexual relationships publicly and participate in same-sex relations privately. Rhonda Sue explains:

“I know a girl right now, she’s livin’ with her man, but she’s a lesbian. When she met me she tol’ me if I didn’t have this girlfriend, she would leave her boyfriend and live with me. But I didn’t love her enough for that, and I didn’t want to get involved with her. She’s a lesbian. She doesn’t love men. She jus’ doesn’t like the way people talk about lesbianism, that’s all. But she’s a lesbian.” (p. 24)

The fear of homophobic violence also confines expressions of alternative sexuality in the Caribbean. Homophobic violence against lesbian women, though invisible in media reports in the Caribbean, is an important problem. Geraldine Skeete, in *Representations of homophobic violence in Anglophone Caribbean literature* explains that even though her “paper devotes more space to the gay male... both male and female homosexuals are victims of homophobia – the latter especially so because they literally and symbolically eschew the desires of men and defy androcratic and patriarchal control.” (p. 4)

Corrective rape has been identified as a category of homophobic violence targeted at lesbians in several regions of the world. The fear of homophobic violence is a

recurring subject in *Tongues on fire*. Furthermore, Staceyann Chin in *The other side of paradise: a memoir* unveils her experience with homophobic violence. Chin, who is Jamaican lesbian, resides in New York, where she also writes from exile. Her memoir, published in 2009, discloses an attempt at corrective rape by men in a public restroom on the campus of The University of the West Indies, Mona. She writes her experience:

“Is why you don’t want no man? Why you ‘fraid o’ the rod of correction, eh, baby? Blue Shirt’s tone attempts the seduction of Red’s.... Yes, why you so frighten a de big bamboo? You think it goin’ hurt you? It not goin’ hurt you, you know. Just make you get better quick. Come feel it, nuh. White Shirt moves closer to me. Blue Shirt follows him. The circle moves in. ... Red runs his hands down my right hip and thigh. Yes, we going fuck her to bring her back to the right way of thinking. We fucking her to save her from herself and from hellfire.” (p. 258, 259, 264).

Although the antagonism or hostility exhibited by these homophobic males in Jamaica does not result in rape, Chin is nonetheless distressed and traumatized by this experience hence; she resolves that she must migrate to the United States for her own safety.

Lesbian women in exile have brought to the fore important issues regarding the prevalence of heterosexist ideals and homophobia in Caribbean. Such problematic ideologies and convictions confine alternative sexualities in the region. At the same time, by navigating deviant depictions of female sexuality these writers like Jamaica Kincaid have written an alternative female subject into the Caribbean’s literary canon. The lesbian in Caribbean narrative incites a discussion about alternative sexual identity which evidently cannot be restricted or regulated by government law or conventional ideology.

Conclusion

Jamaica Kincaid’s *The autobiography of my mother* and Elwin Rosamond’s *Tongues on fire: Caribbean lesbian lives and stories* are controversial, contentious, but significant texts which articulate silenced and submerged realities associated with female sexuality in the Caribbean. These narratives by Caribbean women writers who write from spaces, places and positions of exile depict expressions of female sexuality which overtly challenge traditional notions of femininity, dismantle the devices of patriarchal and conservative Caribbean societies, and advocate for a more liberated and decolonized female sexual citizen.

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IN THE EYE OF THE STORM: ERZULIE'S PLACE IN CARIBBEAN ECOPOETICS

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When Erzulie makes an appearance in Derek Walcott's epic *Omeros* in 1990, she is throwing a hurricane party with a motley crew of Caribbean, Yoruban, and Greek and Roman gods for whom the storm provides both an occasion for and a manifestation of divine celebration. Erzulie is depicted "rattling her ra-ra" (Walcott, 1990: 52), revealing her Haitian and Voodoo origins as she strikes her vaksin or bamboo trumpet, while Ogun takes the occasion to "fire one with his partner Zeus" (Walcott, 1990: 53). His shot of rum and Zeus's thunderbolt are one and the same, part of the vivifying tropical cyclone that enfolds them. Walcott's personification of the cyclone favors classical antiquity over the American etymology of the storm. Rather than refer to the Mayan deity 'Hurucan', he plays on the Greek roots *κυκλῶν* (kuklon), rotating, and *κύκλος* (kuklos), a circle, to point to the single Cyclopean eye of the storm: Cyclone's tempestuous rage is a reaction to injury, he is "howling because one of the lances of a flinging palm has narrowly grazed his one eye" (Walcott, 1990: 57).

Walcott's reference to a grazing injury directs the reader's attention to the eye wall, where the devastating violence of the storm is at its most intense. The eye of the hurricane is employed metaphorically at the outset of the poem to evoke the opposite of its literal sense of a calm center carried within the storm, where clear skies and fair weather can be expected. The cyclonic Cyclops of Walcott's poem, like his Homeric predecessor, Polyphemus, has been blinded by an anonymous hand, and is in no mood to be lulled into brief dormancy. The unbridled ferocity of his rage produces the carnival-like festivities of the gods and propels the narrative forward along its epic and winding course, and for this, the iambic pentameter cannot suffice. Walcott needs greater flexibility in his versification, as he reveals in later comments: "I don't think that the pentameter would've allowed me the kind of prosaic space that I wanted for the action of the narration" (Walcott, 1992). He resorts primarily to the hexameter in *Omeros*, a choice commented upon by Donald Barnard as a departure from blank verse, the dominant form of English poetry from the time of Chaucer, until challenged by free verse in the 20th century: "This might be seen as moving the verse away from a close dependence on the later, Eurocentric norm of iambic pentameter and towards a 'purer' form, closer to classical figures and therefore to the Homeric and oral tradition,

more in tune with modern Caribbean rhythmic culture and more distant from the colonial tradition” (Barnard, 2012: 108).

Six years before the 1984 publication of *Omeros*, in his essay *History of the voice: the development of nation language in Anglophone Caribbean poetry*, Edward Kamau Brathwaite famously remarked on the incompatibility of blank verse and extreme weather: “The hurricane does not roar in pentameter. And that’s the problem: how do you get a rhythm that approximates the *natural* experience, the *environmental* experience? [...] We have been trying to break out of the entire pentametric model in the Caribbean and to move into a system that more closely and intimately approaches our own experience” (Brathwaite, 1984: 10-12). As noted by Victor Ramraj in his anthology *Concert of voices*, Brathwaite’s 1982 poem, *Red rising*, usurps Longfellow’s image of the “red rising moon” (Longfellow: 1880: 366) in the 1873 poem *Keats*, liberating it from iambic pentameter to conjure up the red rising of the dawn of life, where the elemental figure of the hurricane appears as an attribute of the Akan notion of sunsum, one’s spirit or soul, which “walks the four corners of the magnet, caught in the wind, blind//in the eye of ihs (sic) own hurricane” (Brathwaite, 1982: 1). Polyphemus, similarly blind, cannot identify Odysseus as his assailant, taking the latter’s wordplay on the term ‘outis’ or ‘nobody’ for his actual name. The former thus appears, much to the merriment of his fellow Cyclopes, as the outraged author of a self-inflicted injury. Likewise, the hurricane can be seen to marshal force and fury from its own blindly erratic behavior and meandering oceanic course. Brathwaite would go on to build upon his concept of nation language and the specificities of Caribbean utterance, evolving towards a representation of the cyclical patterns of Caribbean life and history through the ecopoetic practice of tidalectics (a clever play on the word ‘dialectics’) from his 1983 *Third World poems* onward, drawing his inspiration from the circulation of waves and waters through the Antillean archipelago.

In the francophone Caribbean, unconstrained by the hegemony of blank verse, or that of the less encompassing French equivalent, the 12-syllable alexandrine, similar experiments with elemental language had been underway for several decades. Saint-John Perse wrote his poem of exile as an erasable poem made out of nothingness, using the syntax of the lightning bolt to craft the pure language of exile in his 1942 poem *Exil*. Perse, the pseudonym of the diplomat Alexis Leger, was in involuntary exile from war-torn France, and voluntarily in exile from the Caribbean, far from his native Guadeloupe, which his family left when he was 12, but whose memories never left him. Other poets were hearkening to the not-so-distant thunder of displacement and dispossession of political oppression and colonial occupation. In his 1939 book-length poem *Cahier d’un retour au pays natal*, Aimé Césaire surveys the aftermath of colonial occupation and depredation in Martinique, recognizing in the bleak landscape a map drawn by the shedding of his own blood. The elemental forces that govern the

island's destiny are themselves recognizable figures of enslavement. The hurricane is shipwrecked, the volcano in shackles:

“Au bout du petit matin, flaques perdues, parfum errants, ouragans échoués, coques démâtées, vieilles plaies, os pourris, buées, volcans enchaînés, morts mal racinés, crier amer. J’accepte!

Et mon originale géographie aussi; la carte du monde faite à mon usage, non pas teinte aux arbitraires couleurs des savants, mais à la géométrie de mon sang répandu, j’accepte.” (Césaire, 1983: 55-56)

For Césaire, acceptance of past humiliation is a necessary step toward triumphant self-determination. On the neighboring island of Haiti, impoverished by the servicing of colonial debt, and wracked by the unnatural violence of dictatorship, the Haitian poet Frankétienne articulates in his 1968 novel *Mûr à crever* the transformational agency of language in his spiralist ecopoetics, uttering a poem that enables him to become one with the fury of the storm:

“Chaque jour, j’emploie le dialecte des cyclones fous. Je dis la folie des vents contraires.

Chaque soir, j’utilise le patois des pluies furieuses. Je dis la furie des eaux en débordement.

Chaque nuit, je parle aux îles Caraïbes le langage des tempêtes hystériques. Je dis l’hystérie de la mer en rut.

Dialecte des cyclones. Patois des pluies. Langage des tempêtes.

Déroulement de la vie en spirale. ” (Frankétienne, 2004: 15-16)

Spiralism in Haiti began in 1965 in the works of three authors, Frankétienne, Jean-Claude Fignolé, and René Philoctète. Inspired by the trigonometric form of the spiral, and taking its universalist aesthetics from the natural world, it was in no small part, as Kaiama Glover has noted in her 2010 book, *Haiti unbound: a spiralist challenge to the postcolonial canon*, a response to the challenge of remaining artistically engaged in Haiti during the repressive dictatorship of Papa Doc. At a time when the political environment brooked no dissidence, the violence of the elements offered a haven, safely sparking a language of revolt.

Erzulie, in the meantime, was making a sporadic appearance in francophone fiction, as Céline in Pétion Savain’s *La case de Damballah*, Annaïse in Jacques Roumain’s *Gouverneurs de la rosée*, Rose in Marie Chauvet’s *Colère*, and Noémie in Émile Ollivier’s *Mère-Solitude*. But it is not until competing voices make themselves heard, articulating alternatives to the androcentric focus on the tempestuous figure of Caliban, that Erzulie will take her place at the heart of the hurricane in Walcott’s *Omeros*. Brathwaite’s poem *Caliban* in his 1969 work *Islands*, alongside George Lamming’s *Pleasures of exile*, Fernández Retamar’s *Calibán*, and most notably Aimé Césaire’s *Une Tempête*, have established this male character as a model for the postcolonial creole subject. As Heather Smyth describes in her article ‘*Roots beyond roots*’:

heteroglossia and feminist creolization in Myal and Crossing the Mangrove by the end of the 1980s women writers were increasingly taking issue with the failure of theories of creolization to include considerations of gender or sexual orientation. The year 1989 saw the publication of *Éloge de la créolité*, a work influential in defining creole identity by Patrick Chamoiseau, Raphaël Confiant and Jean Bernabé. It also saw the publication of Maryse Condé's *Traversée de la mangrove*, a novel whose rhizomatically tangled exploration of Caribbeanness, Smyth notes, challenges the dominant masculinist paradigm, offering "a feminist critique of créolité" (Smyth, 2002: 13), and drawing an accusation of cultural inauthenticity from Chamoiseau.

Women writers will adopt the Haitian lwa Erzulie as a countermodel to historiographic fiction centered on the figure of Caliban. Following in Jamaica Kincaid's muted footsteps (Erzulie is never explicitly named in her works), Pauline Melville, Edwige Danticat, and others will craft their own stories around this central presence in the voodoo pantheon. In her seminal 1994 essay *Erzulie, a women's history of Haiti*, Joan Dayan echoes a growing dissatisfaction with perspectives on Caribbean history that fail to acknowledge the central place occupied by women and remain silent about their stories. She affirms the centrality of the role played by enslaved women in Haiti's past. The iconic figure of Erzulie, she argues, occupies a place at the epicenter of the competing forces that have warred for ascendancy during Haiti's ongoing travails: "Erzulie and the rituals associated with her store and reinterpret the past: the confusions and vociferous identities of colonial Saint-Domingue, Haiti's passage into independence, and its ongoing crisis of neo-colonialism" (Dayan, 1994: 10). She embodies the contradictions of that past, replicating attributes of both master and subaltern, and representing the swirling violence and passions that mark their relations. Daniel Maximin, whose trilogy of historical novels is centered on the presence of strong women characters facing natural and political calamity, subsequently undertakes a personal geopoetics of the Caribbean in which he chronicles the interdependency of Caribbean culture and natural disaster. Entitled *Les fruits du cyclone: une géopoétique de la Caraïbe*, Maximin's 2006 collection of essays casts nature as a major actor in the history of the Caribbean: "La nature dans la Caraïbe n'est pas un décor, c'est un personnage central de son histoire" (Maximin, 2006: 81). Maximin recognizes the raw natural power of the hurricane as a powerful agent of social and political transformation, as unpredictable in its manifestation as it is unimaginable in terms of its destructive potential. As such, it can precipitate the breakdown of social structure and political order, offering to those fortunate enough to survive an awareness of the limits of human power and control, and a corresponding awareness that even the most extreme, and apparently invincible forms of political repression and economic exploitation are fragile structures at best, against which successful revolt is possible.

Maximin notes that on the island of Guadeloupe, the major urban centers of Pointe-à-Pitre and Saint-Pierre have always had more to fear from the destructive potential of the elements than from human opposition, and as Sharae Deckard has pointed out in her study: “*The political ecology of storms in Caribbean literature*, cyclonic activity refuses to bow to human authority, and thereby serves to fan the embers of rebellion, “engendering in the oppressed a dream of revolt, to imitate a nature which says ‘no’” (Deckhard, 2013: 9). At the same time, the hurricane’s uncontrollable energy is a seasonal threat, one that conditions the inhabitants of the Eastern Caribbean to collective endeavor. Struggle on an individual level is futile. Reliance upon an existing social fabric is essential, as effective against despotic colonial and neocolonial oppression as it is to surviving destructive cyclonic activity. Accordingly, the hurricane not only embodies the politics of refusal, it also teaches that the most effective strategy of resistance is that of community formation and the creation of support networks.

As Florence Raymond Journey has shown in her 2009 book, *Representations of the island in Caribbean literature: Caribbean women redefine their homelands*, women writers especially have opposed the tendency to view linguistic boundaries as defining Caribbean communities, and have brought to the foreground the complex relationship of Caribbean space to global engagement and the problematics of diasporic community formation. For the most part, efforts to represent a Caribbean identity grounded in postcolonial ecopoetics through the creation of a storm aesthetics and linguistic experimentation have remained separate from the representation of community and networking as a survival strategy in the Caribbean, on opposite sides of the gender divide. An attempt to integrate the two elements is to be found in a novel by the Haitian-Quebecois writer Gérard Etienne, first published in 2001, and entitled *Vous n’êtes pas seul*, in which the protagonist, Yves, appears as a deranged Haitian immigrant newly escaped from the Montreal asylum where he has been confined while doctors puzzle over his condition.

At first reading, the novel resists the reader’s attempt to penetrate the frozen mutism and later the disconnected ramblings of the fugitive, who takes shelter from a snowstorm in an apartment occupied by a young woman, Carmen Lavoie, later joined by her friends Marie France and Pierre. In this instance of storm activity, the action has migrated far to the north of the Caribbean, there is no Cyclopean hurricane in immediate evidence, and Maîtresse Erzulie’s hurricane party appears to be missing in action. But the connection to Antillean space is gradually strengthened as the protagonist reveals that he has been a victim of torture and a refugee from political oppression on Shark Island, a thinly-veiled allusion to the author’s own experience as a dissident and revolutionary in Haiti, imprisoned and brutalized by the François Duvalier regime in 1960. However, the narrator also reveals a mythomaniac propensity for telling tall tales. Rather than merely compose stories about himself, it appears as

though he is composed of the stories he relates, shifting from one to the next in chameleon-like fashion, unconstrained by the laws of chronology or verisimilitude. He admits at the novel's close that he is a compulsive liar:

“Moi je suis...

Quoi demande Pierre.

Un menteur. Un fabricant d'histoires à dormir debout. ” (Étienne, 2007: 117)

Étienne's narrator is in this regard very different from the protagonists of his other stories. In the preceding novel, *Maître-Clo ou la romance en do mineur*, published in the year 2000, the protagonist suffers from the delusion that Erzulie Freda has followed him from Haiti, but makes no effort to disguise his obsession with the Iwa. Yves' traumatic narrative, on the other hand, unfolds by exposing layers of narrative dissembling. Yves is a creature of the whirling snowstorm that envelops him. When the storm subsides, he also makes his exit, promising to return only when the storm reappears: “dans le même quartier, dans la même tempête de neige” (Étienne, 2007: 182). But the neighborhood is as plausibly fictitious as the snowstorm and Yves himself. Montreal encompasses a phantom topography remapped to reflect Yves' intellectual and ideological itinerary, featuring a Collège André Breton in the Saint-Jacques quarter, an allusion to the well-known surrealist French poet active in promoting the Negritude movement, and to Jacques Stephen Alexis, author of the novel *Compère Général Soleil* and martyred revolutionary who led a heroic but ill-fated rebellion against the Duvalier regime in 1961. Yves, whom we discover at the height of the blizzard's fury, has suffered a facial injury. His transformed features suggest the presence of a similarly encrypted identity. Nursing a ruined eye, he appears as a latter-day Polyphemus, his tormented narrative an engine of the raging storm that devours him, inside and out. The snowstorm, modeled on the monster storm of 1971 that created havoc in Montreal, constitutes a cipher for the tropical cyclone, identifiable by its Caribbean landmarks. The snowstorm, or ‘tempête de neige’, reveals itself not to be Caliban's tempest, but Erzulie's hurricane.

Erzulie, long absent from hurricane antics in the francophone context, makes her literary comeback in Yves' narrative of misdirection, visible through the looking glass of oblique evocation. Her Freda aspect twice masked, Erzulie appears as a Greek divinity, not in the seductive guise of Aphrodite, her opposite number, but as Aphrodite's virile and virginal rival Athena, cloaked by a relatively obscure allusion to her avatar Samonia. Confusingly for Carmen, Yves' host and self-appointed protector from the tempestuous disturbance that has invaded his psyche, Yves is as dependent upon the divinity's unpredictable guidance as he is upon the wandering storm track to give his life direction. Mistress Samonia, with her fair complexion, blue eyes and long ash-blond hair, is quickly recognizable not as the forbidding Greek goddess Athena, but as the irresistible Haitian Iwa Erzulie in her Freda aspect, Yves describes her as a

nocturnal presence whose amorous visit to the future husband exercises an eroticized version of the feudal *droit de seigneur* and serves to sanction the marriage contract. Carmen's own swarthy complexion reflects the gypsy heritage associated to Mérimée's literary immortalization of the name; her pigmentation is described as just light enough for her to escape racial discrimination. She tries in vain to understand the cultural paradox posed by the powerful *lwa*, one that poses a particular challenge to the Haitian male immigrant to Quebec, quickly surrounded by an entire population of blond *Erzulie* lookalikes, and, according to Yves, only too ready to believe in their availability for his sexual gratification. Recounting her own travails as a schoolgirl at a convent, Carmen confesses her physical attraction to an *Erzulie* figure, the blue-eyed, delicately-complected Francine Durivage, which leads to her ultimate downfall at the school, and enduring mortification. Unlike Yves, however, Carmen is unwilling to adopt a defeatist posture; she has not experienced the full abjection of the Haitian condition. Politically persecuted on the one hand, but an oppressor of women on the other, the Haitian male's misery is exacerbated by what Yves portrays as the consignment of black women to the trash cans of existence, "les poubelles de l'existence" (Étienne, 2007: 158). Yves' own lack of sexual desire and ambivalence toward women is attributable to his past experience, which has rendered him incapable of desiring a young woman. On Shark Island, he explains, love is equated with prostitution and virginity with marriage; virtuous desire is thwarted from the outset. The conflation of Aphrodite and Athena in his disordered imagination is thus symptomatic of his sexual dysfunction.

Étienne, whose 1998 book-length study, *La Femme noire dans le discours littéraire haïtien: éléments d'anthroposémiologie* offers an analysis of what he terms sub-racism in the unflattering literary portrayal of black women in the Haitian novel, is concerned in his autofictional *Vous n'êtes pas seul* to show the complexities that surround the arrival of Haitian immigrants of his generation in Quebec, traumatized by despotism and economic deprivation, and incapable of seamless adaptation to a climate and culture so different from what they have known. His novel provides an instance of the networked resistance described in Maximin's geopoetics, but the phantasmagorical character of the action also underscores a paradoxical dependency on cataclysmic events as catalysts for this kind of collective effort, its seasonality ingrained in the Caribbean psyche and embedded in geographically distant diasporic cultures. When Yves leaves the shelter of Carmen's apartment, he carries away with him his nightmarish cargo of memories. New impetus for social communication will, it seems, require the return of tempestuous energy.

In discussing Pauline Melville's short story *Erzulie*, Michael Niblett recruits the expression "spectral ecologies". This way of characterizing *Erzulie*'s literary manifestation also fits nicely with Étienne's novel about the forging of solidarity between strangers, and between the sexes, where a specifically Caribbean ecopoetics

of the hurricane is at work in ghostly counterpart to the novel's Quebecois setting. The contentious figure of Erzulie is placed at the center of this storm-tossed narrative. Her rattling presence is as disturbingly tumultuous as it is therapeutic, generating the turbulence essential to opening the pathways of memory, harnessing anger at old indignities and humiliations, and overcoming reluctance to change. Natural calamity is represented in the novel not simply as a freak occurrence that momentarily brings the characters into intimate proximity but as a necessary, periodic condition for progress, fostering the twin imperatives of communication and cultural exchange indispensable for immigrant communities in search of integration.

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SPATIAL CONSTRUCTS OF LOSS AND RECUPERATION IN MARIE-ELENA JOHN'S *UNBURNABLE*

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Marie-Elena John is a native of Antigua whose mother was born and raised in Dominica. Blending her experience as an inhabitant of the Caribbean, an academic trained in the United States, and a human rights advocate in Africa, she has created a complex and poetic mosaic to represent Dominica in *Unburnable* (2006), her first novel. A mystery plot leads the two main characters, Teddy, a prominent Afro-American scholar, and Lillian, the beautiful but troubled Dominican woman he loves, on a twisting journey through the distinct and discreet topographies of Dominican landscape, society, culture, and history. A heroic quest initiates the journey: the restoration of the primordial bond between mothers and daughters, broken as a result of radically conflicting notions of love, marriage, and the sacred. As part of a larger project that focuses on the use of cultural geography by women writing in the Caribbean, this study specifically analyzes the role of real and imagined space in the liberation or containment of members of marginalized groups in the novel.

This analysis of John's innovative use of place in *Unburnable* relies upon the recent observations of theorists like Susan Stanford Friedman. She articulates a particularly useful framework In *Mappings: feminism and the cultural geographies of encounter* advocating for a locational approach to feminism that "incorporates diverse formations because its positional analysis requires a kind of geopolitical literacy built out of a recognition of how different times and places produce different and changing gender systems as these intersect with other different and changing societal stratifications and movements for justice" (p.5). Friedman observes that stories generated by intercultural encounters invite a move from a temporal paradigm to a more spatially oriented framework, "in which movement generates narrative and structures its progression", and each "location delineates an identity for characters." For Friedman, such a geographic discourse emphasizes the "lack of solid ground, the ceaseless change of fluidity that characterizes the nomadic wanderings and diasporas of the "global ethnoscope" (p. 19). She quotes Stuart Hall's observations on the Caribbean as a region especially appropriate for such an analysis, possessing an identity that is always in dialogic relationship between two axes, one that gives grounding in continuity with the past, and another that is a product of profound discontinuity and is in a constant

state of becoming (p. 153). Such a dialogue of fluid, unstable and conflictive cultural locations shape the plot and characterization of *Unburnable*.

John initiates this multidimensional journey in the contemporary academic community of Georgetown University in Washington DC. She creates a consistent image of the relatively transparent and materialistic nature of this mecca of US political and intellectual power, which she contrasts starkly with the impenetrable complexities of Dominican space. Both places are viewed both from inside and outside, perceptions which to this reader not only communicate the difficulty of bridging cultural divides, but also a profound appreciation for the culture of Dominica, doubly marginalized as a tiny nation overshadowed by the larger and better known islands of the Caribbean Basin, a region already peripheral to structures of global hegemony.

Positioned at the apex of status in the United States, Teddy is a flawed, but not totally unsympathetic character. He has been unofficially crowned in the media as the reigning authority on American race relations. As such, he lives in well-appointed townhouse in a trendy Georgetown neighborhood, dines in the finest restaurants, and attracts the most successful and beautiful black women. He has published *No Justice*, a best-selling account of the wrongful conviction of five African-American boys for a gang rape and the general injustice of the racist American legal system. He broadcasts weekly interviews from the inner-sanctum of his personal space, a study filled with state-of-the-art technology and the commodities of global culture: a daybed from China, a rug from Pakistan, a mask from Africa. Here Teddy is the “master of his universe”, inheritor of Western Enlightenment and irrevocably convinced of the powers of the intellect and science to solve the problems of the world. He pays little credence to any transcendent mythos other than the American worship of the power of the individual to overcome all barriers. Venturing out from this comfortable space will place all those assumptions in jeopardy.

Through the eyes of Lillian Baptiste, Teddy is an “intellectually gifted” but “physically unremarkable” individual. Over the twenty years she has known him, she has observed the results of his considerable efforts to become “a sensual and very good looking man” (John: 26); his average build becomes muscle bound through a rigid weight lifting regime and his medium brown hair becomes more dramatic with black hair dye and free flowing dreads. In harmony with his characterization as one who is more concerned with appearance than essence, Teddy demonstrates little dedication to his academic vocation and depends on Lillian as the ghostwriter for his most important works. He confesses to her that his ultimate goal is his own greatness, the desire to be widely recognized rather than to improve the status of his people (p.: 49). Even his marriage is a product of image: he ignores his true feelings for Lillian to pursue a union that would bring him “pedigree,” as “part of the climb” in the black community (p. 67), and then is repeatedly unfaithful to the wife who loves him deeply. John tempers her negative characterization of Teddy with his growing commitment to

Lillian and a troubled past of being raised as a single black child in a white suburb, an experience of subordination and alienation that would leave him forever obsessed with seeking the approval of his Afro-American peers.

Place has had an indelible impact on Teddy that is far more direct and traceable than what emerges from Lillian's story, which begins as inextricably linked to the past in Dominica through her mother Iris and her grandmother Matilda. The extreme circumstances of their lives are introduced unexplained and are gradually revealed through the unfolding story. Iris is associated with "uncommon beauty", unruly intoxication, passionate love making, and having survived a horrific attack on her genitals with a broken coke bottle. Lillian's grandmother was publically accused and hanged as a mass murderer in 1950. Repeating a pattern of the unnatural separation of mothers and daughters, the reader discovers that Lillian has been carefully insulated from any information about her family by her stepmother Icilma, from whom Lillian has also been estranged since her precipitous departure from the island at the age of fourteen (p. 186). This highly suggestive but perplexing information provides the traumatic void that Lillian struggles to fill in order to heal herself and to give voice to the silenced and misunderstood women of her family.

In spite of the problems buried in her past, Lillian is living what could be considered an immigrant's dream in the United States. She has enjoyed an elite education, is a highly respected defender of women's rights, and like Teddy lives a privileged life in the heart of the lively Georgetown neighborhood. Yet contrasting Teddy's transparency, mystery shrouds Lillian's identity. Lillian has carefully avoided intimacy: she has no close female friends and has engaged only in fleeting and superficial sexual relationships with men. She purposely draws attention away from her physical beauty, hiding her voluptuous figure, averting her gold hued eyes, and drawing back the "jet black straight hair" that reveals a mixed heritage of African and indigenous origin (pp. 8-9). The narrator reveals the turmoil hidden by Lillian's cool exterior, informing the reader that she works to exhaustion "as a firewall against her flashbacks" (p. 14) and that she resorts to tricks like obsessive praying, which as an adolescent "she has used to convince the psychiatrist that there was nothing wrong with her head" (p. 16). There is clearly much that the reader and Teddy do not initially understand about Lillian, circumstances that cannot come to light in the context of her life in the United States.

The reader encounters Lillian and Teddy at a turning point in their relationship. As mature adults who have maintained a friendship since college to mask their mutual attraction, they finally address their true feelings. Teddy has long been divorced, in part because his wife observed his attraction to Lillian on the eve of their wedding in Antigua. The catalyst in their epiphany is Lillian's decision to return to Dominica and her need to convince Teddy to accompany her. Refusing to believe the charge that her grandmother was a murderer, Lillian needs his investigative talents to help her

demonstrate Matilda's innocence. Her natural beauty enhanced only by the gold Adinkra cufflinks with the butterfly-wing whirls that symbolize that which is "unburnable", or the indestructible nature of the soul (p. 37), Lillian relies on seduction to secure Teddy's aid. Abandoning her normal reserve, she confronts him with her knowledge of his obsession with her and his search through her intimate belongings for clues of her past. Finally given the green light, Teddy capsizes his chair as he springs to embrace her. Love and sexuality, elements that play significant roles in the lives of Lillian's foremothers, engage them both in a life-altering encounter of unlike, incompatible, and often mutually destructive spaces.

The Dominican reality to which Lillian is returning with Teddy has two dimensions. Insider knowledge of the historical fragments relating to Iris and Matilda is juxtaposed with Teddy's superficial information as a newcomer. The parallel structure reveals the extent to which his thoroughly Western and rational outlook limits his ability to grasp the alien reality that is slowly absorbing his lover. Before departing for the Caribbean, Teddy's view of Dominica is one of naiveté at best, distortion at worst. When Teddy decides to accompany Lillian, his point of entry is the Internet, where he discovers Dominica to be an inaccessible island "of overwhelming mountains and greenness, daily rain and murky rivers", which he contrasts unfavorably with the more transparent and touristic orientation of Antigua as "flat and cloudless and open and bright" (p. 145). He learns also that the barriers provided by the island's geography provided refuge for a Maroon community to survive in the late seventeenth and eighteen centuries. Teddy then turns to a favorite haunt, a jazz club called The Nile, billed as a "Diasporic Experience", where the diversity of Afro-based cultures is reduced to stereotypical dance styles. Here he encounters a Dominican who apprises him of previously unrevealed information, that Lillian's grandmother was an Obeahwoman, associated with the death of more than a dozen men and women (p. 160).

More confused than enlightened by the information, Teddy's arrival on the island confirms his initial suspicions that it is a foreboding and impenetrable space. Like other tourists who find themselves "on narrow roads so full of hairpin turns and steep ascents and sudden, wheeling descents" (p. 178), Teddy becomes nauseated and must keep his eyes shut most of the way from the airport for fear of plunging to his death (p. 207). He and Lillian stay in a hotel whose veranda is precariously placed over the rushing waters of a river. Above them looms Morne Diablotin, the highest mountain on the island. Teddy asks innocently, "What wickedness did this mountain do . . . to get named after the devil?" (p. 208).

Apart from the unwelcoming terrain, Teddy is relegated to the position of marginalized other in the "purely female territory" of Icilma's kitchen, where he is treated with "benign condescension" by Lillian, her stepmother, and her mother's friend, Nen Allie or Mary-Alice (p. 195). He becomes a passive observer as the women work back to the trauma that had caused Lillian's abrupt departure from the

island. Countering Teddy's confidence in science to resolve Lillian's problems, the women tell him: "But you couldn't understand. An American like you" (p. 198). They know the story of madness that plagued Lillian's mother and now distorts her life. They had witnessed Iris's decline into alcoholism and prostitution after a horrific attack by the family of her lover, John Baptiste, that mutilated her body and broke her spirit. They were also witnesses of Lillian's attempt to be reunited with her mother. They know that when she finally heard the story through her classmates, Lillian attempted to dig herself into Iris's grave and slash her wrist with the shovel.

As Lillian spends more time on the island, she reduces the gap that had separated her from her ancestors and in so doing moves further away from Teddy. The key elements in her story incorporate dimensions of magic and spirituality that escape Teddy's modern mindset and lay claim to alternate versions of reality provided by traditional cultures. What appears to be superstition to him is uncontested reality to the islanders: the supernatural healing powers that are assigned to Matilda as the leader of a community of Maroons, the claims that Matilda had actually flown through the air to terrify John Baptiste and avenge the brutal attack on her daughter, the booming of Baptiste's failing heart heard outside by the islanders as he died in the hospital, and finally the power that Matilda had exerted beyond the grave to cause Iris to give birth to a child fathered by Baptiste's son. In spite of Icilma's efforts to shield her stepdaughter from her family's misfortunes, Lillian sees an image of her grandmother swinging by her neck in a mirror on the night of her own botched baptism. John convincingly constructs a parallel reality that draws the reader and Lillian away from conventional Western notions of truth and into the mythology of Dominica.

In spite of its size, there is a complexity of cultural spaces that are mutually exclusive and create unresolved tension on the small island. Characters become leitmotifs of each finite region. Associated with Matilda and an African past is the community of "Up There", or Noah, or Noir, where women's leadership and the geographical barriers of mountains and forests create a safe refuge for fleeing slaves. Simon, Matilda's husband and Iris' father, is associated with the tragic history of the Carib nation, once so free and unrestrained that it populated much of the Caribbean Basin, now restricted to a tiny corner of the island. The inhabitants of Roseau are delineated between rich and poor, between Christian, African-based faith and an isolated Lebanese community. As a microcosm of human diversity, the rich potential of Dominican space is fragmented into isolated and rival groups who mistrust and misunderstand one another. Reflecting much of colonial history, contact between them breeds conflict and destruction rather than cooperation and enrichment. Borderlands between cultural geographies are locations of insurmountable boundaries rather than utopian fertility and intermingling.

The chaotic influences of love and Carnival draw individuals out of the safety of known and secure spaces and into troubled relationships with the unknown.

Experiencing an irresistible life force in erotic attraction, men and women of different places become bound to one another in passionate love relationships. These encounters begin instantaneously and uncontrollably and hold the promise of transcendence, but become the source of anguish and end in some level of mutual destruction. The union of Simon and Matilda, the joining of the cultural and biological attributes of African and native American culture, produces the uncommon beauty of Iris and the heightened potential for healing in the community, but ends in Simon's corruption of his gifts, his near death, and an aura of suspicion surrounding Matilda. Raised in the adoring community of "Up There", Iris is poorly prepared for the discrimination and machismo she finds in Roseau, where she falls hopelessly in love with a man of higher social and economic status. Under the cover of carnival mask, dance and song, Iris is able to approach John Baptiste and to publically act out their lust. Her boldness humiliates his pregnant wife and initiates the chain of calamitous events. It is the bloody retribution of his wife's family on Iris that prompts the descent of Matilda and her people from their mountain refuge into the town, attacking Baptiste in their fearsome masks during another Masquerade. In turn, town authorities climb the mountain and bring about the destruction of Noir, for which Matilda is unfairly accused and punished. It is ironic that Matilda's guilt is sealed by the testimony of Mary-Alice, a promising threshold figure. She is a Catholic nun who marries the black islander, Bird, and becomes a respected member of his community, but is culturally unable to decipher Matilda's behavior. She seals Matilda's tragic fate when she publically judges her to be "morally corrupt" (p. 278).

Demonstrating a similar lack of comprehension, Teddy conducts an investigation that turns up distorted and misleading information. Reacting to Teddy's certainty that Matilda had killed her people as part of a ritualistic observation of traditional African culture, Bird, Mary Alice's husband, comments, "Is only people with too much brain could come up with a story like that" (p. 283). Bird knows that Matilda was a good and powerful woman, the chosen leader of her people and faithful guardian of their hidden existence. Contrary to recurrent images of female victimization and powerlessness, Matilda's position as supreme judge in "Up There" is testimony to what Shirley Ardener observes as the quintessential humanity of fiction, its potential for providing us "with 'mental maps' which are most free from the constraints of 'reality'" (Ardener: 23).

Rejecting Teddy's conclusions as profoundly insulting, Lillian approaches the high bluff of the village over which Matilda had presided. She hears the voices of her grandmother and her mother's people who draw her toward them, feeling that her mind "was becoming clear and quiet, and she was in full control of her thoughts" (p. 247). Preceded by the community that had jumped to their deaths rather than be captured, and by Matilda who viewed her approaching execution as "beginning of their everlasting lives as ancestors" (p. 272), Lillian decides to leap off the mountain.

Seeking “a place in history alongside her mother and her grandmother” (p. 291), death is more compelling to her than life with the man who loves her.

On one hand, Lillian’s pursuit of her grandmother’s story and her true identity demonstrates Friedman’s notion of “narrative as a mode of knowing essential to survival,” one of many active strategies of resistance intended to subvert versions of cultural spaces given by members of the dominant culture (Stanford Friedman: 217). In similar terms, Patricia Yeager views the need to rethink narrative dimensions “to fathom the idea of place as forgetting, and to appreciate the lexical/indexical powers that geographical figures have to reinvent spatial memory” (Yeager: 9). Lillian completes such a journey of cultural and personal memory and sets the historical record straight through the text.

In spite of this recovery, this intergenerational story does not provide a model of intercultural communication and healing. Perhaps *Unburnable* can be best interpreted as a cautionary tale of profound loss that comes as a result of the clash between the margin and the center, past and future, the local and the global, in which value is a product of power and pragmatism, not intrinsic worth or justice.

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WOMEN'S POLICED BODIES AND SEXUAL EXPRESSION: FANON'S OVERSIGHTS IN CLAUDE MCKAY'S *BANANA BOTTOM*

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Franz Fanon, in his text *Black skin, white masks*, undertakes a psychoanalytic study of how the oppressive sociopolitical structure of colonial culture produces black identity. His theory demonstrates how psychoanalysis is a useful tool to comprehend the effects of power and cultural hegemony in relation to race. Fanon elucidates how the African descended community has learned to despise their own culture and, through mimicry, adopt a white culture and ideology. This, of course, has many psychological effects on African descended peoples, since they not only repress their identity, but also find that they are never fully accepted by the white community. Fanon's theory is useful to study *Banana Bottom* because this novel presents the effects of a colonial society and a colonial education in its main character, Bitá. She is taught that the only way to move up in social class is by assimilating to white culture, which entails a denial of her own body and sexuality. This is uncharted territory for Fanon, not only because he focuses specifically on the black man, but, also, due to his depiction of black women which is highly problematic. In my analysis, I will use *Banana Bottom* to show a crucial aspect of the effects of colonization that Fanon overlooked, but which McKay presents through his characters: that is, the self-denial and self-hatred involved in the sexual development of female colonial subjects and how they break out of this oppression.

Fanon challenges the psychoanalytical theory of his time by arguing that it only applies to a limited population: propertied European descended people (the prototypical 'whites'). For instance, for white children, there is no discontinuity between the family and the nation: in both, they will find the same values, laws, and principles. However in the case of people from the Antilles, which is the group primarily studied in *Black skin, white masks*, from infancy, children learn to identify with the white colonizers and adopt their attitudes. Therefore, they do not see themselves as black. The education and the media that create this hegemony are, according to Fanon, the source of the trauma and complexes found in African descended people. He maintains however, that if they go to Europe or confront the white gaze, they will find that their "white" identity is false. Instead, their identity is

determined by the myths created about black skin: “the black man has to confront a myth – a deep-rooted myth. The black man is unaware of it as long as he lives among his own people; but at the first white gaze, he feels the weight of his melanin” (Fanon: 128). Consequently, in order to be accepted by the white, “civilized” society Antilleans must reject their black, “uncivilized” family and culture, although they will find that this rejection and the intention to be white will never be enough. The way “the black man” (Fanon uses this sexist and limiting language) lives in a racist society is described by Fanon as “being-for-others”. Fanon defines it as the way that African descended people have to change their behavior when they are with whites because they require their approval: “The Antillean does not possess a personal value of his own and is always dependent on the presence of ‘the Other’” (Fanon: 186). Of course, in the Caribbean, this “dependency complex”, this feeling of inferiority, and self-hate originates with the arrival of the white colonizers.

Fanon’s theory is useful to study McKay’s *Banana Bottom*, which is set in a late 19th century Jamaican village. When she is very young, Bitá, the main character, is raped and is taken under the wing of the Craigs, missionaries whose purpose is to “bring to the jungle creatures Light” (p. 12). Thus, Bitá, a victim of the type of native savagery they detested, would be perfect to “train as an exhibit” (p. 17), to prove that the natives could indeed be civilized through religion. Bitá is very conscious of her position:

It had never been lost upon her, from the time that the Craigs adopted her after the rape, that she was the subject of an experiment, and as she grew in understanding she had voluntarily conceded herself as one does to a mesmerist. Neither had she ever been blind to the advantages of it as compared with her peasant heritage. (p. 109)

Just as Fanon described, Bitá, a black colonial subject, finds that the only way she can move up in social class is through assimilation. The narrator rightly compares it to mesmerism, which illustrates the way the cultural unconscious works – a type of brain washing. Moreover, the Craigs function just like the whites that Fanon describes. They believe themselves to be superior, and thus, very paternalistically, are “helping” the poor, savage natives by annihilating their culture and imposing their own. In order to further Bitá’s education, they send her to England so that she may “be English trained and appearing in everything but the colour of her skin” (p. 31). They accomplished their goal to a certain extent. Bitá does learn to appreciate English literature and music, and often thinks English culture is superior to her own Jamaican culture. This ideological education is also reinforced in Jamaica through the prizes that the Church awards: “[t]ales of all children, except Negro children, for little black and brown readers” (p. 61). Furthermore, the Church tries to eliminate their beliefs in Obeah. On one occasion, one Church leader tells them to “[g]ive up our ancient God of darkness. Throw the jungle out of your hearts and forget Africa” (p. 116). With these examples one can clearly see how, as Fanon describes, Antilleans grow up with a white world

view and acquire a cultural unconscious that defines their skin color as immoral and savage. This process leads to self-hate and “being-for-others”.

Another aspect of Fanon’s book which relates to McKay’s novel is his comments on sexuality. *Black skin, white masks* contains information about interracial relationships. However, as Gwen Bergner points out, Fanon primarily studies the colonial relations between black and white men, while women largely remain commodities that mediate these relationships; after all, the sexual terrain is one arena where men compete for social authority. Even though Fanon has a chapter titled “The woman of color and the white man”, he still manages to focus on “the black man”. Throughout the chapter, he comments on how the black male is the victim of the cruelty of black women who ignorantly believe in white superiority and choose white men over them. Therefore, they are a cause of black men’s feelings of abasement and inadequacy. When Fanon does speak about the black woman, he “renders the black woman – rather than the white man – the demonized other” (Bergner: 82). Part of this demonization is achieved by reducing her to a caricature: she “has only one way open to her and one preoccupation – to whiten the race” (p. 37). In this section, his objects of analysis are two characters: Mayotte Capécia from *I am a Martinican woman*, and Nini from *Présence Africaine*. In his study of both novels, he simply defines black women as traitors for desiring the white man. Thus, Fanon ignores completely the economic and sexual politics of a patriarchal society.

The other aspect of sexuality explored by Fanon is the erotization of the black male: “The black man is fixated at the genital level, or rather he has been fixated there. . . [he] is nothing but biological” (p. 143). In *Banana Bottom*, McKay takes up this topic, but offers a particular focus not explored by Fanon. He discusses how this erotization functions in a colonial setting. In the novel, we see the church’s efforts to eliminate the natives’ “depravity”. As McKay poetically describes: “Young Africa, expatriate, emancipated, turning out of barracoons and huts, pressing forward, eager eyes fixed upon the Light held high by a white hand, tripping and falling ingloriously in the sweet snare of the flesh” (p. 14). The last section of this passage refers to some Jamaicans’ tendency to have sexual relations and to experience pregnancy at a young age and before marriage. Priscilla Craig, one of the missionaries, considers that the act of restraint is a characteristic unique to a more complex society. Hence, Priscilla’s push for abstinence is an effort to “advance” Jamaican culture. Additionally, in her eyes, this is a feminist endeavor. Clearly a product of the feminist movement of this period, Priscilla represents the white feminism that spoke universally, did not recognize other types of women, and positioned itself as superior and as more liberated than black and “third world” women. Hazel Carby’s critique in her essay “White woman listen!” fits this circumstance:

Too often concepts of historical progress are invoked by the left and feminists alike, to create a sliding scale of ‘civilized liberties.’ When

barbarous sexual practices are to be described the 'Third World' is placed on display and compared to the 'First World' which is seen as more 'enlightened' or 'progressive.' (p. 47)

Thus, Priscilla, like much of feminist work, assumes that women's liberation depends on the adoption of Western culture and entrance into waged labor. This exhibits the vast differences that exist between white and black women: the latter face different struggles and their gender is constructed differently due to the fact that they are victims of racism as well as of patriarchy (Carby: 46).

While Priscilla believes that she is more liberated than the women of Jamaica, in reality, one could argue that these women enjoyed much more independence than the European women. Rhonda Cobham clearly states that "[i]t is a historical fact that Jamaican women ... were, in comparison to their counterparts in post-Victorian England, both economically and sexually independent" (p. 195). Cobham explains that this lifestyle has its origin in slavery, which enforced certain ideas about family life that were internalized by many of the women: slave owners would make women work just as much as men and enjoying stable sexual unions and procreating were discouraged. After emancipation, even though many women got married and had children, they still remained financially independent from men.

Thus, contrary to Priscilla's beliefs, white societies' gender organization is not necessarily more progressive than that lived by black or "third world" women. Moreover, not only is Priscilla's idea of feminism inapplicable to Jamaican women's lifestyle, but it could even be considered retrograde. Nonetheless, Jamaican women's sexuality and independence was viewed as dangerous and the church believed it had to be suppressed. *Banana Bottom*, which displays this conflict, usefully explores black female colonial subject's sexuality, which Fanon completely disregards.

As I have discussed, an outcome of the enforced colonial and Christian ideologies is that the Jamaican's cultural unconscious makes Jamaicans associate their sexuality with backwardness, and Christianity and education with upward social mobility. Carolyn Cooper explains that "*Banana Bottom* is structured on a number of seeming contradictions: erudition/ignorance, civilization/savagery, fragmentation/wholeness, foreign/native" (p. 46). In relation to sexuality, Bita faces another of these binaries: education/sexuality. Even though these terms themselves do not oppose each other, in the context of the novel, they do: a woman who is educated is expected to renounce her sexuality. For instance, as an educated, religious girl, Bita is expected to follow in Priscilla's prudish footsteps and never traverse into the "sexuality" side of the binary. When Bita visits her village after coming back from England, she discovers in her old schoolmates the fate she avoided: they were pregnant and had many children. However, it is difficult for Bita to stick to one side of the binary. Contrary to what one would expect, she ascertains that *because* of her time abroad, she is able to view her native life from a different perspective, and enjoy it:

The noises of the market were sweeter in her ears than a symphony. Accents and rhythms, movements and colours, nuances that might have passed unnoticed if she had never gone away she felt an impulse to touch and fondle a thousand times more than she wanted to buy. (p. 41)

Here we see how her Jamaican culture, represented by the market, is intertwined with a sensuality that Bitia thoroughly enjoys. In contrast to Fanon's theory, Bitia is able to simultaneously appreciate her education from abroad, love her culture, and explore her sexuality.

Yet, negotiating these different elements is not easily accomplished. She cannot fully enjoy her Jamaican culture nor her sexuality because she is expected to follow the appropriate social norms of her class. Priscilla ensures that she behaves by forbidding her to go to tea-meetings, "low and rowdy affairs among the respectable church elements" (p. 49). Against Priscilla's wishes, Bitia attends one and even dares to dance:

Her body was warm and willing for that native group dancing. It came more natural to her than the waltzes and minuets, although she liked these too in a more artificial atmosphere. . . she danced forgetting herself, forgetting even Jubilee, dancing down the barriers between high-breeding and common pleasures. (p. 84)

In this passage we see how, for Bitia, Jamaica is associated with nature and instinct, while Europe is associated with artificiality and reason, yet Bitia is able to enjoy both cultures. However, when Priscilla discovers that Bitia attended this tea-meeting, she wonders if her efforts with Bitia were in vain, and whether under her cultivated crust she is no better than "a common black wench" (p. 93). Here, Priscilla is again enforcing the education/sexuality binary from which Bitia is trying to separate herself. Bitia constantly tries to do what is expected of her, but her natural inclinations and bodily desires betray her. Squire Gensir, an English anthropologist who is dedicated to recording Banana Bottom's culture, makes Bitia question further the institutions that suppress her agency. He helps her to face the prejudices that she still has and to recognize the value of her culture. Most importantly, Squire Gensir shows her that education and the church are new shackles. When Bitia tells him that he is freer due to his class and color privileges, he responds:

I may be freer than you. . . [b]ecause you passed through the same system of education as myself. Something to fit you into a rigid pattern. But I don't think I am as free as the peasants here in their daily life—I'm not as naturally free as they are. . . that unconscious freedom in their common existence, their natural instincts. They don't know what repression is. (p. 121)

Squire Gensir's opinion of the Jamaicans is not so different from Priscilla's. As previously mentioned, she sees them as constituting a simple society that has no restraint and just gives in to its natural desires, particularly sexual desires. Instead of

seeing their close relation to nature in a negative light, Squire Gensir sees it as more liberating than artificial education and the social norms that come with it. However, his point of view is also problematic. Firstly, he cannot state that there is no repression considering that Jamaica is a colonial society and that the church's control and ideology is ever present in it. Secondly, both his and Priscilla's postures are very essentialist. Even though he praises the Jamaicans, he still enforces the same binaries as the oppressive institutions: education/sexuality, artificiality/nature, and Europe/Jamaica. Fanon speaks in similar terms about "black consciousness." He explains that, since the black man is always reduced to the color of his skin, the solution for him lies in embracing his identity, his black consciousness. It is in his essentialist description of black consciousness that one can see a relation with *Banana Bottom*. He establishes that black civilization has more emotion and sensitivity, that the body of the black man is not in opposition to his soul, that he is led by his intuition (p. 106), and that he coexists with the world instead of trying to master it, to enslave it (p. 107).

Fanon's argument regarding black men is similar to discussions that have arisen in feminism: while earlier groups tried to recuperate a female identity (this would be the equivalent to Fanon's position), more contemporary, postmodern, feminisms critique the use of the category "woman," because it erases the differences of race, nationality, sexual orientation, etc. The latter approach, which rejects essentialism, is closer to *Banana Bottom*'s proposal because Bita is not easily categorized. In relation to the church, she states "whatever I was trained to like or to be, I know one thing. And that is that I am myself" (p. 100). Even though she is a victim of the oppression of her education, Bita discovers that education can be more than just a system that produces people that fit a certain mold. She is capable of using it to her benefit, to question dominant ideologies. For instance, even though she appreciates "The little black boy's" poetic value, she recognizes the danger that Blake's poem poses to black readers.

Bita's agency also manifests itself in her love life: "While girls with less education and chances were aspiring to ladylike living and trying to get away from their peasant origin, Bita had deliberately *chosen* to vegetate in the backwoods with a common drayman" (my emphasis, p. 292). Instead of marrying a man that the Craigs would have preferred because he would improve her social position, she decides to marry Jubban, to whom she is very attracted. She also admires that he is himself, instead of being a dandy; he does not participate in the artifice of society. Furthermore, even though Bita is traditional in the sense that she gets married, she has her first child before marriage, as many Jamaican women of this time did. Hence, Bita disproves the idea that one nation, class, or culture is intrinsically mentally superior to another: she, a black girl who married a peasant and got pregnant out of wedlock, is just as intelligent as any educated white.

Fanon's statement about black women's sexuality is disappointing, to say the least: "Those who grant us our findings on the psychosexuality of the white woman may well ask us what we have to say about the black woman. We know nothing about her" (p. 157). Evelyn O'Callaghan, in her text *Woman version*, addresses the issue of women's invisibilization throughout post-colonial theory. As Fanon reveals, many post-colonial readings do not present women's side of the imperial experience (p. 51). She critiques this absence, particularly because the connections between post-colonial theory and feminist theory are undeniable. O'Callaghan uses W. D. Ashcroft to explain their similarities:

For Ashcroft, both discourses resist authoritarian and neo-authoritarian orthodoxy, and both speak from positions within hegemonic language to subvert it. Both 'woman' and 'post-colonial' exist, to some extent, outside representation itself, in that they are constituted as Other . . . In addition, Ashcroft considers both discourses to be concerned with writing out of a sense of body/place as colonized, constructed within hegemonic practice, and needing to be revisioned, reconstructed, not in opposition to the patriarchal/imperial norm, but through questioning the binary structuration by which marginalization is justified. (p. 51)

This long passage is very useful for understanding how *Banana Bottom* lends itself to both post-colonial and feminist readings. In it, we see how all of the community in Banana Bottom is othered by the colonial discourse, but also how women are doubly othered. Furthermore, as I have shown, Bitá does not assert her identity in opposition to the patriarchal/imperial norm, but challenges these binaries by establishing her individuality.

Banana Bottom, with its anti-essentialist description of Bitá's identity, is an example of the union of all three theoretical approaches: feminist, post-colonial, and postmodern. What I find particularly interesting is the role that sexuality plays in the construction of her identity. One tends to assume that sexuality is, as Priscilla would define it, something natural and instinctual. However, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, in *Epistemology of the closet*, argues that it is just as cultural, constructed, and relational as gender. Even though some sexual practices clearly function within gender relations and gender inequality, sexuality has many other ambiguous and complex dimensions: autoerotic/alloerotic, spontaneous/ scripted, private/public, etc. Given that sexuality contains all these possibilities, it should not simply be reduced to sexual orientation or to the gender of the object-choice. Instead, it surpasses such traditional binary views and breaks free from their duality. Hence, it is an ideal space for Bitá, who does not fit into any binary, to express herself. One of Bitá's most liberating moments is when she studies herself in the mirror, in an autoerotic moment, after almost getting raped by Marse Arthur, who tells her that she is "only a nigger gal:"

“Only a nigger gal!” She undressed and looked at her body in the long mirror. . . She caressed her breasts like maturing pomegranates, her skin firm and smooth like the sheath of a blossoming banana, her luxuriant hair, close-curling like thick fibrous roots, gazed at her own warm-brown eyes, the infallible indication of real human beauty. (p. 266)

This is the ultimate celebration of black beauty and black sexuality. Not only by choosing a husband that she is attracted to, but also by exploring autoeroticism, Bita transgresses all of the repressive discourse that tried to make her see her sexuality as retrograde and as something that would hinder her intellectual development. Bita did not only follow her instincts, she redefines her sexual identity. After this scene, when still thinking of the words “only a nigger gal,” Bita “exploded with laughter, loud, lilting, riotous shaking, rustic black laughter until the little thing was frightened . . . storms of laughter until it was scared and vanished the hell away” (p. 269). Cooper describes this as a “fulfilling, self-centered climax, the antithesis of the frustrated rape” (p. 49). This compelling scene displays why colonial powers were so threatened by black female sexuality: if these women discover all its potential, all its possible constructions, and all the ways it can explode binaries, it has the power to render their ideology, and the very fabric of Western culture not only futile, but also completely irrelevant. In this way, *Banana Bottom*, with its contentious description of a colonial woman’s process of sexual empowerment, is an important text that helps us to address the invisibilization of women in post-colonial theory.

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TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES IN LINGUISTICS

METONYMIC REASONING IN GHANAIAN STUDENT PIDGIN: A FOCUS ON NOUN TO VERB CONVERSIONS

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This paper discusses metonymic processes that contribute to idiosyncratic uses of lexical items in Ghanaian Student Pidgin (SP), a variety of Ghanaian English-lexifier pidgin spoken by males in secondary and tertiary institutions in Ghana. We argue that semantic change is the underlying factor that makes the pidgin variety mutually unintelligible from Ghanaian English. Semantic change has occurred naturally in the pidgin as it normally occurs in other languages: partly as a result of metonymic and metaphorical extension. The present work focuses solely on metonymic processes in noun to verb conversions in the student pidgin variety.

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Introduction

*tʃale, aɪ no: flo: ju: se: dɪs tʃɪk we: aɪ go: krɔʃ fɔ sɔm program bi an dɪs fɔ legɔn
botanɪkal ga:dɪns dɛ: dɛn wi de baʃ bɔl saf we: tʃale, dɛ tʃɪk ɛnta dɛ ja:d, tʃale, no bi
smɔl dɛ tʃɪk de bi fɪ jɛs de bi*

The text above is an extract of Ghanaian Student Pidgin (SP). SP is an English-lexifier pidgin and, as its name suggests, a mixed variety that high school and university students speak in Ghana. Words in the text such as *flo* ‘flow’, *tʃɪk* ‘chick’, *krɔʃ* ‘crush/crash’, and *baʃ* ‘bash’ are not used the same way as they are in Ghanaian English (GE). Furthermore, there are words in the text such as *we* ‘that’ and in certain environments *bi* ‘some’ that do not function in any standard variety of English in the same ways as they do in SP. This paper discusses metonymic processes that contribute to idiosyncratic uses of lexical items in Ghanaian Student Pidgin.

First, the paper provides a brief introduction to English-lexifier pidgin in the Ghanaian context. Then, the discussion turns to certain lexical items in the pidgin data to highlight semantic differences between GE and SP. Those anomalies are explained by pointing to universal processes of cognition that are involved in language change, namely metonymic reasoning. All SP data that appear in this paper have been transcribed using the International Phonetic Alphabet. The first line of translation for each example is literal, whereas the second line is a semantic equivalent. Where there

is only one translation, it means there is no difference between the literal translation and the semantic equivalent. Unless otherwise stated, all dictionary definitions are taken from the *Oxford Dictionary of English* (Soanes & Stevenson, 2003).

Pidgin in Ghana

Studies on English-lexifier pidgin began relatively recently in Ghana. Dako (2002b) believes the existence of West African English-lexifier pidgin in Ghana can be traced back to language transmission from Liberian and Nigerian migration in the 20th century. Many Ghanaian linguists subscribe to the view that a strictly Ghanaian English-lexifier pidgin never emerged along the Gold Coast (Sey, 1973; Dadzie, 1985). One of the reasons for the above assertion centers on the linguistic situation around Afro-European trading activities on the coast, which took place in mostly monolingual areas (Dako, 2002a cites many Ghanaian linguists who take this stance). Scholars believe that a scenario in which a pidgin would have emerged in Ghana would have been unlikely, especially since trained translators acted as middlemen in coastal trade with Europeans. Those Ghanaian linguists claim that an English-lexifier pidgin would have had no role in communicative situations with Africans on the Gold Coast.

The prestige factor bestowed on Standard English is a second reason that makes it difficult for many linguists to believe that a variety of English-lexifier pidgin developed in Ghana. Educated Ghanaians go through a lot of pains to speak “good” English and one suffers embarrassment when one makes an error. According to Sey (1973), expressions exist in GE that reveal speakers’ disdain for non-standard language use by Ghanaians; those expressions indicate that a speaker’s grammar or choice of words is flawed. However, some linguists disagree with the assertion that a variety of West African English-lexifier pidgin never developed in Ghana. Huber (2006), for example, posits that Kru English-lexifier pidgin partially derives its grammar from a Ghanaian English-lexifier pidgin. This flies in the face of general opinion, which, as already mentioned, asserts that the Kru from Liberia and Nigerian immigrants diffused English-lexifier pidgin into Ghana. Most recently, scholars have begun turning their attention toward a radical version of English-lexifier pidgin spoken in Ghana: Student Pidgin. With regard to this variety, creole scholars agree that it most certainly emerged in Ghana, between Ghanaian speakers, and for communication with other Ghanaians that share similar educational backgrounds.

Student Pidgin

According to Dako (2002a), the use of English-lexifier pidgin among students in Ghana began in the 1960s and 1970s in the coastal secondary schools and spread from there into tertiary institutions. Dako (2002a) goes on to say that this variety developed partly in reaction to the dominance of English in the school system, especially because

the language was no longer taught properly and the students found it difficult to master its informal registers. Consequently, Dako (2002b) makes a distinction between West African English-lexifier pidgin as it is spoken in Ghana and SP, which, according to her, is relatively new and spoken mainly by male students in secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Recent studies have shown, however, that many female students now speak SP as well (Anderson & Osei-Tutu, 2007). Huber (1999), on the other hand, uses the terms ‘educated/institutionalized Pidgin’ and ‘uneducated/non-institutionalized Pidgin’ (p. 140). According to him, English-lexifier pidgin in Ghana can be seen as having a number of varieties that exist on a continuum, each representing broadly a basilectal, mesolectal, or acrolectal variety. Therefore, as far as Huber (1999) is concerned, what Dako (2002a) refers to as SP is the acrolectal, educated variety of English-lexifier pidgin in Ghana. A relatively early view on the development of a Student Pidgin can be seen in Dadzie (1985: 118):

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the influence of the ‘sea men’, as they were then called, was considerable around the port cities, especially Takoradi and later Tema. Because these seamen came back with the latest in fashion and swaggered in the characteristic sailor gait, schoolchildren, particularly secondary schoolchildren, at the impressionable age of 15 or over, began to want to look like the sea men; and if they looked like them, it was no wonder that they started also *talking* like them.

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There is little disagreement that the variety of English-lexifier pidgin (either SP or educated pidgin) that speakers employ is based more on sociolectal functions than communicative functions. Ghanaians who speak SP do not do so because it is the only language option that they have for a particular communicative situation—for that they would most likely speak Twi or English. Using SP helps to identify speakers as members of a linguistic group, namely a group of high school- or university-educated males. Although some students share both a Ghanaian language of the Kwa group and English, they still choose to use SP to communicate.

As already stated, SP serves as an in-group language and its speakers pride themselves on membership in an exclusive speech community. Indeed, many speakers agree that some students are noticeably more fluent in the pidgin variety than others to the point that when they use SP their speech is hardly intelligible. The present paper argues that the underlying factor for this relative unintelligibility is due to semantic change, which has occurred naturally in the pidgin variety as it has occurred in other languages: As a result of metonymic and metaphorical extension. The present work focuses solely on metonymic processes in SP.

The data used for this study were extracted from recordings of informal conversations of students of the University of Ghana, Legon. The various students recorded were selected from level 100 through to level 400 of the university and were from different

faculties including the sciences and the humanities. This was done in order to get some representation from as many sections of the student body as possible. Some of the recordings were done in the residence halls. In such cases, there was more than one informant, since everyone in the dorm room who could speak SP was encouraged to join the conversation. A considerable effort was made to get the informants to use their pidgin variety to discuss as many topics as possible, so as to provide a wide range of expression. To achieve this, one student acted as a moderator and constantly brought up topics that the other participants could discuss. As with all recordings where the subjects are aware of a recording device, there was the problem of the Observer's Paradox. However, it is hoped that this was mitigated to some extent as the recording device was placed in a discrete area and the recordings were started long before the subjects became intimately involved in the conversation.

In total, the collected data consists of approximately four hours of material that was recorded using an MP3 Player and an Olympus WAV recorder. There were a total of nine GSP speakers (three students at academic level 100, one at level 200, two at level 300, and three at level 400). The data that appear in this paper come from those recordings that have already been transcribed and analyzed. The most salient semantic shifting processes noted in the SP data include narrowing, amelioration, weakening, and intensification, all of which are due to metonymic processes.

Metonymy

Metonymy, like metaphor, is a central aspect of cognition. It shows up in everyday language use. Metonymic thought should be understood as a conceptual phenomenon in which one or more entities in a conceptual domain or frame (e.g., a RESTAURANT frame) stand for one or more entities in that same conceptual domain or frame. Croft (1993) defines domain as "a semantic structure that functions as the base for at least one concept profile" (p. 339). Concept profile in that definition concerns the particular *encyclopedic meanings* that are highlighted in the larger domain matrix, that is, the particular structures of information in the sub-domains that are picked out and understood in relation to the entire concept. Metonymic structure often relies on information in the highlighted domain that emerges as a result of the *entailments* of the semantic structure of the base. Those entailments or inferences are described in more detail below.

In the linguistic example, *The ham sandwich wants the bill*, there is a 'stands for' relationship existing between entity B (the sandwich) and entity A (the customer). Since there is no cross-domain mapping in the use of SANDWICH FOR PERSON, the example above should not be understood as a metaphor. Both of those entities exist in the same conceptual domain RESTAURANT, which has at least the following entities: waiters, customers, orders, food, bills, payment, events (ordering, waiting, serving, eating, paying, leaving, etc.). Metonymy differs from metaphor in that, first,

it relies on saliency and perspective for the metonymic relationship to work, and second, its structure does not rely on cross-domain mappings:

[W]hile it is not usual to describe a human in terms of food, from the perspective of a waitress, the food ordered may be more salient than the customer. For this reason, the food ordered ‘activates’ the customer sitting at a particular table in the café. (Evans & Green, 2006: 312)

The term vehicle is used in the literature on metonymy to represent an entity that stands for a target entity. In the example above, the sandwich is the vehicle that stands for the customer. That vehicle has been highlighted in the conceptual domain RESTAURANT. One of the many entailments in the concept profile ORDER that helps make up the base domain RESTAURANT is *the customer will at some point have food*. The food aspect of that entailment will serve as a reference for the customer.

In their section on metonymy and denominal verbs, Kövecses & Radden (1998: 60-61, drawing on Clark & Clark, 1979) analyze instances of noun-verb conversions as cases of metonymic relationships. The metonymies involved in those conversions include: a) OBJECT OF MOTION FOR THE MOTION, e.g. *blanket the bed*; b) OBJECT INVOLVED IN THE ACTION FOR THE ACTION, e.g. *bench the player*; c) TIME PERIOD FOR A CHARACTERISTIC ACTIVITY IN THAT TIME PERIOD, e.g. *summer in Paris*; d) AGENT FOR A CHARACTERISTIC ACTIVITY OF THAT AGENT, e.g. *author the book*; e) EXPERIENCER OF AN EVENT FOR THE EVENT, e.g. *witness the accident*; f) RESULT FOR THE ACTION THAT BRINGS ABOUT THAT RESULT, e.g. *dupe the voter*; g) COMPONENT PARTS OF A WHOLE FOR ACTION THAT PRODUCES THE WHOLE, e.g. *word the sentence*; h) INSTRUMENT FOR THE ACTION INVOLVING THAT INSTRUMENT, e.g. *paddle the canoe*.

The metonymic relationships that exist between the entities listed above are derived from cultural knowledge about those entities, for example *bench the player*. The speaker and listener draw on their encyclopedic knowledge of the domain GAME, which includes at least teams, players, coaches, officials, rules, equipment, and team spaces, to process the use of a noun *bench* – *place where players sit when not in the game* to stand for the action *keep out or remove from a game*. Both of those aspects of a game must be understood in order for the metonymic relationship to work. A listener must not think that a player is required to circle the field before returning to the designated space for the team as a result of *being removed from a game*. If that were the typical case, then that action would be the most salient aspect and would probably represent the vehicle in the metonym. On the contrary, the end result *sitting on the bench* is what is highlighted in the action *keep out or remove from a game*. It is that

end result that is the most salient entailment of *keep out or remove from a game* and, hence, it serves as the vehicle for that action.

Metonymic Processes in the SP Data

The following sections provide examples of noun-verb conversions and extended uses of verbs in SP. The analyses point out highlighting in certain concept profiles that permit the establishment of metonymic relationships. Domain highlighting often draws on the entailments of the meanings and motivations for uses of the lexical items.

Semantic shift

The pidgin data suggest that metonymic processes have led to semantic shift in SP. Semantic shift is one of the main reasons for the variation in meaning of lexical items in SP and GE. Examples (1) and (2) contain bold-faced words that illustrate semantic shift in SP:

1. *wi de **bel** wana bɔdi*
1PLSUB NPU bell 1PLSUB-body
'we were belling our body'
'we were calling (phoning) each other'
2. *ĩ wuman de **bed** im bɔdi*
3SGSUB woman NPU bed 3SGSUB body
'his woman sleeps his body'
'his girlfriend sleeps beside him'

In the examples above, *bel* 'bell' means *to call* or *to phone*, and *bed* 'bed' means *to sleep*. There are two metonymic processes that have contributed to semantic shift in those SP lexical items. First, in line with Kövecses & Radden (1998), there are particular metonymic relationships between the vehicles and targets. In example (1), there is an INSTRUMENT FOR THE ACTION INVOLVING THAT INSTRUMENT relationship. In (2), there is an OBJECT INVOLVED IN THE ACTION FOR THE ACTION relationship.

Second, information about the functional aspects of the words' encyclopedic meanings has been highlighted. That information comes from the entailments of the lexical items' functions (wherein function directly relates to *motivation for the existence* of the concept). Table 1 illustrates this information:

Table 1 *bɛl* and *bɛd* in SP

<u>SP item & English translation / gloss</u>	<u>Meaning of the English item with metonymic entailments in SP</u>
<i>bɛl</i> - ‘to call’ / <i>bell</i>	Categorization: noun_instrument Function: alert the presence of someone Entailment: the noise attracts attention -> call
<i>bɛd</i> - ‘to sleep’ / <i>bed</i>	Categorization: noun_furniture Function: helps comfort body Entailment: body relaxes -> sleep

The noun *bell* cannot be used to mean *call* or *phone* in GE. *Ring* can be used to mean *call* or *phone*, but in that case the result of the instrument stands for the action involved with that instrument. This is different from the SP use of *bɛl*. The noun *bed* can be used in GE to mean *sleep with*, but it cannot be used productively outside of fixed expressions to refer to the act of *sleeping*. The *go to sleep* meaning of *go to bed* is one of those non-productive uses where *bed* does mean *sleep* in English. In SP, the metonymic entailments of those nouns’ functions stand for the lexical items’ most salient meanings. Here we have a case of metonymy within metonymy.

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Semantic extension

Semantic extension is the process of a word broadening its scope of reference. In such cases, the meaning of a word is extended to cover other items that were not previously within its extensional range. The pidgin data show uses of verbs in SP that take on a wider semantic range than the source verbs in English. In the pidgin data, the verb *tʃɔk* ‘chock’ means *to wait*, and *but* ‘boot’ means *to walk/run*:

3. *den de tʃɔk mek sɔmbɔdi kam*
3PLSUB NPU chock CAU IDF-body come
‘they were chocking make somebody come’
‘They were waiting for somebody to come’
4. *de gai but sekɔf koti de kam*
DEF guy boot-PAST CONJ koti NPU come
‘The guy booted sake of koti was coming’
‘The guy ran away because the police were coming’

The dictionary meaning of the verb *tʃɔk* is *prevent the movement of (a wheel or vehicle, especially of a parked aircraft) with a wheel chock*. It is a transitive verb in

English that is used in the passive, for example, *be chocked*. The verb is intransitive in SP and it derives its meaning from the *be stalled* entailment of the *be chocked* meaning in English. The metonymic relationship that exists between the vehicle and the target is OBJECT INVOLVED IN THE ACTION FOR THE ACTION, since the *chock* is used to obstruct or stall a wheel in order to prevent it from moving. Table 2 shows the metonymic processes that motivate the intended meaning of *tʃɔk* in SP.

Table 2 *tʃɔk* and *but* in SP

<u>SP item & English translation / gloss</u>	<u>Meaning of the English item with metonymic entailments in SP</u>
<i>tʃɔk</i> - 'to wait' / <i>chock</i>	Categorization: noun_tool/instrument Function: prevent wheels from moving Entailment: wheels are stationary -> wait
<i>but</i> - 'to run' / <i>boot</i>	Categorization: noun_article of clothing Function: protect foot from harm Entailment: boots worn when moving -> walk/run

Table 2 also provides information for the verb *but* in SP. Two salient differences exist in the uses of the verbs *boot* and *but* in GE and SP. The dictionary meaning of *boot* as a verb in GE is *kick (something) in a specified direction*. As in SP, that verbal meaning is derived via metonymy. Drawing from Kövceses & Radden's (1998) list, the most appropriate metonymic relationship involved in the noun-verb conversion is OBJECT OF MOTION FOR THE MOTION. Other than the *start a computer* meaning in GE, the verb *boot* is only used transitively, and usually in a *kick* sense. The SP data show intransitive uses of the verb. That aspect of *but* leads us to posit the second difference in the uses of the verbs in GE and SP.

boot in GE does not entail movement of a person wearing the article of clothing. The SP verb has extended its range to cover movement of a person. This aspect of the verb's meaning is derived from the function of the noun *boot*, which a person wears when they move on foot. The metonymic entailment of wearing boots when walking or running stands for the entire meaning of the verb in SP; apparently, this is another case of double metonymy.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed some peculiarities in the SP lexicon that differentiate the variety from GE. From the discussion above, one observes some of the lexical items that constitute part of the vocabulary of SP which have undergone a form of semantic

change due to metonymic processes. In the noun-verb conversion examples, it was suggested that the metonymic entailments become the highlighted information in the concept profile. Aspects of those entailments are established as the vehicles that stand for the targets in the metonymies, for example, *sleep as a result of resting on a bed* and *wait as a result of being stalled by a chock*.

List of Abbreviations

CAU	Causative
COMP	Complementizer
COP	Copular
CONJ	Conjunction
DEF	Definite Article
DEM	Demonstrative
DET	Determiner
FUT	Future
IDF	Indefinite Article
IRR	Irrealis
LOC	Locative
NEG	Negation
NPU	Nonpunctual
NUM	Numeral
OBJ	Objective case
PAST	Past Tense
PD	Possessive Determiner
PL	Plural
PRE	Present Tense
SG	Singular
SUB	Subjective case
1	1st Person
2	2nd Person
3	3rd Person

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EMERGING SIGN LANGUAGES: EVIDENCE FROM THE CARIBBEAN

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In this paper, I will describe how different systems of sign language can potentially inform us about the nature of human language and how it develops in the absence of typical linguistic input. I will focus on situations where new forms of sign language emerge and the factors that influence the complexity and stability of those forms.

First, it may be useful to say a little about the relationship between spoken and signed languages in general. The term “sign language” normally refers to a system for linguistic communication that is a deaf individual’s primary language. Sign languages make use of the manual-visual modality rather than the vocal-auditory modality but, when fully developed, are otherwise regarded as full-fledged languages on a par with spoken languages. The manual gestures employed in sign language are quite different from the gestures that accompany spoken language or gestures used without language in pantomime. While individual sign language gestures may be iconic, the system as a whole employs arbitrary discrete elements that are combined into complex expressions in the same way that spoken languages do. If there is such a thing as universal grammar, signed and spoken languages would be expected to reflect it equally and sign language use recruits essentially the same left-hemisphere dominant brain networks that spoken languages do despite relying on completely different input-output channels (Campbell, MacSweeney & Waters, 2008). One viable theory of the evolution of spoken language even proposes that it was preceded by and developed from the use of manual gestures for communication (e.g., Corballis, 2003), which would further support strong commonality between spoken and signed languages.

There are quite a few well established sign language systems in use today, including American Sign Language (ASL) which is widely used in North America and other parts of the world, and is the most commonly used sign language in the Caribbean according to a recent report on deaf communities in the Americas (Parks & Williams, 2011). The acquisition of an established sign language like ASL by deaf children whose parents are native, fluent speakers of that language looks very similar to the typical acquisition of a spoken language by hearing children. However, for a variety of reasons, deaf children are far more likely than hearing children to not receive typical

linguistic input during the first years of life when the bulk of a language system is almost always, and most effectively, acquired.

The most extreme case of this is when a deaf child is born to hearing parents who do not know any sign language and thus the child does not receive any structured linguistic input. Parents may even be encouraged not to learn a sign language and use it with their young deaf child in order to promote the eventual use of speech and lip-reading by the child once so-called oralist training can proceed. Under these conditions, young deaf children invent their own systems for using gesture to communicate with their families. This type of gestural communication system is known as “home sign” and painstaking analysis suggests that such systems, while primitive, are nonetheless genuinely linguistic in key ways (Goldin-Meadow, 2003). This constitutes the earliest stages of the invention of a new language, but because it does not become a shared system and is abandoned once another language is acquired, it cannot be considered the emergence of a new language.

However, when multiple deaf individuals come together and invent a system of signs that becomes their primary method for communication, this does represent the emergence of a new language. There are two major ways in which this can happen. According to Meir et al. (2010: 2):

“*Village sign languages* develop within small communities or villages with a high incidence of hereditary deafness... Village sign language communities are typically socially separated by reason of ethnicity or geography. The deaf people born into such communities may not attend school... Therefore, these deaf individuals are not exposed to any existing sign language in the region. In such contexts, the birth of even a small group of deaf children in the community may give rise to a sign language that develops without contact with other sign languages. These languages emerge from the need to communicate within families, and they are characteristically used by both deaf and hearing members of the community.”

A language that fits this profile in the Caribbean is Jamaican Country Sign Language, which is used by a small and decreasing number of people and appears to be on its way to being replaced by the more widely used Jamaican Sign Language (JSL) (Parks, Epley & Parks, 2011). Another village sign language in the Caribbean is Providence Island sign language (PSL) (Washabaugh, 1986). I will return to these later.

The second way in which a brand new sign language can emerge is when a reasonably large number of unrelated deaf individuals of similar age come together, for example, to socialize or attend a new school. The communication system that emerges over several generations in this setting is called a *deaf community sign language*. This is thought to be the way in which the major established sign languages developed, but the actual process by which they emerged has already occurred and is largely

undocumented. However, there have recently been cases where a new deaf community sign language has emerged and the process has been studied from the beginning. Such is the case with Nicaraguan sign language, now known as Idioma de Señas de Nicaragua or ISN (Kegl, Senghas & Coppola, 1999; Senghas, Kita & Özyürek, 2004). Researchers have noted the potential similarity of these types of sign language creation to the emergence of new spoken languages in the form of pidgins and creoles (e.g., Singleton & Newport, 2004). The main difference between the two sets of phenomena, besides the obvious one of being signed vs. spoken, is that pidgins and creoles develop when there is a need for communication between people who already know a fully developed language. However, if children are exposed only to the pidgin, their input for language acquisition is restricted in a way that is similar to deaf individuals who have no contact with fluent speakers of a fully developed sign language.

The process by which a pidgin becomes a more grammatically complex creole is often called “creolization”. It has been claimed by some researchers (e.g., Adone, 2012; Bickerton, 1984) that the primary cause of this shift is the innate linguistic knowledge of young children who are exposed to the pidgin as their first language during the so-called critical period of language acquisition. Somewhat paradoxically, the children have a capacity for language creation that the adults lack, and creoles are claimed to have a similar structure regardless of their geographic location due to the operation of the universal innate language organ. This view is associated with Bickerton’s much disputed “bioprogram” hypothesis of creolization, but has also received more recent support. For example, Adone published a book in 2012 documenting the emergence of Seselwa, a French-based creole language of the Republic of Seychelles in the Indian Ocean, and presenting evidence that the language of the children who acquire Seselwa is more regular and complex than that of the adults who provided their only language model. However, this nativist view of creolization in general has been widely challenged as greatly oversimplifying both the conditions under which creole languages emerge and develop, and the diversity of the resulting creole languages (e.g., Siegel, 2008).

But perhaps the invention of sign languages can provide clearer evidence on the role of children in language creation since the process unfolds without the involvement of adults with pre-existing fully developed languages, at least in the case of deaf community sign language, such as ISN, mentioned previously. To provide a little history, in Nicaragua, there was no deaf community, so no sign language apart from home sign, until the 1970s when deaf children from different areas were brought together to form a school. Efforts to teach the children one system or another failed but the children invented their own system, and the evolution of this language has been studied in detail.

To give one example of the relevant evidence, in 2004, Senghas, Kita, and Özyürek studied 30 deaf Nicaraguans grouped into three cohorts based on the decade when they

began using ISN; all began at age 6 or younger. The task was to describe a complex motion event such as a cat who had previously swallowed a bowling ball and was now proceeding down a steep hill in a wobbling, rolling manner. All participants signed this event using a gesture for the manner of motion, which was rotation, and for the path of motion, which was downhill. But the first cohort, like Spanish speakers asked to express the event in gesture, combined the manner and path of motion into one holistic movement, while the second and third cohorts separated the two into separate gestures for manner and path. The authors argue that this demonstrates how young signers, exposed to the earlier form of the language, move it in the direction of a discrete, combinatorial system that allows for such things as hierarchical embedding, whereas the first cohort who invented the initial system do not make this shift along with them but retain the earlier less analyzed mode. There is substantial additional evidence for this kind of difference between the earlier and later cohorts of signers despite the fact that they are quite similar in other ways, for example, culturally.

This evidence fits well with another phenomenon that has been observed when young children acquire sign language from a reduced model. Singleton and Newport (2004) describe in detail a case where a deaf child learned ASL from his deaf parents who had acquired ASL later in life and were not fluent. The child's mastery of ASL exceeded that of his parents despite the fact that their language was his only model! Note however that while this result and the evidence from ISN just discussed are consistent with a critical period for language learning guided by some innate universal grammar, there is an alternative explanation. Children may in general be better than adults at taking inconsistent input and regularizing it by extracting structural regularities that override the inconsistencies (Newport, 1999). This ability clearly supports language learning but may not be specifically designed for it.

Whatever the relevant underlying process turns out to be, village sign languages, too, may undergo some increase in the use of grammatical devices and capacity to express abstract ideas with successive generations, but apparently not as regularly or rapidly as in cases such as ISN. This leads to the question of why village sign languages tend to have systematically less complex grammars and to be more iconic, variable, and dependent on context for interpretation than deaf community sign languages. One difference is that village sign languages almost by definition emerge in small, insular communities with high rates of congenital deafness. Thus they are from the beginning systems shared by deaf and hearing individuals, within as well as across families, and, of course, those hearing individuals already possess a fully developed spoken language, which may influence the form of the sign language that is created, as mentioned above with creoles. In addition, presumably the close knit, rural, homogeneous social setting means that all users of a village sign language share a great deal of knowledge, experience, and assumptions, and there may be less need to refer to abstract ideas or objects and events displaced in time and space. This would allow context to play a

heavy role in language interpretation, rendering more complex syntactic structure and grammatical encoding unnecessary.

It is interesting that there are spoken languages with some of these same properties. For example, the language of an Amazonian tribe called the Pirahã has become famous in linguistic circles for a number of reasons, foremost among them that their language appears to lack recursive embedding, resulting in simple syntactic structure (Everett, 2005). Daniel Everett, the linguist who has studied the Pirahã most extensively, claims that this does not correspond to a lack of ability to think recursively, but rather stems from very strong cultural values concerning the importance of only speaking of what one has observed directly. There is no interest in referring to abstract ideas or inferred knowledge, rendering complex grammar not only unnecessary but culturally taboo. This has as important implications that recursion is not a linguistic universal and is not fundamentally tied to language, and that features of language structure can be determined by culture as well as whatever innate ability underlies the acquisition of language.

The idea that languages fall on a continuum of complexity rather than varying only trivially in complexity as suggested by nativist proponents such as Noam Chomsky fits well with a recent proposal by the linguist Ray Jackendoff, who says: “The idea is that simpler grammars put more responsibility for understanding on pragmatics and understanding of context. As the grammar gets more complex, it provides more resources for making complex thoughts explicit” (Jackendoff & Wittenberg, 2012: 1). Jackendoff suggests that pidgins, home sign, and the so-called “basic variety” stage of late second language acquisition are all examples of simpler grammars, as is the spoken language Riau Indonesian, which lacks the majority of syntactic devices seen in other languages.

Finally, Providence Island Sign Language (PSL) represents an interesting case of a village sign language that appears not to have developed in a normal way. It has greater than normal variability in lexical items, greater reliance on context and pointing, virtually no syntax, and no form of naming or metalanguage. Apparently the number of deaf individuals on this island off the coast of Nicaragua was relatively small and they were widely scattered, which may have prevented it from becoming more standardized. In addition, the researcher who studied it most extensively, William Washabaugh (1986), came to believe that it remained underdeveloped due to the social status of the deaf on Providence Island. He found that while superficially appearing to be integrated into hearing society, in fact, deaf individuals were not treated as equals but rather as mentally handicapped inferiors, and the hearing did not use PSL to communicate complex information to the deaf or respond to conversation initiated by the deaf. Because the deaf were striving to be included in activities of the hearing, and were relatively isolated from each other, they did not use PSL much to communicate with one another. Washabaugh thought these factors were responsible

for preventing PSL from maturing in even a rudimentary way over several generations, a discovery that surprised him.

While Washabaugh's methodology and interpretation were challenged to some extent (Supalla, 1988), this account has been accepted as generally accurate (Meir et al., 2010). If it is, then the example of PSL is significant because it strongly suggests that the development of language can be hindered when it is not used in sufficiently rich and balanced social interactions between individuals, regardless of whether they are hearing or deaf. When sign languages emerge and thrive over time, it is because more than one or a few people have participated fully in the process of creating them. As Kegl et al. said of the emergence of ISN, "We have discovered that the source of language is within us but that the conditions for its emergence depend on community" (1999: 223). The same principle seems to apply to village sign languages and there is no reason to think it wouldn't apply to the emergence of brand new spoken languages as well.

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THE SPANISH GERUND IN PUERTO-CRUCIAN

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Introduction

Some uses of the *-ndo* morpheme in Puerto Rican Spanish and in other areas where there is extensive history of co-existence between Spanish and English have been attributed to the contact situation between these two languages. Sanchez (2002) investigates the influence that English has on Spanish spoken in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao (the ABC islands) where they coexist with Papiamentu, an Iberian lexifier Creole language. That author argues that there was a morphosyntactic transfer of *-ndo* in Spanish to Papiamentu, and that later the uses of the gerund were extended to progressive periphrasis through contact with English.

Sanchez's findings appear to support the hypothesis that Spanish *-ndo* is a morpheme that favors linguistic changes through contact with other languages, especially with English. This hypothesis has been tested with relative success in the Spanish of the United States and Puerto Rico, as can be witnessed in the works of Klein-Andreu (1980), and Morales (1986), among many others.

In this study, I examine the distribution of the morpheme *-ndo*, especially the periphrastic forms (auxiliary + verb-*ndo*), in Puerto Rican-Saint Croix Spanish (*puertocruceño* Spanish) and compare the findings with Puerto Rican Spanish in general. Our main hypothesis is that the grammatical behavior of *-ndo* will be determined by lexical and aspectual meanings internal to Spanish (Morimoto, 2001). According to this hypothesis, the gerund should be associated with atelic and imperfect dynamic structures in so far as *-ndo* denotes an event, which unfolds at a determined moment, but for which the beginning and end are not specified. The three research questions that will guide the investigation are as follows:

- What grammatical aspect appears with gerundive periphrasis in *puertocruceño* Spanish?
- Which lexical aspect appears with gerundive periphrasis?
- How does the behavior of the gerund in *puertocruceño* Spanish compare to that of the gerund in Puerto Rican Spanish?

The remainder of the paper is divided as follows: in Section 2 (the next section) I will discuss the distribution of *-ndo* in the Puerto Rican context, and examine how recent proposals concerning the uses of the gerund do not support the hypothesis that

linguistic contact is responsible for increased use of *-ndo*. Section 3 will discuss the linguistic community of Puerto Rican immigrants and descendants of Puerto Rican immigrants in Saint Croix and the variety of Spanish spoken by them. In Section 4 I discuss the methodology used for collecting and processing the data obtained over the course of my research and, finally, in Section 5 the results are presented and discussed.

The morpheme *-ndo* in Puerto Rican Spanish

In Puerto Rican Spanish the nonstandard uses of the gerund have been explained mostly as a result of the linguistic contact between Spanish and English that exists on the island, as previously mentioned. Morales (1986: 60), for example, documented a number of structures that show the possible transfer and/or interference of English in the distribution of *-ndo* in the Puerto Rican dialect. These are called Anglicized structures (i.e., a gerund with adjective value and a gerund with nominal value):

- (1) Gerund with adjective value:
 - a. Desapareció la cartera conteniendo dinero.
It disappeared the wallet containing money
 'The wallet containing money disappeared.'
 - b. Desapareció la cartera que contenía el dinero.
It disappeared the wallet that contained the money
 'The wallet that contained the money disappeared.'
- (2) Gerund with nominal value:
 - a. Este muchacho lo que hace es comprando las muestras.
This boy what he does is buying the samples
 'What this boy does is buying the samples.'
 - b. Este muchacho lo que hace es comprar las muestras.
This boy what he does is to buy the samples
 'What this boy does is buy the samples.'

Standard Spanish usually prefers a relative clause (1b) and an infinitive (2b) instead of the gerund in the constructions (1-2). Together with these innovations in the Spanish grammatical system, Vaquero (1998) observes other possibilities for the gerund in the Puerto Rican context that can best be explained as the result of linguistic contact: these involve the gerund with temporal value in the present, future and past tense:

- (3) Present tense:
 - a. El avión está saliendo ahora mismo para Miami.
The plane is leaving now right for Miami
 'The plane is leaving right now for Miami.'
 - b. El avión sale ahora mismo para Miami.
The plane leaves now right for Miami
 'The plane leaves right now for Miami.'
- (4) Future tense:

- a. El avión estará llegando a las 7 pm a Miami.
The plane will be arriving at 7 pm at Miami
 ‘The plane will be arriving at 7 pm in Miami.’
 - b. El avión llegará a las 7 pm a Miami.
The plane will arrive at 7pm at Miami
 ‘The plane will arrive at 7 pm in Miami.’
- (5) Past tense:
- a. La película estuvo presentándose en el cine (durante varias semanas).
The movie was it showing in the theatre (during various weeks)
 ‘The movie was showing in the theatre (for several weeks).
 - b. La película se presentó en el cine (durante varias semanas).
The movie showed in the theatre (during various weeks)
 ‘The movie was shown in the theatre (for several weeks).’

These data have motivated some researchers to attribute the distribution of the morpheme *-ndo* in Puerto Rican Spanish to linguistic contact between Spanish and English. For these authors the distribution of various uses of the gerund in Puerto Rican Spanish can be explained as a result of linguistic contact, that is to say, extralinguistic factors that influence language and promote linguistic variation which in this case results in language change. Nevertheless, this explanation generates more problems than solutions with respect to the study of innovative uses of the gerund. First, some of the Anglicized structures (e.g., the gerund with adjectival value) are attested in the history of Spanish. Concerning the uses of the gerund with adjectival value, López Morales (2004: 30) notes that there is no restriction that would prevent the activation of similar previously operative processes in the language. Second, some innovative uses of the gerund in Puerto Rican Spanish do not necessarily have a correlation with English, that is, English would utilize other grammatical structures and not necessarily the corresponding *-ing* forms. Third, there are uses of the gerund that admit a purely linguistic explanation, internal to the system, without resorting to external or extralinguistic factors such as contact with English: in (3a)-(5a) the verbs *salir* (to leave), *llegar* (to arrive) and *presentar* (to show) have lost their aspectual value, possibly due to a process that is called aspectual coercion (see definition 1), and denote a process, an event that takes place or happens, hence the possibility of combining with *-ndo*. (5a) exploits this possibility for the gerund to appear together with the SP *durante varias semanas* (for several weeks), which permits us to conclude that the predicate of this sentence denotes an iterative aspect.

Definition Aspectual Coercion: A lexical operation that changes the aspectual value of a lexical item. Without this change, resulting combinations would not be convergent (Translation from Bosque and Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2009: 330)

Recent proposals challenge the supposed extralinguistic influence on the synchronous uses of *-ndo*. Clements (2003), for example, suggests that the uses of the gerund in Spanish as a second language (L2) spoken by a Chinese informant correspond to atelic dynamic structures or events without delimitation or end, and they have an imperfect aspectual value. Ortiz López (2004) documents similar behavior in a sample of Haitian informants who speak Spanish as an L2, and González-Rivera (2009) finds the same patterns in the use of the gerund in a sample of old Spanish (13th century to 15th century). These findings appear to confirm the hypothesis of Torres-Cacoullos (2000), for whom the diachronic study of the gerund shows that the linguistic change of *-ndo* from old Spanish through to the current day is basically quantitative rather than qualitative in nature. Thus, the distribution of the gerund can be attributed to internal linguistic variables, in this case, aspectual considerations, which determine its distribution (González-Rivera, 2005). Torres-Cacoullos (2000) proposes that the synchronic data do not support the hypothesis that linguistic contact with English is a cause of any purported increase in frequency or wider distribution of the gerund:

[W]e found no evidence for an increase in the frequency of *estar + -ndo* in bilingual varieties with respect to comparable monolingual Spanish. To the contrary, frequency increases are a diachronic process, one effect of which is the growing restriction of the simple Present to non-progressive uses, especially in oral varieties. These findings cast doubt on the notion that increased frequencies of *estar + -ndo* among bilinguals are the result of convergence with English. (p. 24)

In other words, it appears that the morpheme *-ndo* has acquired other syntactic-semantic possibilities in the synchrony of Spanish that, in turn, refer us to its diachrony: in the evolution from Latin to Spanish, the gerund took on the notion of durative aspect, that is to say, it added functions that were absent in Latin. It appears then that the Spanish gerund maintains an accelerated evolution towards other grammatical contexts, such as the case of the gerund with habitual value or of futurity. Finally, non-standard uses of the gerund appear in scenarios where Spanish is not in contact with English or is in contact with languages that are typologically distant from English, such as is the case with *cochambino* Spanish of Bolivia; and spoken also in the Andean region between Colombia and Ecuador, the Haitian-influenced Spanish spoken in the eastern part of Cuba, the Haitian-influenced Spanish spoken along the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti, and the *achinado* Spanish in Madrid, among other varieties.

(6) Gerund in different dialects of Spanish:

- a. Spanish in the Andean region: (Niño-Murcia, 1995)

Dame trayendo el pan.

You give me bringing the bread

‘Bring me the bread.’

- b. *Cochambino* Spanish, Bolivia: (Pfänder, 2002)
 En ahí **había estado orinando** y nosotros **recién llegando**.
In there he/she/it had been urinating and we recently arriving
 ‘In there he had been urinating and we were close to arriving.’
- c. Haitian-influenced Spanish, Cuba: (Ortiz López, 1999)
 Yo pierdo un hermano aquí porque **está cortando** caña.
I lost a brother here because he was cutting cane
 ‘I lost a brother here because he was cutting cane.’
- d. Haitian-influenced Spanish, Dominican Republic and Haitian border:
 (Ortiz López, 2004)
 No **llevando** nada, deja todo allá.
No (did not) bringing nothing, he/she/it leaves everything there
 ‘She is not bringing anything, she leaves everything there.’
- e. *Achinado* Spanish, Madrid: (Clements, 2003)
 Tú puede ya fuera chica, **trabajando**.
You can now outside girl, working
 ‘You can work outside now, girl.’

When we study the diachronic data of the gerund we find that the linguistic change of *-ndo* from old Spanish to the present is of a quantitative nature. Thus, the supposed influence of English in the case of the gerund in Puerto Rican Spanish would explain the frequency of use of a morphosyntactic factor, but not the cause or origin of this factor. Saint Croix provides us a suitable scenario in order to study the distribution of the gerund. Unlike Puerto Rico, the contact between English and Spanish is much greater in Saint Croix than in Puerto Rico, being as varieties of English and English lexifier Creole are the main varieties used in daily interaction on the island. Even so, Spanish is the second most widely spoken language on the island, according to the 2000 census. If the proposal of linguistic contact as the cause of the innovative uses of *-ndo* is true, then the speakers of Saint Croix dialects of Spanish ought to make greater use of the gerund than their peers on the island of Puerto Rico.

PUERTOCRUCEÑO

Puerto Ricans in Saint Croix

There is a vast bibliography of research that documents various linguistic phenomena to be found in Puerto Rican Spanish. The majority of these studies have approached the discourse of the inhabitants of Puerto Rico (which includes the ‘Spanish’ Virgin Islands of Vieques and Culebra), while others have investigated the discourse of Puerto Ricans in the United States: New York, Chicago, Ohio and Hawaii, etc. For many years researchers have forgotten that very close to the Puerto Rican Virgin Islands lie the British Virgin Islands and the US Virgin Islands, some of which hosted

large groups of economic migrants from Puerto Rico during the 20th century. One of these islands is Saint Croix in the US Virgin Islands, which became an attractive destination for many Puerto Ricans, given its proximity to Vieques and its status as a US territory. The majority of the immigrants worked in the sugar cane fields, spoke a variant typical of their social class and did not master any variety of English or English-lexifier Creole, the main language in use on Saint Croix. The following fragment of one of our interviews in Saint Croix reflects this social reality:

Encuestado: Mis padres son oriundos de Vieques. Ellos emigraron para esta isla en el 1934, en busca de mejor situación económica. [...] En aquella época no había las grandes facilidades que hay hoy en día de grandes lanchas. En aquella época (la gente) tenía que venir en barcos de vela. Había un señor puertorriqueño que él era de Culebra, que tenía un barco, [...] tenía un barco bastante grande, transportaba tanto pasajeros como animales de aquí para allá y de allá para acá. [...] Ese señor transportó muchísima familia de Vieques para Santa Cruz.

[*Respondent:* My parents are natives of Vieques. They migrated to this island in 1934, in search of a better economic situation. [...] At that time there were no big facilities like there are today with large boats. In that era (the people) had to come in sailboats. There was a Puerto Rican man who was from Culebra, who had a boat, [...] he had a pretty big boat, he transported many passengers and animals from here to there and from there to here. [...] This man transported many families from Vieques to Saint Croix.]

Lack of interest on the part of Puerto Rican academics in Saint Croix community is even more astounding, if we take into account the fact that Saint Croix is home to a substantial number of Puerto Ricans and descendants of Puerto Ricans who have maintained their Spanish language through the years. With the exception of Simounet (1990, 1993, 1999 and 2005), there are few scholars who have carried out more than one-off studies on the Spanish of Saint Croix that is, the Spanish that the *Porto-Crucians* speak (Simounet, personal communication). Simounet (1999) has demonstrated that this community maintains Spanish as a marker of their identity, an attachment to a cultural feature that possibly defines them as distinct and differentiates them from other immigrant groups in Saint Croix. It is thus necessary to review the linguistic studies that have been done on the discourse of Puerto Ricans in Saint Croix, in order to compare that variety with the Spanish that is spoken in Puerto Rico and other parts of the Puerto Rican diaspora. Besides González Rivera (2005) and Morales Reyes (2007), there are few studies that analyze the discourse of Puerto Ricans in Saint Croix from a linguistic and formal perspective.

The diglossic situation (English/Spanish) in Saint Croix creates a suitable place to carry out research that measures the effects of social or extralinguistic variables and internal or intralinguistic variables in linguistic change. In other words, through this study of *puertocruceño* Spanish we can investigate the variables that promote linguistic variation and, thus, language change. In turn, this permits us to overcome the traditional dichotomy of external and internal factors to the process of linguistic change in non-standard uses of Spanish (Pfänder, 2002). The following section discusses the data sample of the present study.

Methodology

The data for this investigation were collected in Saint Croix from the years 2002 to 2005, mainly in the district of Christiansted. We were able to obtain highly valuable information on the Saint Croix community and their language by means of recorded observation, conversations and interviews. For the sake of this research a total of ten respondents comprise the sample. The data were collected using the sociolinguistic interview model of Labov (1994), by which we can obtain data produced in spontaneous and semi-spontaneous conversations in natural contexts of use of the language: offices, streets, service businesses, etc. Finally, the respondents were selected by following the deliberate sample model.

The principle variables for selection were: bilinguality, place of residence and generation of immigration. Each respondent must have had bilingual competence in Spanish and English, have resided in Saint Croix for at least ten years prior to the study and belonged to the first, second, or third generation of Puerto Rican immigrants. Table 1 reviews general information (age, gender, linguistic competence, etc.) concerning the respondents in the sample.

The respondents underwent tape recorded interviews of twenty to forty minutes. The participants were always aware of both the objectives of the research as well as when they were being recorded. Through the interviews we obtained a total of 6,744 verb forms, of which 295 (or 4.4%) appeared in the *-ndo* affixed forms. Of these forms, 220 were analyzed in this study, specifically those which correspond to verbal periphrasis in gerunds. Finally, the data were processed using the cross-tabulation statistics program SPSS. The linguistic variables examined include grammatical aspect and lexical aspect. These variables correlate in turn to the auxiliary verb used in gerundive periphrasis.

Table 1 General information concerning the informants of Saint Croix

Participant	Years spent in Saint Croix	Gender	Birthplace	Residence	Generation	Linguistic Competence
01	5	M	Saint Croix	Saint Croix	2 nd	Bilingual
02	5	F	Puerto Rico	...	1 st	...
03	2	F	Saint Croix	...	3 rd	...
04	5	F	Saint Croix	...	2 nd	...
05	7	F	Saint Croix	...	2 nd	...
06	6	F	Saint Croix	...	2 nd	...
07	5	M	Saint Croix	...	1 st	...
08	9	M	Puerto Rico	...	2 nd	...
09	7	M	Puerto Rico	...	1 st	...
10	5	F	Puerto Rico	...	1 st	...

In this study, the Spanish of *puertocruceños* (Puerto Ricans of Saint Croix) are compared with the Spanish of Puerto Rico as found in two corpora: *Norma Popular en la Zona Metropolitana de San Juan* (Alemán 2010) and *El Habla Culta de la Generación Joven de San Juan, Puerto Rico* (Benítez 2001). The results of the study are presented below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Grammatical aspect

According to the data the periphrastic morpheme *-ndo* maintains a correlation with the imperfect aspect in 85.5% of the cases, versus the other grammatical aspects, which reflect much smaller percentages (Table 2).

Table 2 Grammatical aspect of the periphrastic gerund in Saint Croix

Imperfect	Aorist	Perfect	Prospective	Total
188	27	4	1	220
85.5%	12.3%	2	.2	100%

In this sense the gerund in *puertocruceño* Spanish is found in predicates that do not necessarily mention the start or the end of the event described by the verbal predicate. The following examples illustrate this property:

- (7) Imperfect gerund
- Han perdido las tradiciones y las **siguen perdiendo**. (02)
'They have lost the traditions and continue to lose them.'
 - Porque esta muchacha **iba caminando**. (06)
'Because this girl was walking.'
 - Estoy cogiendo** clases aquí, en este edificio. (07)
'I am taking classes here, in this building.'

In the examples in (7) we do not know when the event of *perder* (to lose), *caminar* (to walk) and *coger* (to take) originated, nor do we know if the event has ended; that is, it could be the case that the traditions of Saint Croix continue to be lost (7a), the girl continues walking (7b), or the person continues taking classes in the same building (7c). In this sense, only the internal structure of the situation, and not the situation in its entirety, has been confirmed.

On the other hand, when we examine the aorist aspect, that is to say, that which signals the end of the event described by the verbal predicate, we find a very interesting fact, namely: some 63% of the cases occur with the auxiliary *ir* (to go) and another 26% with the auxiliary *seguir* (to continue); *estar* (to be) appears in only 11% of the cases.

- (8) Aorist gerund
- Él **siguió estudiando** como todo el mundo aquí. (05)
'He continued studying like everyone else here.'
 - La agricultura **fue decayendo**. (08)
'Agriculture was declining.'
 - No se escuchaba nada, **estuvieron llamándole** por el Intercom. (09)
'He could not hear anything, they were calling him on the Intercom.'

González-Rivera (2005) argues that the informants prefer the uses of the auxiliary *ir* (to go) in gerund constructions with aorist value because through this auxiliary the speakers appear to provide the feature [+durative] by means of an auxiliary verb of movement. In a previous study, González Rivera (2009) documents the same pattern in the diachrony of Spanish: from the 13th to the 15th centuries the gerund periphrasis with aorist aspect is associated with the auxiliary *ir* in some 96.4% of cases. In this

sense *puertocruceño* Spanish does not deviate from the general tendencies of Spanish, both in its synchrony as well as its diachrony.

When we compare these findings with Puerto Rican discourse, as evidenced by *El corpus del Habla Popular* and by *El Habla Culta de los Jóvenes*, we note that *puertocruceño* Spanish is very similar to Puerto Rican Spanish: in a sample of five informants in both corpora there is a tendency to favor the imperfect aspect in gerund periphrasis in some 89.3% of the cases (Table 3). Thus, both in Saint Croix and in Puerto Rico, the speakers favor gerundive periphrasis with imperfect.

Table 3 Grammatical aspect of gerund periphrasis in Puerto Rico

Imperfect	Aorist	Perfect	Prospective	Total
274	19	7	7	307
89.3%	6.2%	2.25	2.25	100%

These findings help us to respond to our first research question, namely:

- What grammatical aspect appears with gerundive periphrasis in *puertocruceño* Spanish?

The data indicate that gerundive periphrasis of *puertocruceño* Spanish appears with imperfect aspect, that is, an event without specified beginning or end. Moreover, the data permit us to conclude that the distribution of the gerund is conditioned by aspectual value, both grammatical aspect and, as we will see in the next section, lexical aspect as well.

Lexical aspect

In *puertocruceño* Spanish periphrastic constructions in gerundive form denote dynamic predicates in 88% of the cases (Table 4), and most often these predicates are atelic (53.2%), that is to say, they lack a specified end.

Table 4 Lexical aspect of the periphrastic gerund in Saint Croix

Dynamic	Stative	Total
193	27	220
88%	12%	100%

These predicates denote a proposition that actually occurs and, while occurring, changes or progresses with time. Additionally, these dynamic predicates have a limited duration, reflect external actions, require a voluntary act (Binnick, 1991); and are often differentiated from stative predicates that expresses a unique state that does not

change, that is to say, that persists (e.g., *ser*, *estar*, *quedarse*, *tener*, etc.). Miguel (1999: 3012) defines stative predicates in the following manner:

A state is an event that does not occur but rather happens; and happens homogeneously in every moment of the time period along which it extends. A state, therefore, is lexically incapable of expressing a change or progress during the given time period; being as it does not advance, it cannot be directed towards a limit or reach it. It is limited and consistent during a time period (in every movement of it), so that it is inherently unbound and durative: continuous. (English translation by authors)

It should not surprise us then that in the data from Saint Croix the periphrastic gerund is used predominantly with dynamic predicates – i.e., the dynamic predicates are completely compatible with *-ndo*, while the stative predicates, in principle, do not allow the use of *-ndo*. A few examples are presented here:

- (9) Gerund with dynamic predicates
- a. Y **estoy luchando** con él. (03)
‘And I am struggling with him/it.’
 - b. Se fueron para el NAVY según **iban saliendo** de la escuela. (09)
‘They left for the NAVY as they were leaving from school.’
 - c. Yo creo que hemos pagado un precio alto y **seguimos pagando** un precio alto. (10)
‘I think we have paid a high price and we continue to pay a high price.’

However, despite the general incompatibility of *-ndo* with gerundive verbal morphology, there are exceptions. Thus, there are stative predicates that can take *-ndo* via an aspectual coercion process (see Definition 1 above) which undoes their stative nature, so that they denote movement instead of denoting a state. Such is the case of stative verbs of perception like *ver* (to see), *oir* (to hear), as well as stative verbs of consciousness like *pensar* (to think). These verbs that we can call verbs of inert perception comprise 44.4% of the cases in the data from Saint Croix. A few examples are:

- (10) Gerund with stative predicates
- a. En el 1987 me salí porque no me gustaba lo que **estaba viendo**. (02)
‘In 1987 I left because I did not like what I was seeing.’
 - b. Ya **estaba sintiendo** algo, como que estaba buscando algo que no encontraba. (04)
‘I was already feeling something, as I was looking for something that I was not finding.’
 - c. Y cuando regresó de allá siempre **estoy añorando**. (10)
‘And when he returned from there I am always yearning.’

Some authors like Cortés-Torres (2005) called these items *verbs of mental activity*. These stative verbs are therefore susceptible to being aspectually coerced to denote an

activity rather than a state. This process has not only been documented in González Rivera (2005), but also in Spanish speakers in New Mexico (Torres-Cacoulllos, 2000), in Puerto Rican Spanish (Cortés-Torres, 2005), and in the diachrony of Spanish (González Rivera, 2009). We can conclude that the morphology of the gerund can be used to undo the stative nature of stative verbs. Even so, the frequency of gerundive periphrasis with stative verbs is very limited, as the data demonstrate. Torres-Cacoulllos (2000: 212-213) concludes that:

The relevance of the state versus dynamic situation distinction for Spanish has been questioned by King and Suñer, who present numerous examples of *estar* + *-ndo* with main verbs classified elsewhere as statives. However, while *estar*-plus-stative combinations need not be starred as ungrammatical, there are frequency restrictions on their use. (cf. Givón, 1979: 22-43).

In the data from Puerto Rican Spanish, the interviewees also prefer dynamic predicates in periphrastic constructions with *-ndo* (81%) (Table 5).

Table 5 Lexical aspect of the periphrastic gerund in Puerto Rico

Dynamic	Stative	Total
248	59	307
81%	19%	100%

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This allows us to conclude that *-ndo* is a morpheme used primarily with dynamic verbal lexemes. Such a conclusion has also been documented in the diachrony of Spanish: in the diachronic data that González Rivera (2009) examines, some 89.3% of gerundive periphrases correspond to dynamic predicates. These findings allow us to answer our second research question, namely:

- Which lexical aspect appears with gerundive periphrasis?

According to the data, the predominant lexical aspect in gerundive periphrasis is dynamic and, predominantly, with atelic predicates. These findings and the findings of the previous section allow us to answer our third research question:

- What is the behavior of the gerund in *puertocruceño* Spanish in comparison to Puerto Rican Spanish?

The data show that there is almost no difference between Puerto Rican Spanish and *puertocruceño* Spanish in relation to lexical and grammatical aspect. This supports the hypothesis that aspect determines or restricts the distribution of the gerund and undermines the idea that the non-standard uses of *-ndo* in contact situations respond to processes of linguistic transfer or convergence. In other words, intralinguistic variables rather than extralinguistic variables appear to be responsible for any linguistic change in the behavior of *-ndo* marked predicates in the varieties examined. We are not saying that extralinguistic variables do not play an important role in linguistic change,

but rather that linguistic variables appear to play a more important role in natural language development. This proposal is compatible with Thomason's (2003:108) assertion that certain conditions should be satisfied before researchers conclude that external variables are responsible for linguistic change:

[I]t has to be shown that the language in question has in fact changed, i.e. that the proposed interference feature is an innovation; that a source language for the interference feature must be identified in a language that both has the relevant feature (or some other feature from which the relevant feature can reasonably be supposed to have derived) and that the proposed source language had the feature before the period of contact; and, to be fully convincing, the claim should be supported by solid evidence of other interference features from the same source language.

In summary, the data from Saint Croix and from Puerto Rico support the hypothesis that the use of the morpheme *-ndo* in periphrastic constructions for the most part conveys an imperfect aspectual meaning and appears with atelic and dynamic predicates. Finally, Saint Croix provides us with an appropriate context to research Spanish, not only because there is a significant community of *puertocruceños* living on the island, but also because a substantial group of Dominicans have emigrated to the island in recent years.

Future research on this community will allow us to understand if they are adopting puertocruceño Spanish or their Spanish preserves the grammatical properties of Dominican Spanish (e.g., the expletive *ello*). No comprehensive understanding of contemporary Caribbean Spanish is possible without considering the varieties spoken in St. Croix.

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THE FINE STRUCTURE OF THE NOMINAL IN TOBAGONIAN CREOLE

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Abstract

This study explores in great detail the structure that is the Tobagonian Creole (TC) nominal and describes aspects of its architecture, including the noun and several other structures relating to it such as the determiner, demonstratives and plural marker; each containing their specific syntactic and semantic properties and functions within the nominal sphere. This description builds on foundational work done on the language by James & Youssef (2002) who provide a general description of Tobagonian Creole structure and its use. Native-speaker intuition yielded the data used in this research. Emphasis is placed on the role of attributive adjectives and how they interact with the noun and other syntactic structures of the TC nominal. The semantic properties of these adjectives and how they affect adjectival ordering within the phrase is also highlighted. Distinctions between the lexifier language of TC – English – and TC are noted in areas such as the use of reduplication instead of the English adverb ‘very’ for emphasis. A careful look at these features reveals a complex structure and even more complex processes that make up the nominal architecture of Tobagonian Creole.

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Introduction

In this work, I examine the nominal architecture of Tobagonian Creole (hereafter referred to as TC), identifying aspects of the syntactic structure that make up this domain and highlighting how these structures interact within the nominal sphere. Such structures refer to the Noun – the head of the phrase – and other modifiers of the head: the possessive marker, the determiner, demonstratives, the plural and attributive adjectives, all of which are discussed further. This study is situated within the generative grammar framework and also relies on aspects of the cartographic approach (Cinque, 2002, Cinque & Rizzi, 2008).

The aim of linguistic cartography is to represent structures through detailed mapping illustrating the hierarchy that extends from the head of the phrase, in this case, the Noun. This framework yields a uniform representation that is claimed to be universal

to all languages. The use of the cartographic approach to represent the structures within the nominal domain is a platform for cross-linguistic comparison on which further work in the field of creole typology can be based. The focus for this work however, is the adherence of TC to language universals proposed by the cartographic approach and highlighting how this may be used to facilitate work in creole typology. Although TC is widely spoken by the population of the island of Tobago, it remains a largely undocumented language. Along with other Atlantic English-Based Creoles, TC shares a genesis in the history of colonization and slavery and the contact situations that occurred as a result of these experiences. Tobago, along with the other territories throughout the Caribbean region, was first inhabited by Amerindians for at least one thousand years before Columbus (James & Youssef, 2002: 41). Subsequent to the arrival of Columbus in 1498, the Amerindian population on the island gradually became extinct. Following the arrival of the Spanish came the British settlers in 1625. Tobago, a victim of European invasion by the Spanish, British, French, and Dutch, changed hands over a dozen times until 1763 when the island was ceded to the British by the treaty of Paris.

The British then sought to develop Tobago as a colony, bringing planters from surrounding isles such as Barbados and Grenada, who brought with them, their African slaves in an effort to establish estates, sugar mills, and plantations. Records of the tribal origin of the enslaved that came to Tobago are few; however, ‘Congoes’, ‘Ibos’ and ‘Cramanti’ are accounted for through ‘oral accounts of living informants’, government records of the time, and a report by a Moravian minister to Hugo Schuchardt (James & Youssef, 2002: 44). It is this prolonged British exposure and subsequent contact with the African languages of the enslaved that primarily fostered the creation of the English-lexified Tobagonian Creole.

It is noted that TC exists along a creole-continuum. DeCamp (1971) coined the term to refer to language varieties existing across a spectrum ranging from the basilect (furthest away from the standard) to the acrolect (the standard or the variety closest to it). Standard in this case represents the ‘standardised’ variety of the superstrate or lexifier language. The acrolect (Trinidad and Tobago Standard English - TTSE) is the language variety that garners social prestige as opposed to the basilect which often time is viewed with negative language attitudes. Between the basilect and acrolect are the mesolects which represent intermediary levels between the polar lects. Youssef emphasizes the social and psychological distance between slaves and whites, especially as a result of the huge disproportion in numbers (at one time 20:1), as a critical factor in the structure of slave and ex-slave society and, consequently basilectalisation, that is, the development of speech systems and patterns far removed from available English models. Further to this she suggested that mesolectal forms would have developed increasingly as formal education and the post-emancipation

opening up of society exposed basilect-speaking Tobagonians to more English (James & Youssef, 2002: 7).

Emphasis is placed on the basilectal variety of TC as it remains markedly distinct from the acrolectal variety and distinguishes Tobago linguistically from its sister island, Trinidad. The following examples illustrate the range of the TC continuum. All sentences express the exact same meaning.

Basilect: *Mi a go dong a rod.*

Mesolect: *A goin dong di rod.*

Acrolect: *I am going down the road.*

Foundational work on the language situation in Tobago and on TC specifically has been pioneered by Winford James, who has published several articles documenting different aspects of TC. The most comprehensive work thus far is James & Youssef (2002), who describe how the language varieties present on the island interact, their genesis, structure, and present distribution amongst the population. In their work, they also provide chapters on syntactic and phonological properties of these varieties.

This work was written in order to add to the literature on TC and generate even more scholarly work on the language.

Brief Theoretical Framework

The structural properties of the TC nominal are examined mainly through the cartographic approach to syntax and as such this study is situated within the general theoretical framework of generative grammar. Chomsky defines generative grammar as “[being] able to provide an explicit analysis of the speaker-hearer’s contribution by assigning a structural description of how this is understood by the ideal speaker-hearer” (1965: 4). What this essentially means is that generative grammar is concerned with a set of rules which attempt to predict, from the utterances of a speaker, which combinations will form grammatically correct sentences.

The cartographic approach arose out of Chomsky’s generative grammar framework, in that its developers set out to create a system for mapping the syntactic structure of the world’s languages. Cinque & Rizzi (2008: 42) speak of cartography as a research topic asking the question: “What are the right structural maps for natural language syntax?” They and others have proposed several cartographic structures which are claimed to represent universal syntactic structures. Shlonsky (2010: 417) discusses cartography as being inspired by and contributing to research in comparative syntax. The syntactic structures in the TC nominal are represented through detailed structural maps which illustrate the hierarchy of layers of functional categories that modify the head of the nominal domain, the Noun. These functional categories extend from the lexical core of the nominal domain, the NP, and possess grammatical properties relevant for semantic/pragmatic interpretation.

The example below illustrates a cartographic representation of the hierarchical structure of the nominal domain.

1. QP [+Universal]
KP [+Genitive]
DP [+Definite]
TopP [+Contrastive]
FP [DemP](Demonstrative+Reinforcer)
QP [+Distributive]
NumP [+Number]
FP [+Cardinal] Numeral
CIP [+Classifier]
FocusP [+Adj]
FP [+AdjP]:
Subj.CommentP
SizeP
LengthP
HeightP
SpeedP
WidthP
WeightP
AgeP
ShapeP
ColourP
NationalityP
NP

(Durrleman 2013: 33)

The use of this approach to analyse and represent the structures of the TC nominal provides a platform for further linguistic study. It facilitates cross-linguistic study and thus can be applied to typological studies since the goal of linguistic typology is to deduce from study of the world's languages the structural variations that exist amongst them all. As both typology and cartography are concerned with the idea of linguistic universals, adopting the cartographic approach will highlight subtle structural differences across languages.

The data presented in the following section is analysed in-keeping with the cartographic model in (1).

Data presentation

The data presented below highlights aspects of the TC nominal domain. Syntactic as well as semantic analyses of the portions of data presented indicate their use and interpretation within the TC language. Also, the structures' adherence to the cartographic approach is addressed. The structures discussed below are the Case Projection (KP), Determiner Phrase (DP), Demonstrative Phrase (DemP), the Plural Marker, and Adjectives (AdjP).

K(Case) Projection

Unlike Standard Trinidad and Tobago English's use of the -'s to mark the genitive/possessive case, TC possession is expressed by the optional use of *fi* preceding the possessor.

2. *(fi) di bwai baik*
POSS DET boy bike
'The boy's bike'

In example (2) it is observed that the genitive marker *fi* is realized above the determiner *di* then followed by the noun. This is in accordance with the model in (1) where KP>DP>NP.

Determiner Phrase

The definite determiner *di* is used when expressions have referents that are identifiable so that the entity denoted by these is familiar to both speaker and hearer. This is opposed to indefinite expressions where the referent is being introduced; where the hearer has no prior knowledge or familiarity with it. See example (3) below:

3. *Mi pik wa mango dis maanin an dem pikni tief di mango*
1s pick IND mango DEM morning and DEM children thief DET mango
'I picked a mango this morning and those children stole the mango.'

In the example above, *mango* is first introduced with the TC indefinite marker *wa*, however once the referent *mango* is familiar it takes the definite determiner *di*.

This also adheres to the overall cartographic structure in (1) where DP>NP.

Demonstrative Phrase

Demonstratives refer to expressions used to indicate which entities the speaker refers to and distinguish those entities from others. TC demonstratives include singular *dis* 'this' and *dat* 'that' and plural *dem* 'these, those'. Although not obligatory, *dis*, *dat* and *dem* may be accompanied by a deictic element: *ya* (proximal) and *de* (distal). These deictic elements are referred to as the 'reinforcers' following Bernstein (1997). The following TC examples illustrate how the demonstratives and the reinforcers may be combined. Note that the reinforcer can occur post nominally.

4.

i. <i>Dis (ya) mango</i> DEM (reinforcer) mango 'This mango'	ii. <i>Dis mango (ya)</i> DEM mango (reinforcer) 'This mango'
iii. <i>Dat (de) hous</i> DEM (reinforcer) house (reinforcer) 'That house'	iv. <i>Dat hous (de)</i> DEM house 'That house'
v. <i>Dem (ya) cheri</i> DEM (reinforcer) cherry (reinforcer) 'These cherries'	vi. <i>Dem cheri (ya)</i> DEM cherry 'These cherries'
vii. <i>Dem (de) pikni</i> DEM (reinforcer) child 'Those children'	viii. <i>Dem pikni (de)</i> DEMchild (reinforcer) 'Those children'

The use of the reinforcer conveys a contrastive reading. For example:

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5. *Dis plom chrui ya trang, di oda wan a ratn*
DEM plum tree R strong, DET other one COP rotten
'This plum tree is strong, the other one is rotting.'

TC Demonstratives also align themselves with the proposed order of the cartographic model in (1) occurring before the noun.

Plural marker

TC does not use an inflectional affix to mark plural like TTSE, instead it uses the post-nominal plural marker **-dem**. This form is presumably derived from the 3rd person pronoun **dem** 'they, them, their'. This same form also serves as the plural demonstrative as seen above. However the plural marker is distinguished by its post-nominal position. The plural marker occurs with definite nominals only.

6. *Di daag dem*
DET dog PL
'The dogs'
7. **daag dem*

There are some exceptions where plurality can be expressed in the absence of *dem*:

8. *Di poliis shuut bulit op in di skai*
DET police shoot bullet LOC in DET sky
'The police shot bullets up in the sky.'

With reference to the model in (1) the Plural marker is analysed as belonging to the Classifier Phrase due to the group reading it denotes and as such implies semantic plurality. Head movement of the NP to the Specifier position of the Classifier Phrase is what accounts for the occurrence of the plural marker *dem* following the noun that it modifies.

Adjectival Phrase

The TC adjectival phrase is discussed in relation to the noun with which it modifies. Attributive adjectives in TC occur pre-nominally and more than one may be combined to describe the noun they are qualifying. The order in which the adjectives occur is determined by their semantic properties. Scott (2002) investigates adjectival ordering restrictions and aspects of the syntax of stacked adjectives across several languages and proposes a ‘fixed order’ of adjectives which is part of a universal grammar, as opposed to a free order of distribution.

Below is Scott’s universal hierarchy of adjectival ordering restrictions:

9. DETERMINER > ORDINAL NUMBER > CARDINAL NUMBER > SUBJECTIVE COMMENT > ?EVIDENTIAL > SIZE > LENGTH > HEIGHT > SPEED > ?DEPTH > WIDTH > WEIGHT > TEMPERATURE > ? WETNESS > AGE > SHAPE > COLOR > NATIONALITY/ORIGIN > MATERIAL > COMPOUND ELEMENT > NP

(Scott 2002:114)

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Using Scott’s proposed universal hierarchy in (9), the following TC adjectival combinations are examined two at a time, progressively mapping their relative order.

10. <i>Di fos chrïi pikni fu 'tan op</i> DEF first three children to stand up ‘The first three children to stand’ Number	<i>*Di chrïi fos pikni fu 'tan op</i> DET chrïi first children to stand up Ordinal Number > Cardinal
11. <i>Mi mek faiv priti baaskit</i> 1s make five pretty basket ‘I made five pretty baskets.’	<i>*Mi mek priti faiv baaskit</i> 1s make pretty five basket Cardinal number > Subj Comment
12. <i>Mi si wa priti likl flowa</i> 1s see IND pretty little flower ‘I saw a pretty little flower.’	<i>*Mi si wa likle prity flowa</i> 1s see IND little pretty flower Subj comment > Size
13. <i>Di likl roun keek dem</i> DEF little round cake PL ‘The little round cakes’	<i>*Di roun likl cake dem</i> DEF round little cake PL Size > Shape

This implies the order: **Ordinal number>Cardinal Number>Subj Comment>Size>Shape**

TC also makes use of Adjectival Focus, with adjectives reduplicating to yield a focused reading:

14. ***Di priti - priti beebi***

DEF pretty [+FOC] baby

‘The very pretty baby’

The reduplication of adjectives contrasts with the English’s use of the degree adverbial *very*.

A focused adjective must precede the others in a sequence, and as a result the base order of adjectives as outlined above may be disrupted. For instance:

15. ***Di hevi - hevi smaal pan***

DEF heavy [+FOC] small pan

‘The heavy, small pan’

The previously identified order **Weight** > **Size** is subverted as the adjective denoting weight is focused.

The language also allows for reduplication of more than one adjective at a time as in example (16) whereas other creoles such as Jamaican Creole in example (17) do not.

16. ***Di priti - priti fat - fat beebi***

DEF priti [+FOC]₁ fat [+FOC]₂ baby

‘The very pretty very fat baby.’

17. ****Di tuu fuu- fuul priti priti gyal***

DEF NUM Adj [+FOC]₁ Adj [+FOC]₂ N

Conclusion

As stated in the introductory section of this paper, the study sought to provide a description of some aspects of the architecture of the TC nominal domain. The semantic and syntactic properties of the structures considered were analyzed adopting relatively a new approach to linguistic analysis, the cartographic approach. The specific TC structures that were examined; the possessive marker, determiner phrase, demonstrative phrase, plural marker and attributive adjectives, all were found to be occurring in accordance with a proposed universal model shown below.

QP [+Universal] > KP [+Genitive] > DP [+Definite] > TopP [+Contrastive] > FP [DemP] (Demonstrative+Reinforcer) > QP [+Distributive] > NumP [+Number] > FP [+Cardinal] Numeral > CLP [+Classifier] > FocusP [+Adj] > FP [+AdjP]: Subj.CommentP > SizeP > LengthP > HeightP > SpeedP > WidthP > WeightP > AgeP > ShapeP > ColourP > NationalityP > NP

(Durrleman 2013:33)

For structures such as the plural marker, the reinforcer, and post-nominal adjectives (not found in TC) which occur after the noun, this phenomenon is accounted for in the cartographic approach by head movement of the noun to a higher position within the phrase.

TC's use of the possessive marker *fi* to mark genitive case, the [+Definite] constraints of the TC determiner *di*, the use of demonstratives and their deictic reinforcers, the use of the post-nominal plural marker *dem*, and finally attributive adjectives and how their order is affected by their semantic properties are all discussed to yield this description of aspects of the TC nominal domain.

It is hoped that this study will serve as a foundation not only for further work on the creoles of the region, but also for further work in the area of comparative linguistics and typology.

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EL ESPAÑOL BORICUA VISTO COMO LENGUA DE CONTACTO

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Las teorías sobre el desarrollo del español antillano, específicamente del español de Puerto Rico son diversas y están en contraposición entre sí. Por ejemplo, Bickerton y Escalante (1970) creen que sí existió un idioma criollo cuyo superestrato fue el español. Exponen que el palenquero, idioma hablado al norte de Colombia, puede ser el sobreviviente de un criollo que se habló en un área extensa del Caribe colonial durante el siglo 16 incluyendo a Puerto Rico. Exploran la posibilidad de que este criollo se pierde a través de un proceso de descriollización ya que la variedad hablada en la isla se convierte en acrolecto que acaba por ser absorbido completamente por el español.

Lawton (1971) por otro lado aboga por la idea de que el español de Puerto Rico surge a través de un proceso de cambio interno. Esta situación se explica ya que la colonización española fue muy distinta de la francesa o de la inglesa. Debido a que los españoles tenían en su agenda la cristianización de sus esclavos, se abre un espacio mayor de asimilación y de contacto entre indios y españoles y luego entre esclavos africanos y españoles también.

Del Rosario (1969) citado en Zenón Cruz (1974) expone que el español de Puerto Rico es el resultado de una evolución larga y compleja. Los siguientes factores fueron significativos en esta evolución según el autor: 1) Los indios taínos proveyeron a Borikén su trasfondo étnico; 2) La colonización española se lleva a cabo por españoles que provienen del sur de España siendo en su mayoría hombres de pueblo, agricultores, y soldados; 3) A partir del 1508, Puerto Rico se incorpora a la cultura occidental y al cristianismo; 4) La importación de esclavos tiene un impacto en el idioma y en la cultura; y 5) Los elementos indígenas y africanos impactan la cultura y el idioma boricua a pesar de que los españoles dominaron imponiendo su idioma, costumbres y creencias religiosas.

Zenón Cruz (1974) cree que las formas populares del español Boricua nacen como el resultado del contacto entre tres razas y tres culturas que cohabitan y se mezclan en un mismo territorio. De acuerdo a Álvarez Nazario (1974) el idioma castellano de los colonizadores arraiga con firmeza en Puerto Rico pero expone que:

“Los rasgos característicos que lo perfilan como un Koiné en la cual de frente a la diversidad de orígenes regionales de los pobladores

peninsulares, una pronunciación predominantemente andaluza y una estructura morfosintáctica de fundamentos castellanos se conjugan niveladamente con importantes contribuciones léxicas procedentes del occidente peninsular” (tanto español como portugués) (p. 86)

Resulta interesante el análisis de las teorías sobre el origen del español boricua. Desde mi perspectiva personal, una ecléctica, donde atribuyo que varios factores y fenómenos se entremezclaron bajo un marco lingüístico, socio histórico y sociocultural específico a la isla, propongo la siguiente teoría como posible origen de nuestro español puertorriqueño. Inicialmente, el español típico de nuestra isla nace de un proceso de semicriollización. En un sentido nuestro idioma es un español semicriollizado donde el léxico en su mayoría proviene del español, pero tiene también una notable influencia del taíno, del afro español y del inglés. La inflexión en los procesos morfológicos proviene del superestrato (español) pero también en menor grado de sustratos como el taíno y los criollos afro españoles. En Puerto Rico se dieron las condiciones socio-históricas que permitieron el proceso de semicriollización, muy especialmente el contacto íntimo de colonizadores y conquistadores (de donde proviene el superestrato) con indígenas y africanos (de donde proviene el sustrato).

Concurro con la opinión de otros lingüistas que exponen que en el Caribe Hispano de la era colonial ocurre un proceso de semicriollización específicamente en las variedades habladas por los esclavos en las plantaciones. Estas variedades nunca llegaron a convertirse en idiomas criollos porque se descriollizan asemejándose cada vez más al idioma español. La semicriollización se siguió por un proceso descriollizante. Finalmente, el español boricua nace de una sociedad de contacto o cohabitación entre gente de descendencia europea, indígena, y africana. A pesar de la increíble presión española por erradicar las influencias lingüísticas de las voces negroides e indígenas, evidencia de su sobrevivencia permea en nuestra lengua corroborando la situación de contacto entre razas.

Según Álvarez Nazario (1991), el español que se origina en Puerto Rico desde los inicios del Siglo 16 nace de un español más arcaico que proviene de la península española (de Andalucía, las Islas Canarias) pero a su vez incorpora un léxico y estructuras morfosintácticas muy distintas al español castellano. Recoge pues los elementos del taíno y de las variedades africanas y afro-españoles que sirven de sustrato. No podemos olvidar el impacto del inglés en el español boricua. A partir de la colonización estadounidense en 1898, la influencia del inglés en el español boricua ha sido notable. Esta situación de contacto entre el español y el inglés se observa actualmente a nivel léxico y de préstamos.

Al llegar los españoles, había en Borikén alrededor de 70,000 indios arahuacos cuyo vernáculo era el taíno al igual que en Cuba y en La Española. Dice Cristóbal Colón en una carta a los Reyes Católicos, “En todas estas islas no vide mucha diversidad de la

gente, ni en las costumbres, ni en la lengua; salvo que todos se entienden” (según citado en Gómez Acevedo y Ballester, 1975: 41). Aún antes de la colonización española hubo una mezcla etnológica y lingüística entre las culturas indígenas del Caribe Antillano que aporta significativamente a la lengua taína hablada en Borinquén. Luego se añaden préstamos lingüísticos posteriores traídos de otros sitios (Hernández Aquino, 1969).

Los colonizadores españoles vinieron de diferentes áreas de España: Castilla, Galicia, Andalucía, Islas Canarias y la región Vasca. A pesar de sus dialectos regionales se comunican en castellano, pero es un castellano diferente, es un coine lingüístico donde se mezclan los elementos léxicos y morfosintácticos de las diferentes formas dialectales. Este coine lingüístico del español trasplantado que llega a Puerto Rico con los colonizadores españoles es significativamente afectado por el idioma taíno de los indios arahuacos que habitaban la isla. La lengua taína, según Hernández Aquino (1969) contaba con la influencia lingüística de otros idiomas indígenas de las islas cercanas pero este hecho no impedía que los habitantes de las Antillas Mayores se entendieran entre sí. Este mestizaje lingüístico de variedades indígenas de la familia del arahuaco del norte se extingue eventualmente al ser absorbido y asimilado por el español. La variedad que resulta es luego matizada con africanismos y se va generando un español de contacto que evoluciona hasta convertirse en nuestro español boricua de hoy día.

La población de Puerto Rico durante los primeros siglos de la era colonial era mayormente masculina compuesta por soldados, colonizadores y sacerdotes. Debido a que no hay mujeres blancas en la isla, en 1514 se pasa un decreto real permitiendo a los colonizadores contraer nupcias con las indias taínas. Surge una mayoría demográfica mestiza como consecuencia. Esta mezcla de razas, unido a las enfermedades y al maltrato laboral, contribuye a la merma de la población indígena en la isla pero la misma no fue erradicada por completo. Muchos indios huyeron y establecieron sociedades de cohabitación con los esclavos cimarrones que escapaban y se refugiaban en las montañas.

Según Álvarez Nazario (1974: 17), “el núcleo Africano más antiguo en las colonias españolas estuvo compuesto por los ‘negros ladinos’, también conocidos como ‘negros de Castilla’ o de Portugal.” Desde épocas tempranas, en Iberia se traficaban esclavos de origen africano. En el siglo 15, surge la trata de esclavos africanos la cual inician los portugueses. La merma de la población indígena en las Antillas promueve la esclavitud de africanos en las Américas. Los esclavos bozales (traídos de África) llegan a Puerto Rico a partir del 1518. Proviene de diversas aéreas de la costa occidental del continente y hablan diversos idiomas africanos. Llegan a Puerto Rico esclavos fugados de las colonias adyacentes. Morales Cintrón (citado en Álvarez Nazario, 1974) narra el testimonio ofrecido por John George, marinero inglés preso en San Juan de Puerto Rico en 1748, quien declara que la isla era un refugio de negros

esclavos escapados de los ingleses, daneses y holandeses ya que al llegar a la isla eran declarados libres. Esto se debe, en gran parte, al hecho de que en 1664, el gobernador de la isla le ofrece la libertad a todos los esclavos que entraban a Puerto Rico si se convertían al cristianismo y juraban lealtad a la Corona Española, factor que contribuye a que en Puerto Rico la proporción de esclavos de descendencia africana nunca alcanzó los números que se reportaron en Cuba y Santo Domingo.

Durante los primeros 250 años luego de la conquista española, Santo Domingo, Cuba y Puerto Rico experimentan una primera oleada de inmigración de esclavos. Estos esclavos africanos se utilizaron para extraer oro de las minas y los ríos, para trabajar la tierra y para la construcción. Este primer influjo de esclavos africanos ocurre cuando todavía la población indígena del Caribe Antillano era numerosa. Durante esta fase, la interacción entre africanos e indígenas resulta en una variedad de relaciones incluyendo coaliciones contra un común enemigo, revueltas coordinadas entre ambos, matrimonios interraciales y cimarronaje en conjunto. Después del 1550, surge un estancamiento económico en el Caribe Hispano que promueve las condiciones idóneas para el establecimiento de sociedades de cohabitación entre las tres razas. La población rural compuesta por españoles pobres, esclavos africanos e indígenas ocupa tierras que los conquistadores desecharon o abandonaron. Se establecen en estas tierras compartidas economías de subsistencia donde las tres razas conviven en contacto íntimo en su lucha común por la supervivencia y en contra de la dominación y esclavitud impuesta por los españoles. Hacia los finales del siglo 18, la economía comienza a cambiar hacia el cultivo agro-industrial y capitalista de azúcar; se intensifica pues el uso de la mano de obra forzada y se necesitan más esclavos para trabajar en las plantaciones azucareras. Las sociedades de las Antillas Españolas se organizan cada vez más como las sociedades racializadas de plantación de las Antillas Inglesas y Francesas.

El arahuaco taíno fue el primer vernáculo con el que se encuentran los colonizadores españoles. Se cree que el taíno no tenía escritura pero el idioma hablado era muy rico y definido. Del habla de nuestros indios quedan palabras sueltas que han impactado nuestro léxico en diferentes áreas. Enamorado Cuesta (1971) hace constar que los taínos usaban el jeroglífico como medio de comunicación. Se han encontrado piedras con dibujos tallados en el área de Coabey, un campo de Jayuya. Hoy día, más de cien años después de que el Padre Nazario descubriera más de 800 petroglíficos indígenas en la ribera del Río Yauco en Guayanilla, conocidos como *La Biblioteca de Agueybaná*, su origen sigue siendo un misterio así como también lo es la teoría de que los indios taínos dominaban la lectura y la escritura (Olavarría, 1980a & 1980b, Rodríguez, 1998; Sepúlveda, 2011).

El idioma taíno resulta muy difícil de entender para los españoles por su naturaleza aglutinante y polisintética [e.j. *ua-tti-un-ti* “nuestros padres”; *ma-iúli-te* “sin tabaco”; *da-tíau* “mi compañero”]. Álvarez Nazario (1999: 47-71) nos presenta un estudio

morfosintáctico del idioma arahuaco insular que entiende se extiende al taíno. Se resume brevísimamente a continuación: 1) el género de los sustantivos se expresa por /-i/ para masculino y /-u/ para femenino [*eiéri* “hombre”; *hiáru* “mujer”]; 2) existe el número singular y plural [plural -*um/-iem* para sustantivos terminados en -*i* [*níbiri* “mi hijo”; *níbiriem* “mis hijos”]; 3) los sustantivos expresan diminutivo y aumentativo mediante sufijación [-*kan* se usa para diminutivo - *hiaru-kan* “mujercita” y -*wabu* se usa para el aumentativo] 4) los adjetivos forman parte del sintagma nominal, casi siempre delante del sustantivo; 5) los numerales llegan al veinte; 6) el uso del artículo no es obligatorio; 7) tiene un sistema de pronombres personales y posesivos; 8) tiene un sistema de prefijos marcadores de personas gramaticales; 9) figuran seis ‘tiempos’: presente, perfecto, perfecto auxiliar, imperfecto, pluscuamperfecto y futuro; 10) cuenta con tres formas verbales no conjugables clasificados como verboides [*araméta* “esconder” (infinitivo), *araméta-ionia* “escondiendo” (gerundio) y *aramétuti* “que esconde” (participio)]; 11) tiene un sistema de conjugación verbal en voz pasiva; y 12) existe un sistema simple de preposiciones y locuciones prepositivas.

El afamado lingüista puertorriqueño Álvarez Nazario (1999: 38-41), sostiene que el arahuaco tenía un sistema básico de cinco vocales (i, e, a, o, u). Expone que existía sin embargo una vacilación entre la pronunciación de la /u,o/ y /i,e/ y que el taíno, como lengua arahuaca, usaba muchos diptongos y triptongos. Referente al sistema consonántico, asevera Álvarez Nazario (1999) lo siguiente: “En las palabras del arahuaco taíno que entraron al español, los fonemas consonánticos de dicha lengua aborígen antillana quedaron acomodados dentro de los patrones paralelos o cercanamente semejantes de nuestra lengua castellana, sin que nos sea posible hoy día precisar siempre la exacta naturaleza articulatoria que tuvieron los mismos.” (p. 41)

Un breve resumen del autor (pp. 41- 45) indica el uso frecuente en el taíno de los siguientes grupos consonánticos: 1) /bilabiales /p,b,m/: papaya, pitahaya, burén, bohío, mamey, maíz; 2) dentales /t, d, s/: tabaco, taíno, dajao, duey, sabana, seboruco; 3) alveolares /n, r, l/: naboría, manatí, lerén; 4) palatales /š/ correspondiente a la <x> del español antiguo: xagüey, xagua, xaiba; 5) muy pocas palabras con el fonema palatal /č /; 6) velares/ k,g/: cacique, canoa, donguey; 7) glotal sorda /h/: hicotea, hamaca, huracán; y 8) faltan los fonemas /f/ y /v/.

Nuestro español boricua tiene un sinnúmero de vocablos que se retuvieron del taíno. Consta con muchas palabras del taíno usadas para nombrar nuestra flora, fauna, geografía isleña, etc. Cuenta nuestro vernáculo también con algunas influencias léxicas indígenas del náhuatl (aztecas de Méjico) y del quechua (Incas del Perú). Las siguientes formas fueron obtenidas de Álvarez Nazario (1974; 1999) y de Hernández Aquino (1969):

Del taíno: aybonito, ají, anamú, arepa, areito, bairoa, balajú, barbacoa, bejuco, bohío, cabuya, caique, cazabe, ceiba, coquí, duey, dujo, enagua,

guabairo, guacamayo, guajana, guajataca, guánica, haití, habana, higuera, hamaca, huracán, icaco, iguana, inabón, jácana, jaiba, jayuya, jíbaro, jobo, loiza, lerén, luquillo, mabí, macana, maíz, mamey, maraca, múcaro, naboria, naguabo, nagua, nigua, orocobix, papaya, patillas, piragua, pitirre, pitahaya, quenepa, sabana, seiba, susúa, tabaco, taíno, tanamá, tereque, tiburón, úcar, urayoán, utuado, vieques, yaboa, yabucoa, yagrumo, yagua, yukiyú

Del náhuatl: achiote, aguacate, cacao, elote, güipil, tamal, zapote

Del quechua: papa, topo

En cuanto a la influencia léxica del taíno en nuestro español nos dice Álvarez Nazario (1999):

“Tras un período primero de bilingüismo indo hispano en nuestro suelo antillano, y no obstante la relativa brevedad del mismo, habrá de dejar huella aquella lengua aborígen en el castellano trasplantado el impacto de un importante legado léxicoreferente a la toponimia y a la antroponimia, la fauna y la flora, la vida material y espiritual, la convivencia en el grupo comunitario....” (p. 25)

Afirma Alvarez Nazario (1990) que el vocabulario usado en las áreas rurales de nuestra isla por nuestros campesinos (jíbaros) utiliza centenares de vocablos de origen indígena. Expone el autor que:

“El hombre del campo heredero de elementos diversos de la tradición de vida de nuestros aborígenes, y aun en muchísimos casos descendiente de aquellos a través del cruce de las sangres que se cumple en la Isla a partir de la conquista, apoya en el transcurso de los tiempos buena parte de su vocabulario activo en menciones que se remontan al mundo arahuaco prehispánico.” (p. 462)

Antes de que los esclavos fueran transportados al Caribe Antillano, la trata de esclavos existía en España y Portugal. Opina Álvarez Nazario (1974) que el elemento afro negroide: “Constituye tal vez el más antiguo caso de relexificación y re-estructuración de la lingua franca afro portuguesa de las costas de Guinea, el Congo, Angola y Mozambique así como de las islas de Cabo Verde y del golfo de Guinea, el que representa el habla particular del negro que la trata esclavista lleva a España”. (p. 111) En la isla de Puerto Rico, al igual que en Cuba y La Española, el español es afectado por el número de esclavos africanos que se importan a la isla durante diferentes períodos históricos. A mayor número de esclavos negros proporcional al número de la

población total, más notable será el impacto de la cultura e idiomas africanos en el español trasplantado de la isla. La variedad afro portugués al cual refiere Álvarez Nazario comienza un proceso de relexificación y reestructuración por conducto del español para la segunda década del siglo 16 en suelo caribeño. De hecho este afro español que hablaban los esclavos bozales en Puerto Rico se conocía con el nombre de *habla cangá* y eventualmente se extiende a todos los negros bozales que llegan de otras lugares. En Santo Domingo este criollo afro español se denomina con el nombre de hablar *boruco*, expresión que significaba “hablar confusamente o en media lengua” (Álvarez-Nazario, 1974). Expone también el autor que para la tercera década del siglo XVI, en Puerto Rico merma el interés de los colonizadores, por tanto merma la entrada de esclavos, factor que resulta en la hispanización del afro español en la isla. Nos dice Álvarez Nazario (1974) que “la lengua castellana mezclada de africanismos que sirvió de lazo unificador entre los negros de distintas procedencias originales, fue evolucionando en dirección del habla normal del territorio...los moradores de las aldeas han asimilado muy bien el idioma nacional, o sea el español.” (p. 142)

Tanto Zenón Cruz (1974) como Álvarez Nazario (1974) exponen que las atribuciones afro negroides en el español boricua se perciben en el léxico, la fonética y la morfosintaxis de nuestro idioma (por ejemplo, la Sierra de Luquillo recibe el nombre de *Furidi*, “puesto este nombre por negros, que en su lengua quiere decir cosa que siempre está llena de nubes” (Álvarez-Nazario 1974; p. 132). Figueroa (1955) citado en Zenón Cruz (1974: 143) comenta que “los africanismos son rechazados por los sujetos profesionales. Son más usados en los pueblos de la costa.” Álvarez Nazario nos ofrece un estudio sobre los africanismos en el léxico del español boricua. La siguiente lista recoge solamente algunos de las voces del español afro negroide que se utilizan con mucha frecuencia en nuestro hablar cotidiano obtenidos del Diccionario de africanismos <http://cai.bc.inter.edu>: abombarse, anamá, aylelolé, bachata, baquiné, bembe/a, bembé, bomba, bongó, burundanga, candungo, cocolía, cocolo, cocoroco, conga, changa, changuería, changó, chévere, dengue, enfuncharse, fufú, funche, gongolí, guarapo, guinea, jurutungo, macaco, mafafo, malanga, marimba, mofongo, mondongo, motetes, mozambique, ñame, ñangotarse, ñeñeñe, quimbambas, quimbombó, sambumbia, sínoras, titingó, tostón, unjú, entre muchísimas más.

En la fonética cabe mencionar: 1) variaciones en la realización de la /r/ y la /l/: [*pierna~ pielna~piena; pulpo~pupo; venderla~vendehla; albañil~abbañí; míralo~mídalo*]; 2) debilitamiento y pérdida de consonantes y sílabas iniciales y finales [*enfermedad~fermerá; usted~uté; muchas gracias~muchah graciáh~muchah gracia*]. También se observan casos de epéntesis vocálica [*mortificar~morotificá*]. Se registran casos de metátesis, o sea la transposición de sonidos: [*divertir~divretí; porque~proqué*]. Estos son solamente algunos ejemplos del uso de las consonantes en el afro español Boricua obtenidos en su gran mayoría de Álvarez Nazario (1974).

El siguiente resumen presenta algunos de los rasgos morfosintácticos del afro español boricua y está tomado de los apuntes de Álvarez Nazario (1974, p. 376): 1) uso opcional del artículo determinado [*gallo ta nan so* “el gallo está al sol”]; 2) uso de un mismo artículo determinado para ambos géneros [*uno becerro, uno yegua*]; 3) mezcla del género y número al usarlos con los nombres [*un poquita; la braza*]; 4) empleo de las palabras macho/hombre y mujer/hembra para expresar género de los sustantivos [*hombre niño* “muchacho”, *mujer niña* “muchacha”]; 5) unión completa o parcial de un sustantivo con el artículo reducido que lo precede [*suña- las uñas*]; 6) uso de un nombre femenino con un adjetivo masculino y viceversa [*ombe mala* “hombre malo”]; 7) uso de un pronombre invariable *elle* como masculino o femenino [*yo no conca elle* “yo no lo conozco a él; *yo no quiso di con elle* “yo no quise ir con ella”]; 8) uso de la forma *ta* ante un gerundio en el progresivo [*yo ta trabajando* “yo estoy trabajando”]; 9) supresión de la cópula verbal [*bila koto* “la vida es corta”]; 10) trueque de verbo transitivo por verbo intransitivo y vice versa [*la pena me ta muriendo* “la pena me está matando”]; 11) uso de compuestos iterativos, reduplicación [*grande grande* “muy grande”].

Álvarez Nazario (1990, p. 463-64) entiende que “el antiguo afro español o habla cangá del pasado” aporta menos al léxico del español boricua que el sustrato taíno. Opina que este fenómeno se debió a que el afro español se decriolliza ya que el “hombre de color” se asimiló a las costumbres y al idioma del jíbaro de la ruralía moviéndose el dialecto “en dirección del sistema corriente del lenguaje popular y campesino en Puerto Rico...Ante esta realidad no resultan abundantes las palabras de la tradición negroide que se conocen y se manejan por los campos...”

No podemos dejar de incluir los cambios a nuestro español que surgen a partir de la ocupación norteamericana en 1898. A pesar de que la dominación norteamericana no representó tanto una amenaza lingüística ni cultural que más bien un domino político y económico, si podemos percibir la influencia del inglés de forma cada vez más marcada en nuestro español. El hecho de que la cultura estadounidense y el inglés como parte intrínseca de la misma, se hayan consagrado como modelos en la globalización mundial, ha acrecentado en los últimos años la situación de contacto y asimilación lingüística y cultural en el español boricua. Del Rosario citado en Zenón Cruz (1974) expone que la situación de contacto con los Estados Unidos no ha afectado los tiempos verbales, ni el modo, ni el género, ni el número del español que se habla en Puerto Rico. Sin embargo, Gil y Gaya citado en Zenón Cruz (1974) afirma que si podemos encontrar anglicismos sintácticos en el español boricua.

Aún antes de la ocupación estadounidense, afirma Álvarez Nazario (1974, p. 204) que en nuestro antiguo afro español se encontraban palabras de origen anglo criollo traídas a las Antillas por la trata esclavista con los ingleses. Estos vocablos fueron introducidos a Puerto Rico por esclavos que provenían de algunas de las islas de

dominio británico. Algunas de estas palabras fueron: *tifitifi* [“robo-hurto” < thief]; *guasi-guasi* [“lavar” < wash]; etc.

Al igual que los indigenismos y africanismos, los anglicismos son notables en el léxico de nuestro español cotidiano. Incluyo un listado de anglicismos que se utilizan muy frecuentemente en el español boricua que fueron obtenidos de la página electrónica del escritor puertorriqueño, Luis López Nieves (www.ciudadseva.com): bacon, caucho, clipear, escrín, enforzar la ley, escanear, espiker, estar en shock, feedback, ganga/gang, inbreeding, indentar, lonchera, magazine, malpractice, nice/cool, norsa, por default, poster: cartel, rain check, rentar, size, ticket, y zip code.

Faraclas y Viada (2006) identificaron un conjunto importantísimo de escenarios de contacto que tuvieron un impacto sobre los procesos de criollización. La interacción entre la población de gente marginizada de descendencia europea indígena y africana dio paso a la formación de sociedades de cohabitación a través del Caribe Antillano. Aquí se establece un contacto íntimo entre las tres razas y se forja el lugar idóneo para el origen del proceso de criollización lingüística y cultural en el Caribe Hispano. El estudio de estas sociedades de cohabitación revela que el proceso de criollización lingüística fue mucho más complejo de lo que se creía.

El español fue sin lugar a duda el superestrato que da origen a un semicriollo en Puerto Rico que no se cristaliza sino que más bien se descriolliza por las razones antes mencionadas. Evoluciona a través del contacto con la población indígena y afro negroide dando paso a nuestro español boricua que sigue siendo grandemente influenciado hoy día por el inglés. Un dato significativo es la importancia que tuvo la población indígena en el desarrollo del español boricua. Fue esta población arahuaca la que provee el léxico y conocimiento para que los colonizadores y más tarde los esclavos pudieran sobrevivir. Mantuvieron un contacto cercano con los españoles desde el principio de la era colonial en adelante. Esta población ha tenido un impacto mucho mayor en la génesis de los criollos del Caribe Hispano y de otros criollos del Caribe de lo que le ha sido adjudicado (Viada Bellido de Luna, forthcoming).

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ATTITUDES TOWARDS LIMONESE CREOLE

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A language is a cultural construction, formed and modified over time by its speakers. It is through language that individuals build relationships among themselves and with their social environment. Language is seen as a distinctive characteristic of group identity. Some scholars state that the use of a given language is essential to the preservation of group identity; meanwhile others affirm that it is important not to lose sight of other identity markers as well. According to Edwards (1985: 22), of all of the elements of group identity “the most important ingredients are the subjective sense of groupness and the countinuation of group boundaries.”

While there may not be a direct relation between language and identity, links can be found between both, and the linguistic behavior of a person can reveal his/her identity and roles in society (Mosca Montel, 2008). This relationship is also reflected in the attitudes of individuals towards the languages and their users. In this article, we will report on research that we are conducting concerning attitudes towards Limonese Creole by Creole speakers themselves and attitudes of other Costa Ricans toward speakers of Limonese Creole.

Very little scholarly work has been done on the topic of attitudes towards limonese Creole and its speakers. Among the few works available are the following: 1) a published thesis by Anita Herzfeld (2002); 2) an unpublished thesis by Fernando Wright (1974); 3) an unpublished thesis by Marva Spence (1992); 4) an article on racist attitudes toward the people of Limón (Oficina de comunicación, Universidad Nacional, Costa Rica, 2010); 5) a report with some data on attitudes (Sandoval Carvajal & Solano Acuña, 2010); and 6) an in-depth study of the language and identity of Limonese Creole speakers (Herzfield, 2003).

The first wave of Afro-Costa Ricans arrived along with the Spanish in the 16th century. Many became maroons and renegades, living along the Caribbean coast, an area considered as uninhabitable by the Spanish themselves. The African and Indigenous descended inhabitants of the Caribbean coast of Central America had early and intimate contact with English pirates and privateers who began attacking Spanish convoys, settlements, and ships from the mid-1500s onward. The varieties of English-

lexifier Creole spoken along the Caribbean coast of Central America probably emerged initially from this contact.

The attitudes of the Spanish toward these renegades, maroons, and pirates would have been very negative, as was their attitude toward the English with whom they co-habitated. In the Central American context, from the earliest days of colonization, people of African descent would have occupied the lowest and most stigmatized rung of the social hierarchy in general. Therefore attitudes toward people of African descent, their cultures and their languages would have been negative. But those people of African descent who escaped colonial control to live on the Caribbean coast would have been doubly stigmatized, because they were thought to have rejected Christian and European ‘civilization’ to live as ‘savages’ or *cimarrones* (‘wild pigs’) with the unconquered indigenous peoples there. Their languages and cultures would thus have doubly stigmatized as particularly un-European and therefore uncultured. But the Spanish would have reserved their greatest scorn for those of African descent who lived on the Caribbean coast and who gave food, shelter, protection, and information to aid the English in their operations against the Spanish. These African descended peoples and their English influenced contact languages would have been triply stigmatized, first as African, second as *cimarrón*, and thirdly as part and parcel of a traitorous conspiracy in support of Protestant England against Catholic Spain. Thus many of the negative attitudes in evidence today on the part of Costa Ricans of Spanish and ladino descent toward African descended peoples living on the Caribbean coast and their English influenced languages are probably not fundamentally different from those held by the Spanish and the ladinos of the sixteenth century.

The next wave of Afro-Costa Ricans were brought to the country from Jamaica and a number of other English-colonized islands of the Caribbean by the United Fruit Company and the Costa Rican government in the late 1800s to work on banana plantations and to build railroads around the Port of Limón on the Caribbean coast (Meléndez & Duncan, 1974). After the railroads were finished, these workers and their descendants continued to live in the province of Limón, where they were considered to be aliens and denied Costa Rican citizenship until 1948 when the government of José Figueres Ferrer (1948-1949; 1953-1957; 1970-1974) naturalized them. These Afro-Caribbean peoples brought their English-lexifier Creole languages and their Afro-Caribbean cultures with them. When they arrived in Limón, the area was sparsely populated, so this group of immigrants became the dominant demographic in the area. Because of this, they were able to preserve most of their linguistic, cultural and social traditions in Costa Rica, establishing their own Protestant churches, English schools, and social clubs where English-lexifier Creole and Standard English were spoken (Herzfield, 2002).

The languages that most of the immigrants spoke during most of their daily interactions were different varieties of Caribbean English-lexifier Creole, which eventually combined and evolved to constitute a distinct Limonese variety. For decades, this English-lexifier Creole was the first language of the great majority of Limonese but, with the establishment of government funded universal public education in Spanish, later generations became fully bilingual in English and Spanish, the official language of Costa Rica. Today, some African descended Limonese have adopted Spanish as their only language of communication because of its prestige. Since most people are taught to read and write at school, most Limonese read and write in Spanish, and use Limonese Creole only for communicating with family and friends. Those of the older generations who were educated in local English schools also read and write in English (Purcell, 1993). Since the parents of the first generation of Limonese people had the opportunity to be educated in English as the medium of instruction, they speak English and Creole

Today it is estimated that 73 percent of the Limonese population of Afro-Caribbean descent (or around 2 percent of the entire population of Costa Rica) speaks some variety of English as their first language (Spence, 2003). Many factors have influenced some of the population to stop speaking Limonese Creole and adopt Spanish as their main language including the absence of a bilingual education policy for the province of Limón, the lack of preparation of public school teachers in English, the influence of Spanish as the prestigious official language of the overwhelming majority of Costa Ricans, the movement of Spanish speaking people to the province of Limón, and the low overt prestige of Limonese Creole, even among the Afro-Caribbean population of Limón. When asked what they speak, most respondents who speak Limonese Creole say instead that they speak ‘English’. This is due to the fact that for many of them, there is no clear boundary between Creole and Standard English, and because they feel more comfortable saying that they speak a high prestige language like English, instead of a stigmatized language like their English-lexifier Creole. Purcell (1993) noted in his observations of language behavior in Limón that most of the women did not opt to speak Limonese Creole in formal situations, but in informal contexts with friends and family they used the language to speak freely and expressively. On the other hand, young people of high school age who had been educated in Spanish, and who had been led to think that Limonese Creole is “bad language”, tended to be more willing to use Limonese Creole in all situations as a way of protesting against the imposition of Spanish (Purcell, 1993).

The United Fruit Company and the railroad companies chose to import labor from the British Caribbean for several reasons, including the availability of a large underemployed agricultural workforce in Jamaica and the fact that most of the managers of these companies were English speakers themselves. Just as the first wave

of African descended Costa Ricans were resented by ladino Costa Ricans for their association with English speaking pirates, so have the second wave of African descended Costa Ricans been resented by ladino Costa Ricans for the preference that they receive for employment with large US companies operating in Costa Rica. Thus, negative attitudes toward African descended Limonese and their English influenced language has persisted from the days of the pirates, to the days of the railroads, into the present day, where English has become the main language of the globalized economy, giving some Limonese a certain advantage in the global job market. Our research indicates that negative attitudes toward the Limonese and their language persist among Costa Ricans who do not live along the Caribbean coast, simply because they have no exposure to the region, its people and its languages.

In any case, the Limonese still speak their Creole. The older generations speak a Creole that is similar to the one spoken by their ancestors. The younger generations have introduced many Spanish words into their variety of Limonese Creole. While some Creole speakers think that Limonese Creole is 'English' and others consider it to be 'bad English', it is still safe to say that all maintain a strong bond to Limonese Creole because it makes a statement about their identity and cultural heritage.

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**TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES IN LANGUAGE,
CULTURE AND SOCIETY**

SLAVERY AND CULTURE IN PUERTO RICO: THE ELUSIVE ETHNIC BOUNDARIES OF WEST AFRICAN SLAVES, 1518-1873

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Some historians and linguists have studied the ethnic origins of West African slaves arriving in Puerto Rico from the 16th through the 19th centuries. In general, they have relied on documents produced by slave dealers who branded slaves according, in many instances, to the places on the coast of West Africa from which the slaves were embarked. The names of factories or fortresses where slaves were purchased very often became misnomers regarding the origin of captives. European traders were not usually interested in determining the precise location from which captives came. Sometimes slaves originated from regions further inland and had no cultural connections to the people who inhabited the coastal areas. This paper will highlight a number of the questionable criteria which have been used in historiographical and linguistic literature to determine denominations for African slaves in an effort to establish the “origins” of Africans who arrived in Puerto Rico during three-hundred years of slavery.

Slaves from different parts of Africa began to arrive in Puerto Rico both legally and illegally in the early 16th century. A distinguished linguist, Manuel Álvarez Nazario (1974), carried out very important research in terms of the linguistic contribution that the African slave population made to the Spanish language spoken in Puerto Rico. According to Álvarez Nazario, many West African ethnic groups were represented among the slaves who arrived in Puerto Rico over a period that lasted more than three hundred years. The Niger-Congo linguistic family of West Africa comprises the vast majority of the languages spoken by African slaves who ended up on the island.

The establishment of European factories on the coast of Africa began in 1448 after the Portuguese had founded a trading post at Arguín in 1445. After the Portuguese had established other slave trading centers along the coast, the Dutch and English established their own rival factories during the 16th century. As the new sugar cane plantation complex emerged in the Americas during the 17th century, new factories

were founded on the west coast of Africa. The French founded a fort at St. Louis near the mouth of the River Senegal in 1673. The English responded with a fort near the mouth of the River Gambia and the Portuguese established the Bissau factory on the Bissago Islands, which are part of Portuguese Guinea (Fage, 1969). Slaves purchased at these posts were known as “negros de ríos” or “river blacks” in Puerto Rico since most of these factories were near the mouths of some important West African rivers. A Puerto Rican historian has traced the “river black” term to 1647 (Díaz Soler, 1985).

However, these terms are sometimes inappropriate. Many of those slaves could have come from areas far from the coast in the African interior. They could have reached the coast through a vast trading network that already existed long before the arrival of European sailors along which ivory, gold, and other goods were exchanged. Nevertheless, linguists like Álvarez Nazario (1974) and historians like Díaz Soler (1985) have accepted these denominations as valid. The origin of slaves was probably more diverse. Men and women of different regions were grouped together as if all of them belonged to what the literature refers to as a “tribe” or a “caste”. It must be noted here that “tribe” and “caste” may not be the appropriate terms to classify African peoples. These terms refer to family units dating back to Roman times (in the case of “tribe”) and to social classes from the fifteenth-century Iberian Peninsula (in the case of “caste”).

In spite of all of these concerns regarding the ethnic classification of Africans, some names seem to be more common than others in archival documents. The first term that could be linked to a contemporary ethnic or linguistic group is that of the Wolof people. Spaniards wrote down this term as “*jelofe*” or “*gelofe*”. “*Jelofe*” is easier to pronounce than Wolof, especially for a native-speaker of Spanish. The Wolof people inhabit part of the modern-day Republic of Senegal. The presence of Wolof slaves was notable during the decade of the 1520s (Lovejoy, 2000). Wolof slaves organized the earliest revolts in Hispaniola. Puerto Rico experienced one such revolt in 1527. Spanish authorities were shocked by the intensity of this revolt and blamed slaves purportedly belonging to the Wolof ethnic group for this rebellion. King Charles I of Spain decreed that the importation of Wolof slaves had to be avoided unless a special permit was granted to a slave dealer. In King Charles’s words the Wolof were “*soberbios, inobedientes [sic], revolvedores [sic] e incorregibles*” [arrogant, disobedient, prone to revolt, and incorrigible] (Díaz Soler, 1985).

These words define the Wolof as if they were biologically inclined to revolt. The blame for the rebellions of the 1520s was placed on the enslaved Africans themselves. The European mindset of the era failed to recognize that the terrible conditions in which African slaves had to work in mines and on sugar plantations provoked rebellions. Therefore, the first African ethnic group to be amply represented in the Caribbean also became the first group that revolted against the masters and authorities. However, the contraband traffic in slaves did not take into consideration the

prohibitions on slave trafficking stipulated by the Spanish Crown. ‘Wolof’ people continued to arrive in Puerto Rico long after King Charles’s decree (Díaz Soler, 1985). It is also interesting to note that the term “*cafre*” or “kaffir” was also used to refer to Senegalese slaves in the early 16th century. The Mali and Songhay empires based in Timbuktu, in the present-day Republic of Mali, had contributed to the spread of Islam across vast areas of West Africa. “Kaffir” is an Arabic term used to refer to people who had not yet converted to Islam. The Iberian Peninsula was invaded by Moors from North Africa in 711. Muslims dominated parts of Spain for almost eight hundred years. The “*reconquista*” was carried out to expel Muslims from Spain. This war also fostered religious intolerance. As the Spanish empire of the 16th century was expanding throughout immense parts of the Americas, the Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church became concerned with the possibility of a propagation of Islam in their new colonial domain (Rout, 1976).

Thus, the faith of African slaves was a major preoccupation of the Spanish Crown. Not only were the indigenous peoples of the Americas expected to convert to Christianity, but African slaves were also expected to embrace Catholicism. Pre-Christian and pre-Islamic African religions did not pose as much of a perceived threat to the religious establishment in the Americas as did Islam (Rout, 1976). Therefore, from a Spanish point of view, African Muslim slaves had to be avoided at all costs. However, the Spanish authorities failed to realize that even during the heyday of the Mali and Songhay empires, many West Africans remained attached to their local faiths and that exclusive adherence to Islam was mostly practiced by African elites (Fage, 1969).

More Sub-Saharan slaves arrived in the Americas after the fall of the Songhay empires and other minor kingdoms of West Africa during the late 16th century. Other African ethnicities became part of the shipments of slaves destined to Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. Mention of Djula, Bámbara, Fulani, and Malinke slaves was made in the archival record. It is possible that some of Malinke or Mandinga people came from further inland, perhaps from the Niger Bend in the present-day Republic of Mali (Díaz Soler, 1985). Again, historical documents use imprecise terms such as “Mandinga.” The ethnic diversity of slaves originating from any given area could have been greater than the diversity that historical records imply.

Other slaves are identified in documents as “Biafara” which may indicate an origin in the Bight of Biafra in present day southeastern Nigeria or in Guinea-Bissau. It is interesting to notice that in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico there are places that bear the name Biáfara. There is even a locality in the Dominican Republic that borne this name since 1606 (Álvarez Nazario, 1974). Another group known in documents as Cangá or Gangá probably originated in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Slaves from that area seem to be numerous in 19th century Puerto Rico. Álvarez Nazario (1974) assigns them to the Mande linguistic group.

Slaves from the Cangá group developed their own dialectal form of the Spanish language on the island. Some 19th century authors write about slaves who “speak Cangá”, or “hablaren Cangá”. Moreover, Cangá slaves created a peculiar form of the Catholic ritual of the Holy Rosary. There was also a funeral vigil for children observed among Cangá slaves. It is called “*baquiné*”. Álvarez Nazario (1974) and others believe that this was a syncretic ritual that showed both Catholic and Mande features. Therefore, the enslaved had an impact on more than just economics in Puerto Rico, extending their influence to Puerto Rican culture and identity.

Other parts of West Africa also contributed to the formation of the Puerto Rican population and culture. The Temné people of Sierra Leone were represented among slaves who arrived in Puerto Rico at different times. Other slaves came from Côte d’Ivoire, from Ghana, and from the coastal area known to many as the Slave Coast. The Slave Coast comprises Togo, Benin, and the southwestern coast of Nigeria.

Again, the Portuguese were the pioneers in the nefarious traffic in human beings that linked Africa to the New World (Davis, 1994). The factory of Elmina, or Sao Jorge da Mina, was established along the coast of present day Ghana in 1482. There were Spanish slave traders in the area although under the Treaty of Tordesillas, the Spanish were obliged to obtain West African slaves through Portuguese middlemen, who were later replaced by Dutch, French, and English companies (Lovejoy, 2000).

It is worth noting that the slave trade was so lucrative that a number of other European powers participated in the slave trade. Traders from northern Germany and from Sweden were among the newcomers of the seventeenth-century. There were Danish factories between the current-day cities of Accra in Ghana and Whydah in Benin Republic. The British established their first outpost in Kormantine (in present day Ghana) in 1631 and eventually founded others that extended up to the southeastern coast of Nigeria, where they were forced to trade offshore. Many factories frequently changed hands from one European power to another (Díaz Soler, 1985).

The French established a factory at Whydah and other minor posts in the area, such as the Grand Popo settlement in present day Republic of Benin and the Little Popo outpost in present day Togo. According to historian Philip Curtin (1972), some ten thousand slaves were exported annually from an area extending from the coast of Côte d’Ivoire to the southeastern coast of Nigeria by 1785. In many instances, the long-standing presence of European traders in these parts of Africa was later used to support claims for the eventual establishment of a colonial presence in specific portions of the continent during the 19th century “Scramble for Africa” (Pakenham, 2011).

Slaves from present day Ghana were especially numerous in Puerto Rico. The category of “*esclavos de minas*” or “Mina slaves” was one of the most important denominations used for slaves imported into Puerto Rico from the 1580s onward. Of course, the origin of this term meaning “mine slaves” is related to the fact that Ghana was one of the most important gold producing areas of the world during the 16th and

17th centuries. According to historian Roland Oliver (2000), there were times when the Ghanaian mines surpassed the entire gold production of the Americas. The first archival mention of this term has been dated to 1647. Father Diego de Torres Vargas, a Spanish priest who lived in Puerto Rico, used that expression to refer to certain slaves (Álvarez Nazario, 1974). Some of these Ghanaian slaves arrived legally on the island but many did so illegally. Therefore, the exact number of Ghanaian slaves in Puerto Rico is impossible to determine.

Most “Mina slaves” were either Fanti or Ashanti. Spaniards used the term “Fante” to refer to “Fanti” people, and “Achante” to refer to the “Ashanti”. The English used the term “Koromanties” or “Kromantynes” for the “Fanti” (Álvarez Nazario, 1974). A Puerto Rican ethnomusicologist, Héctor Vega Drouet (1979), has traced the origin of an Afro-Puerto Rican rhythm called *bomba* to the Ashanti people. Vega Drouet visited Ghana in the 1960s and 1970s and found many similarities between the Ashanti music and its Puerto Rican counterpart. Further research needs to be carried out concerning such contributions of enslaved peoples from present day Ghana to Puerto Rican culture.

Moreover, Álvarez Nazario (1974) has pointed out that some slaves branded as “Mina” could have been people who came from further north. Some people of Ber, Barba, Bariba, and Kasselé origin were actually captives from the present-day Republic of Burkina Faso. According to Roland Oliver (2000), the savannah areas of the Sahel, which lacked a centralized political structure above the village level, were preyed upon by slave raiders from the powerful kingdoms located further south such as the Ashanti from the present day Ghana.

Luis M. Díaz Soler (1985) mentions a particular belief held by slaves from Ghana in Puerto Rico. According to another Catholic priest, Fray Íñigo Abbad y Lasierra, there was a strong tendency to commit suicide among those slaves. Fray Íñigo, who lived in Puerto Rico during the 1770s, commented that “Mina slaves” committed suicide because they thought that they would be reborn in their native land, which was “the best country on Earth”. This belief reflected not only a particular longing for a return to their place of origin. It is also a reflection of the horrible conditions of life and work to which slaves in Puerto Rico and the Americas were subjected.

Mine work in the New World was characterized by accidents, malnutrition, and corporal punishment. Sugar cane labor was not necessarily less oppressive. Slaves had to work at a fast pace for six months every year. They had to harvest the cane fields and to mill the cane immediately afterwards. Cane loses most of its sugar content only twenty-four hours after it has been cut. Many slaves, both men and women, had to work steadily some sixteen or eighteen hours a day so that the mill could produce a reasonable amount of sugar. There were frequent accidents. Many slaves lost some of their limbs in the process (Curtin, 1998). Historian Herbert S. Klein (1967) estimated

that life expectancy for slaves in the Cuban sugar industry of the 18th century to be only twenty-eight years. Therefore, slaves from Africa had to be constantly replaced. The Yoruba group from the present day Republic of Benin and the southwestern part of Nigeria became another important component of the cultural environment of Puerto Rico and other American territories. The Portuguese began to establish factories on the Yoruba coast during the second half of the 16th century (Fage, 1969). Other European powers founded factories during the following centuries. Yoruba slaves continued to arrive in Puerto Rico and other places until the first half of the 19th century (Álvarez Nazario, 1974). The Portuguese slave trade took advantage of the fact that some African states had emerged in the area (often with the help of the Europeans) and their heads of states were willing to be participants in the trans-Atlantic slave trade. This is the case of the Dahomey kingdom, which was founded around 1600. Dahomeyan kings exported slaves and other valuable goods both across the Saharan Desert through many intermediaries and also through the Atlantic Ocean network (Fage, 1969). The ethnic background of these slaves was certainly varied. Yoruba people probably comprised part of the human cargo sent to the Americas by Dahomeyans.

Yoruba religion was attractive to many slaves in the Americas. A syncretic form of Yoruba religions and Catholicism eventually emerged. It is known in various forms in the Caribbean and South America. It took the name of *vodou* in Haiti, *santería* in Cuba, and *candomblé* in Brazil. The numerous gods and goddesses of the Yoruba religion were worshipped through the images of Catholic saints. Both the Yoruba and Catholic personalities of these spiritual beings became enmeshed into inseparable entities.

However, Jorge Duany (1982), a Cuban-born anthropologist, has pointed some mistakes committed by researchers when they deal with these syncretic religions. Many features of these religions have their origins in the Americas. Santero “*orishas*” or gods are, actually, new spiritual beings that acquired a personality of their own outside of Africa. Moreover, other factors have to be considered, according to Duany. The Yoruba religion of Benin and Nigeria was the religion of the elite. It gave power to a class of rulers and wealthy merchants who sold slaves to European traders. The power relations were entirely different in the Americas, where Yoruba religion in all of its syncretic versions was the faith of enslaved and exploited peoples. Yoruba rituals gave some sort of meaning to a life that was oppressive. It also spiritually empowered slaves who were placed at the lower echelon of colonial societies. It is interesting to notice that Caribbean *santería* became attractive not only to enslaved and freed people of African descent but also to a number of people of European descent in the region.

Other West African groups were represented among slaves who reached Puerto Rico and the Caribbean. The Niger Delta area was another important market for slaves. The Portuguese began to purchase slaves in the area during the second half of the 16th century, but the Dutch, the British and the French soon followed suit as had happened

before in other coastal areas (Fage, 1969). Even though the Europeans were not allowed to establish their own factories there, the British turned the Niger Delta region into one of their favorite slave trading centers. The slave trade in the region lasted until the first half of the 19th century and was carried out via African controlled towns which were locally governed as independent city states along the coast, with European ships anchored offshore.

Some Efik/Ibibio trading families founded the town of Akwa Akpa and engaged themselves in this trade. The British called this place Duke Town, Calabar, or Old Calabar. Efik/Ibibio families became important business partners of merchants from Bristol and Liverpool. The Ijo town of New Calabar became another important slave-trading center, after the Ijoid speaking Kalabari ethno-linguistic group who live there. Most of the slaves sold at the local trading posts in the Niger Delta were of the Igbo ethnic group although their origin was probably much more diverse. Some of these slaves could have been speakers of languages belonging to the Ijoid branch of Niger Congo and to the Lower Cross, Upper Cross, Central Delta, Ogoni, non-Igbo Igboid, Bendi, and Bantoid groupings within the Benue-Kwa sub-branch of the broad Niger-Congo linguistic family (Álvarez Nazario, 1974).

The term Calabar itself is troublesome. It may have had more of a meaning to European traders than to Africans themselves. Calabar was a term used by Diogo Cao, a Portuguese navigator. Cao visited the Niger Delta area in 1482. Calabar was also the term used to refer to a navigable river. Therefore, Calabar is essentially a place name. The origin of this name is related to the Kalibari, which is a sub-group of the Ijo people of the Niger Delta region, according to Álvarez Nazario (1974). However, Calabar took on new meanings in the Americas. It became part of a specific identity assigned to and proudly borne by some slaves and their descendants.

Some slaves in Cuba and Puerto Rico identified themselves as “*carabalí*” well into the 19th century. They even participated in Catholic activities as a group. “*Carabalís*” were prominent in *fiestas* dedicated to particular saints within the Catholic calendar of saint’s days. They attended the San Miguel festivities in San Juan, Puerto Rico as a separate group up to the late 19th century. “*Carabalís*” also formed secret religious societies in 19th century Cuba. Furthermore, “*Carabalí*” has become a surname or family name to some people of African descent in Colombia and Ecuador (Álvarez Nazario, 1974) as are names such as ‘*Biafarra*’ or ‘*Viafarra*’. Therefore, names often acquired meanings other than those imposed by European slave traders and slave-owners in the Caribbean and Latin America.

There was another important distinction among slaves that was linked to their African origins. Those born in Africa were called *bozales* throughout the Spanish colonies. Those who were born in the Americas as the descendants of *bozales*, and frequently of white owners or foremen, were called *criollos* or “creoles” (Rout, 1976).

Bozal slaves tended to manifest more problems in terms of cultural adjustment than creoles born into slavery. *Bozales* were taken away from their place of origin where they used to be free men and women. They were forcibly introduced to a social and cultural environment that was alien to them. Violence became the principal means of making them accept and adopt a new culture. They had to learn new labor skills, a new language and a new religion. In most cases, they were even deemed inferior to slaves who were born in the Americas in terms of price and value.

Not surprisingly, *bozales* occupied the lowest social echelon among plantation slaves. Individual and collective escapes were more common among *bozales* than among creole slaves. Many revolts took place throughout the New World and these revolts made the colonial system of the Americas unstable and unreliable, as historian Eugene Genovese (1992) has pointed out. Therefore, the instances in which suicides among “Mina slaves” took place should be understood as another form of resistance in a thoroughly oppressive colonial world. The slave who committed suicide deprived his or her owner of a highly valued investment.

Creole slaves, however, did not entirely lose the culture of their *bozal* parents. Since plantations and mines tended to accumulate slaves of different African origins, a mixed Afro-European creole culture became the norm throughout Puerto Rico and the rest of the Americas. Although European cultural and linguistic features were imposed from above as part of the power relations established between masters and slaves, African cultural and linguistic features survived and thrived. In many cases, however African cultural and linguistic elements had to be masked by European forms, such as Catholic saints or European words. Therefore, while Spanish, English, French, and Dutch became the main lexical source for most of the languages of the Caribbean, at a deeper level African grammatical structures have persisted in Caribbean languages. These influences, along with those of indigenous Amerindians, South Asians, and others have contributed to converting the Caribbean basin into one of the most complex cultural regions in the world.

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JOHN MESSER: THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP OF A FREE COLORED CAPTAIN OF FREDERIKSTED, 1750-1819¹

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Background

Twenty-four years after the establishment of Christiansted in the Danish West Indies, now the US Virgin Islands, planters on the western side of the island needed a facility from which they could export their produce and receive imported goods. Government officials and planters were aware that the coastline was unprotected as it was an open roadstead (Oldendorp, 1987, [1777]: 32) subject to tropical storms and the invasions of enemies. These factors caused the West End of St. Croix to remain barely developed and sparsely populated. Despite the hazards, planters, desperate to get their goods to ships, had some portion of the shoreline cleared and ferried their goods out to vessels anchored in deeper waters. By 1745, however, the Danish colonial government had recognized that a second port on the island was necessary (Highfield, 2013: 2). The town of Frederiksted was thus created. With only one half of the planned town built, Fort Frederik, named after Frederik V, was completed in 1754.

In 1766, twelve years after the establishment of the town, there were 53 Euro-Caribbean men and 96 capable (able to work 8 hours) male and female enslaved Africans living there. No free Afro-Caribbean women were enumerated, but there were 3 free Afro-Caribbean men counted who owned either real property or enslaved people in the town. Of these three men was John Messer (Missard, Mesher), a “free Negro”, who at this time was listed as owning real property (Matricule 1766). Thirty-three years later in 1779, Messer is at first indicated as Captain of the Free Colored Corps, and thereafter his life takes several strange twists and turns (Census of Free Colored People in Frederiksted, 1779).

¹ This paper is an outgrowth of an internship sponsored by the National Park Service Historic District, January, 2012, to create a walking tour of Free Gut, Frederiksted. Louise Edwards of Oberlin College, Oberlin OH and Elizabeth Rezende, NPS consultant worked on the project. Blog by Edwards: VINE available at <http://usvine.wordpress.com/2013/01/31/reflections-on-free-gut-history>

At the time of the publication of the 1766 taxable property list or *matricule*, the earliest listing in which John Messer appears, we can suppose that John Messer had just reached official adulthood (16 years old) making his year of birth 1750. In a notation to the *Burial records of non Lutherans*, John Messer is listed as having died in 1819 (Vital Statistics 1826). Thus, using 1750 as his birth date and 1819 as his death date, John Messer, Sr. would have died at the age of 69.

There was a Euro-Caribbean resident also named John Messer who had died in 1771.² At the same time, two enslaved African girls, Dina and Rosetta, belonging to him were sold at auction.³ The present-day Messer family claims that Afro-Caribbean John Messer was the son of one of these women (Aminah Prince Saleem, interview). The 1787 Frederiksted Free People of Color list indicates that Captain John Messer's father was the Euro-Caribbean John Messer. What is curious, however, is that throughout the records, John Messer is listed as a "Free Black", which is a strong indication that he may not actually have been the son of the Euro-Caribbean John Messer.

In November 1733, the same year as the establishment of St. Croix, there was a major revolt in St. John in which the enslaved Africans overthrew the colonial government and held the island for six months. Previous to the revolt, stringent slave laws were enacted in September 1733, in the form of the Ordinance of 1733, also known as Gardelin's law (Phillip Gardelin, 1732-1736). This legislation was designed to create greater controls over the enslaved Africans including greater punishments for running away from the plantations. The legislation precipitated the 1733 revolt in St. John. Although the legislation is directed mainly at enslaved Africans, the document also contained mandates which focused on the Free African-Caribbean population as they related to the enslaved Africans. If free Afro-Caribbean persons were found harboring enslaved Africans or dealing with Africans with stolen goods, they, the free Afro-Caribbeans were "to lose all their rights" (Hall, 1992: 148). Just 17 years before John Messer's birth, the ordinance was being enforced in all three islands of the Danish West Indies.

Developments closer to John Messer's life, however, included the suppression of a conspiracy in 1759. Even though Messer was a child at this time, the impact of this and related events on the members of the free colored community in Christiansted

² Ryberg: 198. "Mester" is listed without a first name; he has a daughter Annaneca. Ryberg states that a testament, Skifteprotokol 49, Mar. 27, 1771 exists at the Rigsarkiv, Copenhagen; however, it was unavailable the summer of 2013. Svend Holsoe, compiler of VI Families.org has indicated to the Messer family that the European-Caribbean John Messer was a ship's captain.

³ Frederiksted Auction Protokol 1760-1824 states that Dina was purchased by Dr. John Barnes for 285 Rigsdalers; Rosetta by John Baa for 302 Rigsdalers.

would have made an impression upon him. Several free Afro-Caribbean men had conspired to overthrow members of the Danish colonial government and to assume key governmental positions. Some of their associates who were loyal to the colonial administration leaked the details of the plan to the authorities, and the military quickly arrested those said to be involved (Hesselberg, 1994, [1759]: 53-60). The punishments meted out were very brutal so as to prevent others, free Afro-Caribbean people or Africans from taking such action. These punishments inflicted by the Danish colonial government included the perpetrators being tortured and then hanged at the gallows, or their bodies dragged through the streets, or broken on the wheel (Hesselberg: 57). Witnessing the effects of the severity of these punishments or even hearing the stories of the events certainly would have left a lasting impression on the minds of both free Afro-Caribbeans and enslaved Africans throughout the island.

Formation of the Free Corps

The Free Negro Corps, or Free Company, later to be called the Free Colored Corps, was officially established in 1780s in Christiansted (Hall: 1992: 154), but the records list Messer as a “Free Negro Lieutenant” in 1778 and as “Captain John Messer” in 1779 (Matricules 1778, 1779). This para-military group may have started as a night watch detail which would later be transformed into a more formal organization, with several diverse mandates, probably in answer to what the colonial government felt were unresolved tensions from past conspiracies. “By 1800, the organization formed a critically important law enforcement apparatus in the towns” (Hall, 1992: 154).

The Governor-General appointed the Captain of this para-military group for each town; a “trustworthy and loyal” person was selected (Flagere: 1). In this position, the Captain, representing the colonial administration, acted as the general overseer of the free colored population, and was responsible for keeping order within the Free Guts, where free Afro-Caribbean people were allowed by Ordinance 1747 to own land and build their homes (Rezende, 1998: 90). This residential area called “*Neger Gotted*”, in the Ordinance of 1747 is included on the I.M. Beck map of 1754 Christiansted. “*Neger Gotted*” popularly became known as “Free Gut”, because a major drainage gutter bisected this two-block square hillside area. The gut channeled running water during torrential rains.

The Free Gut in Frederiksted, on the other hand, was not created as part of any written mandate. The area is specifically mentioned in the *Extracts of the Weekly Police Journals*. The area is referred to in these records as “Frie Guttet med Frie Couleurte.”⁴ This area was considerably smaller than that of Christiansted, consisting of one street, New Street, bounded on the south by Queen Cross Street. During rainstorms, a major

⁴ National Archives. RG 55. *Extracts of the Frederiksted Weekly Police Journals*. Entry 114 Box 497. July 16, 1804. Translation: “Free Gut with Free Colored”. The reports from the free African-Caribbean captain were submitted in English.

torrent of water from both the La Grange and Wheel of Fortune estates, located on small adjacent inclines, poured into this back area of the town. As water was plentiful in this area, a water well was placed at the intersection of Queen Cross and New Streets. Thus, over the generations, New Street became known as the Free Gut of Frederiksted.

Among their duties, the Free Colored Corps were to keep order in the streets of the Free Gut. The guardhouse, where the corps had their headquarters, was located on Hospital Street (*Police Journals*), the same street on which John Messer lived. Both enslaved Africans and free Afro-Caribbean people lodged their complaints when the corps was not on night watch duty within the Free Gut area. Should there be disturbances in other parts of the town, the enforcement of the social order was nebulous. In these calls for order, “members of the free colored corps came in contact with [Euro-Caribbeans] often in a situation marked by conflict” (Flagere: 1).

One such event occurred at a 1803 New Year’s Party at Samuel Gumbs’ residence in Frederiksted, when attendees, most of whom were Anglo-Irish became disorderly. When the Free Colored Corps attempted to quell the disturbance, which was out of their normal night watch area, the patrol received a hail of stones, and the rowdy party-goers jeered at them giving them the epithet of “Black Coat” (Hall, 1992: 161). The name may have derived from the feeling that the Anglo-Irish may have had for the British Red Coats. In any case, the name calling reveals the extent to which the Euro-Caribbean population disapproved of free African-Caribbean being called upon to establish order in areas beyond the limits of the Free Gut.

In another incident in 1804, Christian Muller of the Frederiksted Free Corps arrested Roderick Connor, a mulatto, for “disturbing the peace”. Muller, in carrying out his duties warned, “You shall have respect for me just as if I were the Governor General himself” (Hall, 1992: 164). Muller, after quelling a disturbance between three Afro-Caribbean enslaved persons and a free Afro-Caribbean man, once again is recorded as standing his ground in front of a Euro-Caribbean court judge and the planter whose enslaved Africans were involved in the altercation. In this instance, Muller stated that “If there was no justice in Frederiksted, there was the Governor-General in Christiansted” (Hall, 1992: 166).

Free Afro-Caribbean men themselves felt that they, as enforcers of the social order, should be given their just status in their role as law enforcement officers. Their organization was established and approved by the colonial administration. While the free African men did not mind the night watch, they resented the duty of hunting down enslaved African runaways, some of which could have been their own relatives. Moreover, when drafted for such duty, they were required to be absent from their own paid jobs for several days (Rezende, 1998: 236).

Restrictions on Free Coloreds' lifestyles

Between the years 1747-1760, "As the number of Free Colored increased steadily, it became necessary to have certain rules to secure uniform handling of the many questions involved in their freedom" (Lawaetz, 1979: 14). All of these ordinances regulating the lives of free Afro-Caribbean persons were legislated between the years 1747 and 1790, during John Messer's formative years. In 1766, Governor Peder Clausen (1766-1771) followed the lead of the governor of St. Thomas in writing up legislation against noise and celebrations. He stated that within the Free Guts, the free colored population was to observe a curfew of 10 PM, with permission from the police needed for approval of extended hours. In addition, enslaved Africans were not to be found in the Free Guts (Hall, 1992: 148). For infractions of any of these ordinances, the Captain meted out punishments, acting as judge and jury for this group of people (Flagere: 17). In Christiansted, punishments for major infractions were given out at the fort and for minor infractions in the Captain's residential yard. In Frederiksted, the severity of the offence was also considered. Severe infractions were dealt with at the fort and lesser infractions at the Free Colored Corps' guardhouse on Hospital Street.

Punishments for noise and illegal gatherings were 50 lashes (Hall, 1992: 148). For any punishment over 100 lashes, the offender had to be brought to the fort and dealt with by the fort personnel (Lawaetz, 1979: 7). With different punishments for infractions committed by different classes of inhabitants, the colonial government wished to keep the distinction between how Africans were punished (publically at the whipping post outside of the Fort) and the lesser offences of free Afro-Caribbean persons in the relative privacy in the Captain's yard or the guardhouse.

From one *Police Journal* entry, "free Negro woman Christiana Smith was arrested and flogged 25 times by the free Captain for interfering with the duties of the guard" (*Weekly Extract* Oct 13-17). In another instance, second lieutenant Andreas Buntin was in charge, but away from the site of the disturbance in which three enslaved rushed a free colored man. Before Buntin could get to the center of the problem, the judge Eylitz and the planter who owned the enslaved Africans appeared and took the combatants to the fort. Buntin writes in the entry, "I was trying to make it as easy as possible" (*Police Journals* Dec. 25, 1796). It is deduced that Buntin for the sake of the free Afro-Caribbean would have liked to have settled the issue quietly at the Free Colored Corps' guardhouse.

Nightly, the corps was to patrol the streets of the town as well as the coastlines. As Captain of this detachment of men, Messer received a small stipend and the other officers also received payment. The rank and file did not enjoy such privileges. Instead, they suffered a loss in pay when they were called out to hunt runaway Africans, some of whom may have been their relatives.

In addition to enforcing the laws, the Captain was to act as a mentor to the male youth in overseeing their apprenticeship and integration into the Corps when they reached 16

years of age (Lawaetz, 1990: 14). Another duty of the free Afro-Caribbean Captain was to conduct an annual census of the free non-European population in the town. For the years 1781-1783, Lieutenant Andreas Buntin signed the document. In other years Messer himself had the document written but made a mark as his signature. Messer is found in the Lists up until 1808 when it is recorded that he had fallen sick (Free Colored Lists, 1808).

For the Frederiksted district, the year 1787 seems to be one in which several lists of the Free Afro-Caribbean persons were generated. In *A List of Free Men in Frederiksted Jurisdiction for the Year 1787, December*, Captain John Messer heads the list. For the first time, his son, John Messer Jr. is listed. He must have become age 16 and attained adulthood that year, so he would have been born in 1771. There is also a list of the women taken that same month and there is a compilation of the two lists with John Messer Sr. as Captain and John Messer Jr. further down in the listing. This document gives a total of 128 free Afro-Caribbean people in Frederiksted, including 26 men, 44 women, 28 boys and 30 girls (1787 compiled Census). Special for this year is a *List of Free People that own Negroe Slaves in Fredericksted 1787*. This enumeration reveals that there were 11 free Afro-Caribbean persons who owned 17 enslaved Africans. Captain John Messer owned two enslaved Africans. In corroboration, a protocol confirms that he had purchased Monday, an adult at auction in 1785 for 56 Rigsdalers (Frederiksted Auction Protokol 1760-1824). The 1787 matricule shows that he later owned two enslaved Africans. Monday was noted as a “macron,” meaning a sickly person, alongside a second healthy man, Primus (Head Tax List of Negroes 1787). John Messer’s wife was the enslaved Afro-Caribbean, Sarra, but he did not own her.

The enumeration, *List over All Free Men in Fridtichstatt for Present Year 1792* yields more information than an ordinary census. There is a free African population in the town of 39 men, 74 women and 70 children. John Messer Sr. is listed first without any military designation, and he is classified as free born. His freedom certificate, or free brief, which such documents were called in the Danish West Indies, bears the government’s approval date of 1775, the date his free brief was recorded as having been signed by Governor Clausen. In scanning through the names listed, it is noted that numerous freedom certificates for other Frederiksted free colored were signed the same year. One wonders whether there had been a backlog of paperwork to be signed, awaiting the Governor-General to get to Frederiksted. It is curious that John Messer is listed as free in the 1766 matricule, but his certification was not signed until 1775, nine years later.

John Messer, Jr. is listed in this same document as one of the rank and file members of the Corps There are several surprising facts. First, he is listed as free born; therefore John Messer Sr.’s wife, the enslaved African Sarra, must not have been his mother.

Second, he does not have a free brief. Under the Ordinance of 1771, punishment for not having such a freedom certificate was imprisonment (Lawaetz, 1979: 27-32). It is important to note that at the same time there were 17 other free Afro-Caribbeans without free briefs, and another five with other papers declaring freedom but not certified by any governor.

Additionally, according to the ordinances, free Afro-Caribbean persons were not only to be in possession of the documents, but were mandated to show the paperwork upon demand in order to prove their freedom. Attached to the 1771 Ordinance, was the added mandate that the freed persons were to wear a rosette or cockade either on their hats or scarves to distinguish them from enslaved persons (Lawaetz, 1990: 115). These inconsistencies with the law we do not find in Christiansted. It also seems strange that as John Messer is the Captain of the Free Corps, supposedly knowing people in government, that he would have easily sought and obtained documentation for his son. These inconsistencies lead us to believe that because Frederiksted was smaller and less developed than Christiansted, less pressure was placed on formalities. It could also be that because of its smaller size the people of Frederiksted all knew one another's status, so that the regulations concerning proof of status could be lax.

John Messer's earnings

Since the 1780s, John Messer had been paid a small stipend by the colonial government for serving as free colored Captain. Other records do not mention his holding another position, but in looking at the yearly tax lists for real and enslaved property, we can gain some insight into how he earned some of his income.

The 1772 matricule shows that Messer lived with seven other free colored individuals. These individuals are not named. Before the census was taken, a hurricane ravaged the islands with both Christiansted and Frederiksted towns being heavily damaged.⁵ The matricule for 1772 indicates the lots on which buildings were destroyed. This natural disaster exacerbated the critical housing shortage which had already existed in Frederiksted town (Matricule 1772).

During the years 1778-1783. Messer owned property on Hospital Street and was constructing a home on the lot.⁶ A few years later he had purchased a lot on Fisher Street, on which he started construction (Matricule 1778). In later matricules, a

⁵ Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of State under US President, George Washington, spent his formative years in Christiansted. Just before he left for New York in 1772, he had experienced the hurricane. He wrote a letter to his father who was living in St. Vincent at the time, describing the strength of the winds and rain. This letter was then published in the *Royal Danish-American Gazette*, October 3, 1772.

⁶ During this time, lots in Frederiksted were not numbered as they are today. They seem to be numbered not according to the street, but that the whole town is broken up into lots and numbered. The matricule shows that he owned lot 255 on Hospital Street and lot 16 on Fisher St.

notation was made that “huts” existed on both of the properties. Neither Hospital nor Fisher Streets were considered part of the Free Gut. Yet, within the town of Frederiksted, there was a critical lack of housing available, even for Euro-Caribbean persons. During these years, the town still continued to grow very slowly. Under these circumstances, huts must have been allowed, ignoring for a time the official insistence on “sturdy buildings” as stated in the Ordinance of 1747. The *Danish American Gazette* lists “John Mercer” as delinquent in payment of his property taxes and “house and land at No. (no number is given) in Free Gut [Frederiksted] was taken from him by execution” (Dec. 26, 1778).

Knowing the shortage of housing, Messer in 1780 rented his Fisher Street hut to a Mr. Bolwin, a Euro-Caribbean resident, who owned 4 capable enslaved as well as to Thomas Gumbs, another Euro-Caribbean resident, who owned 14 enslaved persons. Additionally, Messer boarded two enslaved Africans, the property of two free African friends (VI Families .org). Just how the “hut” accommodated all of these individuals is not known. Also, if the custom of punishing less serious infractions by free Afro-Caribbean persons was to be carried out at the Captain’s residence, as was the case in Christiansted, where would Messer have fulfilled this obligation?

As for the Hospital Street property, Messer’s own enslaved African resided there (VI Families.org). In 1783, Richard Jobs, a Euro-Caribbean person purchased the property, and Messer now paid Jobs to allow his enslaved African to board there as did the two other free colored, who formerly paid Messer the rent for boarding their enslaved Africans. Having collected the price of selling the property, Svend Holsoe speculated that John Messer was living on Richard Job’s property (VI Families.org).

During this time, the population of the towns was increasing. For 1786, Hall reports that for Frederiksted there were 302 Euro-Caribbean persons, 133 free Afro-Caribbeans, and 133 enslaved Africans (1992: 89). Thus, Messer was definitely taking advantage of the market as there was no hotel in Frederiksted to accommodate business people coming in on the ships and no boarding house for visiting free Afro-Caribbean persons. Thus renting out rooms and spaces at exorbitant costs on a short-term basis appears to be a major source of income for John Messer and other enterprising free Afro-Caribbean men and women in the town (George Tyson, interview). As seen through his ownership of property, the fortunes of John Messer varied from year to year. He seemed to rent on a short-term basis, thus his income may not have been stable. What he did with his enslaved persons is not mentioned, but there is the possibility that he might have taken the opportunity to hire them out on a daily basis. Men were hired as porters on the Frederiksted pier to load and off load ships and to store goods in warehouses on the waterfront. He may also have had them working as petty vendors of goods on the streets of the town.

Around 1802, Messer attempted another entrepreneurial venture: to offer cockfights as entertainment to the general public. Messer himself, through his position as Captain of the Free Colored Corps, most likely knew the members of the colonial police force and thus could easily obtain permission to hold such gatherings which included the serving of meals cooked by his enslaved African wife Sarra and another enslaved African Cudjoe (Hall, 1992: 161). One condition of hosting the cockfights was to adhere to the curfew, which could be extended until 11 PM. A second condition was that the entertainment was to be offered only to free Afro-Caribbean persons. These were mandates set by ordinances.

Cockfights were a lively form of entertainment that drew all classes of people. Noise, gambling and fights typified such activities. Both the organizers and the police knew this. During a police sweep of the festivities, enslaved Africans were found in attendance. Messer was arrested and stated that, “he didn’t think that he had done anything wrong as it was common practice all over the countryside for slaves and free negroes to have cockfights” (Hall, 1992: 161). The colonial government through their ordinances wished to ensure that different classes of African descended people were not allowed to intermingle, and, thus, conducted such police sweeps most probably at the first sign of noise or a disturbance. Whether Messer was fined for this infraction or whether he served up to two weeks imprisonment on bread and water is not known.

Conclusion

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In comparison to Christiansted, Frederiksted was a small town, developing at a slower pace, with fewer structures being constructed. After the first 18 years of its history, what had been established was struck down by the devastating hurricane of 1772. Thus, the conditions of the town were completely different from those of Christiansted, the premier town of the island, which had been allowed time and money to grow. In the latter, regulations most probably were strictly adhered to. On the other hand, with such a small number of free Afro-Caribbean persons in Frederiksted, it is presumably correct to say that members of this class knew one another, and that authorities could easily distinguish between free Afro-Caribbean persons and enslaved Africans. Therefore, it can be concluded that the enforcement of the laws was considerably looser than it was in Christiansted.

John Messer’s life shows that he dabbled in many occupations in order to gain a livelihood: buying and selling real property, renting out rooms and boarding enslaved Africans, purchasing his own enslaved and hiring them out, and providing entertainment on a large scale. However, clever he was, he was unable to sustain any of these occupations for more than a few years.

Additionally, John Messer was working within a system set up to restrict his earning power as a free Afro-Caribbean person. When he chose the risky profession of operating cockfights, he knew that there were many official obstacles in his way.

Perhaps by offering dinner cooked by his enslaved African wife he had hoped to lend the semi-criminalized cockfights some legitimacy and sophistication.

Looking at the life of John Messer is a glimpse into the world of the free Afro-Caribbean population of Frederiksted between 1750 and 1819.

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St. Croix Landmarks Society

A list of free men, women and children in Fredericksteade Jurisdiction for Present Year 1781

A list of free men and women and children residing in the town of this 16th day of December 1787

A list of free men in Fredericksteade Jurisdiction 1787

A list of free women with their children in Frederiksteade Jurisdiction for the Year 1787, December

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FREEDOM FOR THE EMANCIPATED: AUGUST 1, 1838 IN THE BRITISH CARIBBEAN

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Introduction

How did enslaved persons of African ancestry in the British Caribbean respond to the 1838 declaration that today is often recalled as “setting them free”? This article turns to anecdotes from archival materials to explore this question and, more specifically, to better understand the events of August first of that year. It suggests that the use of historical materials to consider some of the ways in which people prepared for, celebrated, and gave meaning to the day usefully informs contemporary understandings of freedom and legal emancipation. These sources relate how persons of African ancestry saw the shift to wage labor at the same time that they contextualize ideas about freedom in terms of social relationships, formal education, and hopes for the future.

This examination of activities surrounding emancipation in various British colonies (e.g., Anguilla, St. Kitts, Jamaica, and Barbados) during the nineteenth-century suggests two things well worth remembering: First, the enslaved saw themselves as free long before the day that freedom was decreed for the hundreds of thousands that lived in bondage. Even while they had few opportunities to elaborate and share such opinions publicly, various types of evidence show that many viewed themselves as free beings that were wrongly enslaved. Second, while August first was seen as highly significant, restrictions that today are often associated with enslavement extend beyond the date that laws guaranteeing emancipation were passed. Commentaries from the period show that the formerly enslaved were cognizant of this paradox. Their statements link excitement about breaking with the past and complaints that it is increasingly difficult to do so. Contextualizing some of the events of 1838 brings into relief tensions between demands for freedom and realities of emancipation that were deeply infected by a legacy of enslavement and economic exploitation.

Today ideas about freedom for the enslaved inform numerous annual celebrations within the circum-Caribbean: August Monday in the Eastern Caribbean, Emancipation Day in Jamaica, Carnival in Antigua, the Season of Emancipation in Barbados, and Juneteenth celebrations in the US South. These events are meant to commemorate achievements of the past, but they can focus more on the passage of a law than the

struggles of the enslaved. One means of responding to this tension is to remember the enslaved as protagonists. Recalling that they did not see themselves as their masters did gives attention to their distinct social experience and their hopes that emancipation would displace and forever defeat the ideas, laws, and economic practices responsible for their bondage. It also illuminates specific concerns of the newly emancipated, including the charge that the changes enshrined in law fell short of meeting their expectations of liberty.

Oral histories, like written documents, underscore the notion that freedom has to do with much more than the passage of a law; they also show that the transition from slave to wage labor in the Caribbean's British colonies is more staggered than usually recognized. For example, contemporary elders in Anguilla, the most northerly of the Leeward Islands, report that news of slavery's dismantling reached their ancestors after their legal emancipation had been enshrined in law, due to their relative isolation and masters' greed. As one woman explained, "Some kept the news secret for a while and also started rumors to cause confusion about legal status. Still, here we celebrate the first of August. It's not like places in the US where they celebrate Juneteenth, the day the people actually got the news that slavery had ended."¹ As her testimony suggests, the declaration of freedom for hundreds of thousands of persons of African ancestry in the British colonies on August 1, 1838 was neither automatic nor systematically enforced. Apparently in Anguilla and some of the marginal colonies news of emancipation was suppressed, foreshadowing a situation similar to the one that arose in parts of the US South almost three decades later.

Juneteenth commemorates the official declaration of freedom for the enslaved by General Gordon Granger, the commanding officer of a group of Union troops in Galveston, Texas on the 19th of June 1865. This act came two months after the end of the Civil War and approximately two years after Abraham Lincoln's signing of the Emancipation Proclamation (Taylor, 2002: 3). On that day General Granger told African Americans that they had been freed. He read from General Order #3, which mandated that the formerly enslaved remain in their homes and work for wages (Conner, 2013: 120). Granger's message included restrictions and warnings, as had proclamations of emancipation in the British colonies. Among these were prohibitions against idleness and public gatherings at military posts.

John Callahan offers compelling comments on Juneteenth in his introduction to writer Ralph Ellison's 1999 novel of the same name. He gives special attention to the delay that continues to make it such an intriguing event.² Callahan (1999) describes the delay as "symbolic acknowledgement that liberation is the never-ending task of self, group, and nation, and that, to endure, liberation must be self-achieved and self-achieving" (p.

¹ Anguilla Culture-Bearers Project interview, 2008.

² This novel, a 368-page compilation of more than 2000 pages written by Ellison over a span of forty years, was edited and published posthumously in 1999.

xxxi). Ellison spoke about liberation as the recovery of language in response to devastation. He described the need to reveal the sacred vision of enslaved African Americans found in testimony, folklore, and writing as “a very valuable tradition” that is “a part of the general American literary heritage,” not merely a component of Black heritage (Open Culture interview, 1966). Ellison’s work and Callahan’s statement echo sentiments of the enslaved preserved by abolitionists and missionaries in nineteenth-century archives. All three imagine freedom as something wholly transformative and larger than legal emancipation. As suggested by the above testimony from Anguilla, some contemporary Caribbean people are intuitively aware that freedom exists in tension with habits of daily life, including discourses that proliferate in moments dominated by official state-sponsored celebrations.

Freedom among the enslaved before 1838 in Anguilla

The idea that the enslaved saw themselves as free functions as a useful lens for interpreting historical documents that precede 1838. It assists in nuancing contemporary understandings of freedom and past events, offering hints of what a genealogy of freedom for colonial societies of the British Caribbean might look like. Examples showing that the enslaved saw themselves as free before legal emancipation abound, but in the interest of space, here I focus on one.

Court records from Anguilla in the year 1769 offer details of a case which documents some of the contradictions concerning how freedom and personal agency were linked in colonial societies (Anguilla Heritage Room archives). The case revolves around the actions of two enslaved men, Bristol and Crux, both of whom were the legal property of Reverend Jonathan Fleming. The two were told to protect a field of sugar cane and given a standing order to kill anyone who stole or destroyed the cane they that they guarded. When a man named Venture, an alleged intruder, entered the field, they chose to defy their master’s orders. Rather than murder Venture, they apprehended him and went to their master, reporting what had happened. Fleming, evidently furious with their actions, threatened them and forced them to kill Venture, rejecting the suggestions that the “intruder” shouldn’t die and may have been merely taking a stroll or shortcut.

Later, the local court, after a process of deliberation, ordered Fleming to pay Venture’s owner what it determined to be the deceased slave’s value, indicating that such payment was necessary because the killing took place after Venture was stopped and apprehended, rather than at the moment he first trespassed. Because they followed their master’s orders, the court punished neither Bristol nor Crux.

Bristol and Crux exercised freedom when they attempted to save the life of a member of their community. They refused to respond to the situation as robotic brutes, even though their legal status as Fleming’s property suggested that they were to do precisely that. Their actions contest infractions on their humanity and suggest that they saw

themselves as free to think and act. Moreover, their decision to take the issue to their master shows that they appealed to and endorsed a standard of logic or reason larger than the system of jurisprudence that enslaved them.

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeship is another aspect of the path to emancipation that tends to be forgotten. Virtually all of the enslaved in the British Caribbean were designated apprentices by the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833. However, there are a few exceptions. The main one is Antigua, where the local legislature bypassed apprenticeship and offered “full emancipation” in 1834 (Berleant, 2004). Another exception is children, as those under the age of six were classified as free. Apprentices were obligated to work 40.5 hours on their masters’ estates without payment (Hall, 1953: 148). In exchange for their labor, they were to be provided with lodging, food, clothing, and medical care. Distinct from the situation they had faced previously as enslaved laborers, apprentices had the right to either hire themselves out as wage laborers or tend to their own provision grounds. Significantly, however, they were allowed to do so only after completing the number of hours stipulated by law.

Some apprentices hired themselves out to their own masters during the extra hours they managed to squeeze in at the end of the week. Others chose to work off their master’s land. Emerging entrepreneurs chose to cultivate vegetables and other crops for sale in local markets, using small sections of peripheral ground that they were allocated. Many strived to save enough money to buy their freedom or that of family members. A substantial number succeeded in doing so, even though the price was usually very high. Significantly, this practice extended until almost the very end of the four-year period of apprenticeship. One reason for this seems to be that the violence and inhumane treatment continued under apprenticeship was accompanied with increased surveillance and uncertainty about what awaited the formerly enslaved. One apprentice spoke of an arbitrary system of justice in which his rights were restricted and punishment commonplace by the authorities: “The constable lock you up when him like; the book-keeper lock you up when him like; when the busha come, they tell him, and he fasten you in the dark hole better; when the magistrate come on the property, they bring you before him, and he know all about you before you come, if you offer to speak for yourself, he hold his finger and say ‘not a word.’” (quoted in *Baptist Magazine*, 1838: 14)

Historian D.G. Hall (1953) points out that apprentices and their masters saw the phenomenon of apprenticeship quite differently. British masters tended to see it as a much-deserved opportunity to exploit the system of compulsory labor on which they had long relied for a few additional years (p. 142). Apprentices saw it as a temporary status ridden with contradictions, challenges, and administrative problems. Change was in the air and they were often told they had been emancipated, but for them this

was not freedom. How could they be both free and bound to estates? How could someone be only partially emancipated? How free was the child of an apprentice who was forced to serve a master? Unsurprisingly, numerous conflicts arose between masters and apprentices. Problems concerned issues such as how to calculate work hours in the case of rain, use of the master's tools for work on provision grounds, medical attention in case of illness and injury, and compensation for travel time to work sites far from home. Masters and apprentices alike worried about how the other's gains and losses related to these issues would inform pending social and economic reform. Racial and socioeconomic hierarchy was only reinforced when, as part of the process of emancipation, the British Crown financially compensated masters for the value of the Africans that they owned. This system of compensation for masters informed how colonial authorities in the Spanish Caribbean proceeded with emancipation a few decades later.

The last day of apprenticeship, July 31, 1838, was far from a normal workday for many. In fact, records indicate that a substantial number of apprentices in St. Kitts, Antigua, and Jamaica completed the required hours of their workweek early because they wanted the day free to prepare for the next day's festivities. Newspaper clippings from the region indicate that their preparations took a variety of forms: Mothers and grandmothers prepared the clothes that family members would wear the next day. Friends came together to decorate chapels and government buildings. Educators and church members organized books and readers for distribution to "young scholars." Those planning to speak in public finalized toasts, speeches, and eulogies to be given at funerals for slavery (e.g., St. Kitts newspaper cuttings, 1839: 256-257).

Additional details concerning what people did on the final day of apprenticeship come from the archives of Jamaica's Baptist missions. They report that church members baked breads, killed pigs, built tables, and practiced hymns. They also record that members and non-members alike (the latter are referred to by missionaries as "inquirers") joined together to cook, clean, and set up outdoor tents, all so that hundreds would be able to sit down together and share a meal (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 3; 15). The inclusion of inquirers was important to some of the apprentices because it represented a step towards the restoration and preservation of community across lines that divided them, including those of class and faith.

In Jamaica's larger cities thousands flocked to chapels at 10:00 p.m. on the evening of July thirty-first. People were so excited that they couldn't sleep, and many prayed and sang throughout the day and into the night. What did they pray for? What were their concerns? These questions are hard to answer, but it seems that some prayed for a smooth transition. Other prayers included expressions of thanks. Apprentices were thankful for all that had allowed them to see themselves as free despite their enslavement: the acts of kindness and solidarity, concerns about infractions on their humanity, and the actions associated with the abolitionist cause, for example (*Freedom*

in *Jamaica*, 1838: 3-4). However, some harbored serious concerns. They worried that the emancipation of the masses might lead to a status that was more restricted or limited than that enjoyed by Blacks granted their freedom before 1838.

Preparation in one Jamaican village led to a debate about how to best celebrate. Parishioners eventually rejected missionary proposals that they hold a tea party, opting instead for “a more expressive service dedicated to song and personal testimony” (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 4). The drinking of tea appears to have been associated with a former way of life in which constant tensions between enslavement and freedom were normalized. Apparently they saw the more dynamic gathering that they proposed, a type of activity that they had not organized previously, as appropriate given that their emancipation was to be “full, free, and complete.”

With the first glimpse of dawn the next morning, people formed groups and marched through their communities. One man climbed a tree before the break of day to be the first in his neighborhood to cast his eyes upon the sun. Perched up on a branch, when he saw the sun’s first rays, he did not celebrate the mere arrival of a day. Instead, he shouted out, “The light shines down on the freedom within us.” Another celebrant saw matters through a similar metaphor, “The sun of freedom rose and shone in all its glory on our isle, and the slave, freed from his shackles, declared to the world that he was a brother and a man” (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 3-4).

Celebrations of “Full Freedom” in Jamaica

By noon on August first, a jubilant crowd of at least 10,000 had formed in Kingston. In Spanish Town, Jamaica’s capital under Spanish rule, 8,000 gathered. Among the latter crowd were 2,000 children who marched alongside their teachers to Government House. They proudly carried banners with slogans such as “Knowledge is Power,” “Africa is Free,” and “The Chain is Broken.” (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 2-5; 12). As these messages suggest, the youth and many of those around them were eager to pursue the future that they had long imagined. Greater access to formal education, in particular tangible skills associated with the acquisition of literacy, was at the forefront of their minds. Indeed, the formerly enslaved appear to have seen such opportunities as essential to the changes that marked the day as one worth celebrating.

Also revealing is the message offered to the masses from church pulpits. According to one official, certain ministers “fully and faithfully” presented “the privileges and duties that would arise out of this new state of society” (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 4). Many of these sermons, like discussions of emancipation that circulated among anti-abolitionists, positioned freedom not as a God-given right, but as a privilege. These sermons and related lectures applauded the leadership and foresight of wealthy abolitionists, the Governor of Jamaica, and Queen Victoria. While dignitaries and religious leaders offered a history of slavery on some occasions, their narratives appear

to have not made reference to the resistance, patience, strength, and resilience of those Africans who had been exploited and oppressed for hundreds of years.

Another somewhat surprising component of the messages offered by church leaders is their insistence that the masses exhibit behavior that complied with a strict set of ideological norms. Church leaders instructed them to take on numerous “responsibilities”. They were told to be hardworking and productive laborers and to exhibit commendable behavior, including sobriety, orderly conduct, and religious devotion. They were also ordered to avoid idleness, drumming, violence, and adultery. Church officials of various denominations experimented with proposals that positioned compliance with these directives as a prerequisite for formal education. Former apprentices were openly challenged to prove that they were worthy of their new legal status. The review of materials from Methodists, Baptists, Wesleyans and Anglicans alike indicates that most ministers told them that the day emancipated them not from their masters, but from barbarism and sin (e.g., see *Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838; Phillipo, 1843; Waddell, 1891).

Although tension had sometimes emerged around the imposition of religious directives associated with Christianity, the archives of several religious institutions suggest that the dominant mood among the African masses on the first day of August was one of exuberance and hope. A woman who identifies herself as “Mrs. T” indicates that 800-900 people gathered at her chapel (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 5). She reports that they insisted on changing the words of the hymn “Joyful”, written by Thomas Bilby in 1832, and repeatedly inserted “Oh, this is joyful” for the standard line “Oh that will be joyful”.³

In a testimony of a distinct tenor, a former apprentice by the name of Edward Barrett praised the Queen of England for her actions and then compared her strength to that of enslaved women who, when they were forced to face the abuse of their masters, refused to accept the idea that they were not free. He went on to challenge claims that emancipation would lead to the economic downfall of the colony. Barrett declared, “The overseers and bookkeepers say that ships will come from England and go back with nothing but ballast, but I say to them ‘Look out, we shall have more to send than we ever had, sugar, pimient, ginger, and coffee’” (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 9-10). Mr. John White echoed the claim. His insistence that “more sugar can be made by free ladies and gentleman than was made by slaves” was met with loud cheers from all around him (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 10).

The day’s events also included performances. In the northern town of Falmouth, for example, celebrants assembled near Suffield School to bury slavery – literally – once and for all. People gathered around a coffin to celebrate slavery’s passing (*Freedom in Jamaica* 1838: 7). Next, they ceremoniously placed within it objects representing the most inhumane aspects of the Atlantic Slave Trade: a chain, handcuffs, and an iron

³ For the standard hymn see Rogers 1867, p. 60.

collar. In another community, Salter Hill, people appear to have seen slavery as an ongoing threat poised for return. A whip was cut up, a chain disassembled, and shackles crushed before they were all buried near the chapel. Members of this congregation destroyed the object and made it a point to entomb them close by, because slavery was capable of “rising from the dead” (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 14-15). Locating the grave near the chapel allowed them to “keep an eye on” slavery and some of the main tools used historically in attempts to convince them that they were not free.

African Heritage and the Anglican Church in Barbados

Anglican church records from Barbados provide a few details of what happened there on August 1, 1838. They depict a pious and controlled religious celebration, probably the largest on the island that day. William Hart Coleridge, one of the two Anglican bishops in the British Caribbean at the time of Emancipation, led the worship service. Coleridge describes a well-attended event that he organized:

It was my peculiar happiness [. . .] to address a congregation of more than 4,000 persons, more than 3,000 of whom were negroes, just emancipated. And such was the order, such the deep attention and perfect silence, that [. . .] you might have heard a pin drop. Among this mass of people, of all colours, were thousands of my African brethren, joining with their European brother, in offering up their prayers and thanksgivings to the Father, Redeemer, and Sacrificer of all. (quoted by Pascoe, 1901: 93)

Like testimonies made by officials in Jamaica, this one emphasizes that the day was peaceful; however, its references to silence and orderliness carry with them special significance when considered within the sociohistorical context. For more than a decade, Coleridge, a proponent of prior experiments in “partial freedom,” had focused on carefully and systematically transforming the behavior of Africans through baptism and strict religious and social codes. He advocated the gradual abolition of slavery, because it was less likely to “damage life and property,” warning that rapid enfranchisement would be followed by “[. . .] more suffering and crime than have ever yet been witnessed under the most galling bondage” (Pascoe, 1901: 201-202). His policies of amelioration and evangelization included a system of rewards and punishments demanding that persons of African ancestry rapidly assimilate toward a specific set of English cultural norms. In the words of one observer, Bishop Coleridge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), “hoped to transplant to Barbados and the West Indies the paternalistic social structure of an ideal English village” (Bennett, 1958, 133). The SPG was a major slave owner that oversaw the labor of thousands of Africans on the Codrington Plantation.

Coleridge and SPG affiliates saw the systematic eradication of West African religious beliefs and social practices as going hand in hand with formal education. In fact, they considered both necessary steps in the preparation of Barbados for emancipation. Starting in the late 1820s Coleridge promoted the establishment of numerous Sunday Schools in which the enslaved who lived on estates could learn to read. By 1829 each parish in Barbados had at least one (Goodridge, 1981: 25). These were not marginal to his mission or the work of the SPG. As Goodridge states, the “civilizing role of education and religious instruction was clearly uppermost in the Bishop’s mind” (p. 63). Those who embraced the Anglican establishment’s directives, whether of European or African ancestry, were positioned as models for “heathens” and those among them who were enslaved were taught that they had freedom in God. These ideas were presented in schools and in the thousands of chapels that Coleridge built. Like the situation in other Eastern Caribbean islands, the enslaved and free studied and worshipped together (Walicek, 2011: 185-186). Both before and after apprenticeship, religious instruction prohibited dancing, drumming, and sexual promiscuity (including “polygamy” and “concubinage”). In addition, Bishop Coleridge and others linked to the SPG sought to withhold access to formal education from those who continued to engage in these practices. Teaching in the areas of English grammar, arithmetic, and religious instruction were also components of the educational curriculum that he oversaw and endorsed as “good” (Goodridge, 1981: 55-58).

As suggested by the aforementioned prohibitions, Coleridge was highly critical of anything he saw as an “African custom or superstition”. He dedicated significant energy to transforming the outward behavior of the formerly enslaved in the period of apprenticeship, including their activities on Sundays, the only day they did not have to work on their masters’ estates. On Sundays, many Africans in his diocese traded with poor whites, practiced dancing and singing, visited friends and families on other estates, and tended to the provisions in their own gardens; in addition, some engaged in practices associated with Obeah (Goodridge, 1981: 74). Coleridge considered all of these highly problematic and sinful. He was one of many church officials to spread the idea that their continuation meant that Barbados was not ready for freedom. Apprentices who wished for their children to attend schools, as well as any adults who wished to study, were pressured to abandon their provision grounds and to modify their patterns of social relations. The practices that they had inherited from their ancestors were deemed uncivilized by powerful members of the class that had enslaved them. Coleridge, SPG administrators, and colonial officials with whom they were allied tended to portray communities and individuals who did not modify their behavior and beliefs as problematic and primitive people unworthy of literacy, economic autonomy, and wages.

To be remembered, a freedom that grows

On the second day of August 1838, celebrations continued in public spaces of St. Kitts, Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica, and other British colonies. In most of these places, dignitaries spoke, the Union Jack was saluted, and beef and biscuits were served. Powerful individuals invested with colonial authority sought to define what freedom would mean. On the beaches of the more populous colonies, cannons were fired, bonfires built, and fireworks displayed. Speaking at some of these activities in Jamaica were schoolmasters who reported dramatic increases in enrollment and the registration of thousands of first-time students. They wondered how they would deal with the larger numbers effectively. Intensifying matters further, some of the societies that had supported schools for the most marginalized of Jamaica's students announced that they would cancel funding, given the onset of wages, more widespread interest in education, and possible future support from local government. The decision was backed by the idea that once they earned wages, the formerly enslaved who wanted to learn to read and write would be able to financially support their own schools. Offering a positive outlook, a few communities held ceremonies for the planting of trees of liberty, proclaiming that freedom must be cultivated to "continue to grow" and bear fruit.

The following week, crucial questions about emancipation arose in community gatherings. In one case, a gentleman named James Wallace stood up to praise as well as critique the state's declaration of his freedom. He recalled how as a little boy he was given a hoe and ordered to clean grass. After emphatically identifying *the hoe* as "the first resolution" in his life, he continued by questioning the idea that he was "fully free" (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 11). Wallace publicly lamented that he couldn't read one of the important documents of his life, the resolution detailing his emancipation, even when he held it in his own hands. Some among the enslaved and apprentices had become literate as the result of formal education, but he was not one of them. Wallace ended his testimony with a look to the future, grateful that the young son he had recently enrolled in school should one day be able to read it for him.

Just a few days later, a man in Old Harbour, Jamaica pointed to problems that would soon arise throughout the region. He explained, "The long expected day is past and [. . .] we are free in law, but every attempt is made by some of the planters to keep up slavery, in some form or another, by telling the people to work as usual, without arriving at any new agreement." Others decried that "attorneys offered unfair wages or no wages at all" (*Freedom in Jamaica*, 1838: 6).

Shortly after 1838 many of the newly freed faced opposition from a large number of their former masters and social and economic institutions. To make matters worse, several colonies abandoned their investments in participatory government and embraced "direct rule from London." On the island of Antigua, attorneys who served on the legislature were critiqued for "contributing to abuses" and having interests

“only identified with the present order of things.” (Sturge & Harvey, 1838: 78). In Jamaica, the elite often interpreted education for the peasantry as having a limited purpose and “fail[ing] from the beginning to match the social demand that might have been made of it” (Gordon: 1958: 141).

As shown by historian Mimi Sheller (2000), the majority of those emancipated as well as the whole next generation found themselves marginalized from political participation as well as landless, impoverished, and unschooled (pp. 145-154). She tells of an incident that took place in the First of August festival of 1839 in which people had planted a coconut tree as an emblem of their cherished liberty. To their dismay, some “gentlemen” in the neighborhood pulled it up. One of those disturbed by this responded, “they pull up we tree, but they can’t take away we August.” As Sheller notes, struggles over symbols indicate the deeper significance of non-economic factors in marking the transition out of slavery and building a new society” (p. 145). The formerly enslaved embraced the idea that their freedom should be protected by law and insisted on a new future, holding on to the progressive sense of optimism that still brings to life many of the celebrations described above. Their actions, hopes, and vision can serve as important symbols for reconsidering discourses of freedom and democracy that endure throughout the Atlantic world.

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UN PASO ENTRE LA LITERATURA Y LA HISTORIA: BIOGRAFÍA DE UN CIMARRÓN DE MIGUEL BARNET

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“La novela latinoamericana es, en lo general, un documento más exacto que la Historia” (Ervin, 2006: 15)

Germán Arciniegas

¿A quién citar, en este mundo
terrible de citas y de discursos de
otros? ¿De dónde elegir la cita?

(Josefina Ludmer, citada en Vera, 1989: 15)

Los debates entre Historia y Literatura son un tema candente en los actuales discursos académicos. La cuestión del cimarrón es un tema, desde mi punto de vista, interesante. Quién no ha oído hablar sobre la famosa obra de Miguel Barnet, *Biografía de un cimarrón*, publicada en la década de los sesenta del siglo pasado. Ésta trata del testimonio del cimarrón, Esteban Montejo, en la Cuba del siglo XIX. Esta obra de Barnet se enmarca dentro de la novela-testimonio según diferentes autores. Como bien dispone la cita del comienzo de esta propuesta, propongo analizar esta obra (novela, testimonio, literatura, Historia) en tanto en cuanto a través de la literatura podemos acercarnos a la Historia, en este caso, a los últimos años de la esclavitud en el siglo XIX.

Introducción

Cuando hice la propuesta inicial que pueden leer más arriba no pensé que fuera a toparme con un tema tan interesante. Como confieso en la misma, mi especialización académica ha versado, al menos en Puerto Rico, en problemas contemporáneos del siglo XX y XXI. Digo en Puerto Rico como española radicada en Puerto Rico donde comencé a hacer mi maestría en las áreas de Estados Unidos y Europa y, en la actualidad, realizo mi doctorado con énfasis obligatorio en el área de Puerto Rico. Sirva como estereotipo, como española y europea no sabía (ni sé) mucho de El Caribe. En las clases de Historia en la Universidad de Murcia por cual me licencié teníamos la típica clase de Historia de América dividida en diferentes etapas con la carencia de todo lo que ello implica al ser el continente americano inmenso. Además de que en esta universidad yo centré mi atención en la Edad Media. De ahí que el historiador se reinventa y siempre aparece uno de esos profesores que hace *click* y modifican algo en

ti. Y ese fue un profesor que impartía una clase de Historia de América Latina en el siglo XX, Alejandro García, por supuesto. Inicialmente vine a hacer un intercambio académico en Puerto Rico como parte de una experiencia en el extranjero antes de graduarme. Puerto Rico sonaba como ese lugar tropical donde las playas, las palmeras, los cocos y la diversión estarían por doquier. Si bien esta fue la impresión inicial como todo buen extranjero nunca pensé que fuera a hacer mis estudios académicos de alto nivel en la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Pero heme aquí, y ante el famoso tema del cimarronaje a través de la considerada “novela testimonio” de Miguel Barnet, *Biografía de un cimarrón*. Si lo pongo entre comillas lo de novela testimonio no es gratuitamente sino por todo el completo debate que ello ha suscitado y suscita en torno a esta obra, como expondré más adelante. Si me detengo a dar este contexto de mi persona es por lo impactante que ciertas tradiciones y costumbres así como descripciones hechas en el libro son, quizá para mí y digo sólo quizá, más sorprendentes e impactantes así como también interesantes por lo novedoso y el propio descubrimiento de lo desconocido.

En este libro, centrado en Esteban Montejo, cuenta la vida de éste a través de su experiencia como cimarrón en los montes en la Cuba de finales del siglo XIX así como su implicación en la guerra de la Independencia. Miguel Barnet conoce por casualidad a Esteban que en el momento de relatarle sus vivencias contaba con 105 años de edad (a pesar de que él mismo admite en el libro que no está seguro de dónde exactamente y el año en que nació). A través del mismo podemos acercarnos a la vida de un esclavo a finales del siglo XIX en la isla más grande del Caribe mientras no sólo nos cuenta de su vida en la hacienda y su huida sino también comenta sobre las tradiciones como las diferentes religiones como el palo y la santería, su relación con las mujeres e incluso la guerra de la Independencia y su presencia en la misma.

Antes de explicar cómo se distribuirá el trabajo me gustaría incidir en mi propia experiencia por lo que ello pueda contribuir al mismo. Mis primeros contactos con Cuba fueron en el año 2010 con una brigada comunista a diferentes partes de Cuba como obviamente La Habana pero también otras más alejadas como Santiago, Baracoa e incluso una caminata a la Sierra Maestra. En este primer viaje los contactos, al margen de mis creencias políticas, fueron de esa índole pues el motivo de mi viaje era viajar a Cuba como se pudiera con el fin de que no me contaran como era Cuba siendo uno de los países más interesantes en tanto en cuanto viven en una Revolución desde 1959. Así que nada de lo que cuenta Esteban percibí en este primer viaje.

En el segundo viaje, en año 2011, fui como parte de una delegación al Festival del Caribe que se celebra anualmente en la ciudad de Santiago de Cuba por poco más de una semana. En este festival pude tener contacto con la religión de la santería e incluso con la religión del palo que Esteban comenta en el relato. Si fue así fue porque por las noches se hacían representaciones de éstos cerca del hotel donde nos quedábamos

donde se reunieron espiritistas, santeros y paleros, además de ser un viaje con más contacto con la gente más local.

Debo decir que a eso ayudó que uno de los integrantes de nuestra delegación había participado en la religión del palo años anteriores con lo que éste sirvió como un excelente recurso a la mayoría de mis dudas e interrogantes. En este sentido, llegamos a visitar el santuario de la Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre, conocida en la santería como *Ochún*, diosa yoruba del oro y la sexualidad, donde se hizo un ritual como parte de la Fiesta del Fuego del festival. En ella pudimos ver algunos de los rituales que Esteban comenta. Pude ver las *ngangas* e incluso tuve alguna sensación extraña que uno no sabe si es producto de la realidad o de la sugestión. En cualquier caso, aprendí mucho en ese viaje, más de lo que hubiera esperado.

Es normal, en la Cuba actual, encontrarte con mujeres vestidas completamente de blanco (que se conoce que están vistiéndose santos, es decir, iniciándose en la religión con todo lo que eso llega a implicar como la renuncia al sexo por esa etapa que puede durar más de un año) así como otras que ya han sido iniciadas y son hijas de *Ochún* o *Yemayá*, diosa esta última de los mares y la maternidad, así como también hombres que son hijos de *Oggún* o de *Changó*, dios de la guerra, la selva y las herramientas y dios del rayo y de los truenos, del amor, la virilidad y la música, respectivamente. Mencione estos por citar algunos si bien hay muchos otros. Estas identificaciones pueden hacerse por los colores que usan en su vestimenta, por ejemplo de *Ochún* es el amarillo y de *Yemayá*, el azul. Incluso asistimos a un tambor de muerto en la misma Habana y llegamos a ver a varios, en ambas ciudades, con el muerto *trepá'o* como comúnmente se dice. Así que todos estos acercamientos me han ayudado mucho a la hora de acercarme a la obra de ¿Montejo o Barnet? a la hora de analizarla desde el punto de vista de la literatura que me propongo. Como sabemos los historiadores, es importante conocer el contexto y saber desde dónde se escribe. Yo escribo desde esta experiencia.

Pretendo iniciar el trabajo con un acercamiento a los distintos debates que impuso este libro desde su publicación en el año 1966 en tanto en cuanto éste es considerado por el mismo Barnet como novela testimonio pero muchos otros han escrito sobre las similitudes o bien con la biografía, la autobiografía y las memorias. En segundo lugar, pretendo realizar una aproximación a si este relato puede o no considerarse literatura o no. Para ambos puntos citaré a diferentes autores que he podido examinar a la luz de la rapidez que amerita un breve semestre académico. En tercer lugar, pretendo exponer algunos de los puntos que Esteban Montejo relata en esas entrevistas que tuvo con Barnet.

¿Novela-testimonio, biografía, autobiografía o qué?

Biografía de un cimarrón es el título como se expone este libro. En mi primer lugar, nos encontramos con un prólogo de no más de tres hojas, al menos en esta edición de

1966 del Instituto de Etnología y Folklore. Precisamente es en este año que se da la publicación del mismo, así que ésta es una copia original. Al lado del prólogo observamos una fotografía de Esteban Montejo con una nota al pie que dice: "...hay cosas que yo no me explico de la vida...", que tras el prólogo, es la primera frase del libro.

En el prólogo escribe Barnet, poniendo en contexto cómo conoció a Montejo. Comenta sobre la inicial reticencia de Montejo para hablar pero finalmente termina expresándose largo y tendido sobre las preguntas que Barnet le va haciendo. Para Barnet, esto es un estudio etnológico y no pretende hacer literatura. Considera que es Historia en tanto en cuanto es la vida de un hombre que pasa por ella pero no pretende hacer tampoco un trabajo histórico per se. Entonces, ¿qué pretende? Según sus propias palabras: "este libro no hace más que narrar vivencias comunes a muchos hombres de su misma nacionalidad" (Barnet, 1966: 12). Añade que se hicieron las indagaciones pertinentes para hacer las preguntas correctas y que una vez tuvieron el material lo editaron para no caer en las repeticiones y eliminaron expresiones de su lenguaje que dificultarían la lectura. Más allá de eso, el libro está compuesto en su mayoría por el relato de Esteban sin las preguntas que se hicieron. Sí se añaden unas notas al final del mismo donde se aclara o se da información sobre algún aspecto relatado así como un pequeño diccionario de palabras que Esteban usa y pueden resultar extrañas para el lector como *esquifación* o *nganga*.

Dividida en tres partes, *La esclavitud*, *La abolición de la esclavitud* y *La Guerra de Independencia* a través de las cuáles Esteban Montejo va relatando sus memorias o como él muy bien dice, lo que recuerda. Si toda la estructura del libro, al margen de este pequeño prólogo, se narra en primera persona la vida de una persona, ¿cómo debe considerarse el mismo? Aquí comienzan los debates.

Para José Ismael Gutiérrez, en su artículo publicado en *Dialnet*, *Miguel Barnet y su concepción de la novela testimonio* escribe la fórmula que para Barnet este género significa en cinco puntos: 1. La novela testimonio propone un desenmascaramiento de la realidad tomando los hechos principales y que han afectado la sensibilidad de un pueblo por boca de un protagonista, en este caso Esteban Montejo. La escritura se dará tras el proceso de grabación, dictado y reflexión. 2. Debe suprimirse el yo, el ego del escritor. 3. Contribución a la comprensión de la realidad con el rompimiento de mitos que ello supone. 4. Tiene como misión desvelar la otra cara de la realidad. 5. El lenguaje es el propio de la vida diaria y no se transcribe lo hablado tal cual fue sino que se le añadirán estilo y matices por parte del autor (Gutiérrez, 2000: 5).

Todas estas características lo que traen a colación es lo que Peter Ervin en *Memorias narradas: el testimonio esclavista cubano como Historia* comenta que *Biografía de un cimarrón* problematiza el concepto de propiedad autorial (Ervin, 2006: 11), es decir, hasta dónde llega el autor y el narrador. En algunas ocasiones, buscando en la red las distintas portadas de las muchas ediciones que se han hecho hasta el momento, uno se

encuentra con que ha habido libros donde el autor aparecía, únicamente, Esteban Montejo. ¿Equivocación de la editorial, dudas ante la autoría o diferencia de opiniones? Nunca lo sabremos. Para Begoña Huertas Huertas, en *El postboom y el género testimonio. Miguel Barnet*, parece que el género testimonial pareciera definirse como género híbrido (Huertas, 1997: 6).

En cuanto a si debe considerarse una novela o no, Elzbieta Sklodowska en *Miguel Barnet y la literatura testimonio* propone lo siguiente:

“Si entendemos la novela, tal como lo sugiere Bajtin, en cuanto una forma literaria heterogénea y proteica, en trance de formación, y a la vez la más apta para apropiarse del contexto histórico, la clasificación de la *Biografía de un cimarrón* en el marco del género novelesco sería perfectamente justificada. La palabra testimonio -empleada por Barnet en sus ensayos- cumple una función modificadora, señalando solamente la intención autorial, sin hablar del contenido (novela histórica, psicológica, etc.), ni de la técnica narrativa (novela realista, fantástica, etcétera)” (Sklodowska, 1990: 3.).

Si es considerada una novela debemos tomar en cuenta la presencia de la ficción en la misma, en toda la unidad literaria o al menos en parte. En mi opinión, nos encontramos ante un texto novelesco por la ficción que presenta en alguna de sus partes. Esto nos llevaría a los debates entre Historia y Literatura del segundo epígrafe más adelante. Pero aquí sí podemos comentar sobre la cuestión de si es o no una Biografía. El libro se define como tal pero por la definición de biografía entendemos un relato de no ficción. Igualmente en el caso de la autobiografía si en algún momento llegamos a considerar esta obra como tal. Las diferencias entre biografía y autobiografía son claras en tanto en cuanto el autor de la primera es otro que no es el protagonista al contrario que en el segundo caso. En ambas se relata la vida del sujeto desde el nacimiento hasta la muerte o si aún está vivo o viva hasta los últimos sucesos de la misma. En el caso de *Biografía de un cimarrón* no se relata la vida de Montejo hasta el momento que Barnet lo entrevista sino que se queda en el último capítulo de la relación de Montejo con la guerra de la Independencia. En este sentido Ervin también añade lo siguiente: “Ya que Barnet tiene el poder de enmarcar e iluminar el testimonio con su propio toque, muchos explican la curiosa falta de testimonio personal, por parte de Montejo, a partir de 1905 como resultado de la mano del autor de la biografía” (Ervin, 2006: 8). Esto nos llevaría a dos temas trascendentales de la obra: uno, es que si no se está cubriendo por completo la vida del protagonista, es decir, sólo unos eventos concretos, eso es lo que nos lleva a la definición de memorias (Romera, 1981: 53), mientras que por otro lado plantea la problemática que suscita la edición de Barnet. Pues al editar no sólo palabras y giros lingüísticos, sino también parte de su vida, parece que entonces responde a un objetivo claro del autor. El mismo Barnet en su prólogo escribe lo siguiente: “Su tradición de revolucionario, cimarrón primero,

luego libertador, miembro del Partido Socialista Popular más tarde, se vivifica en nuestros días en su identificación con la Revolución Cubana” (Barnet, 1966: 11-12). Recordemos la publicación de este libro en 1966 a pocos años del triunfo de la Revolución Cubana en 1959. Suponer que este discurso no es parte del proyecto sería ser ilusos.

Lo que es evidente es que lo que es el objetivo del autor (si lo consideramos a Barnet como tal) y del narrador, Esteban, son completamente distintos. Mientras Montejo se dirige al editor, Barnet pretende dirigirse a un público más amplio, los lectores. Peter Ervin añade, citando a González Echevarría, que “la ambigüedad del texto plantea una pregunta: But who speaks here, the old runaway slave or the young Cuban anthropologist? Is the book a biography, as the original title proclaims, an autobiography, as the English title reads, or a documentary novel” (Ervin, 2006: 4). Como comentaba más arriba algunas de las ediciones aparecían con el nombre de Esteban Montejo. Y la cita no puede ser más elocuente en este sentido.

Si nos encontramos ante una novela biográfica o autobiográfica estaríamos hablando de un relato de ficción basado en una experiencia real. Pero como dije antes, faltarían en *Biografía* la última etapa de la vida de Montejo. Para una autobiografía real o ficcional, además de la carencia mencionada, debería haber sido escrita por Montejo, cosa que debido a su analfabetismo no fue lo que ocurrió o quizá porque nunca hubiera querido escribirlo aunque pudiera.

En definitiva, circunscribir este libro a alguno de los géneros mencionados es complicado. Pareciera que es una novela testimonial de memorias por tener su parte de ficción, por la declaración de la persona y por centrarse en unos eventos concretos. Quizá el error se encuentra en titular el relato como una biografía. La falta de presencia de Barnet en la misma, en sus opiniones, en la eliminación de las preguntas y las ediciones plantea problemas de veracidad. En cualquier caso, como siempre ha afirmado mi admirado Jorge Semprún “Contar bien significa: de manera que sea escuchado. No lo conseguiremos sin algo de artificio, el artificio suficiente para que se vuelva arte” (Semprún, 1995: 140).

Para entrar en el siguiente punto del trabajo, otra cuestión que se sugiere es la fiabilidad del relato para ser considerado uno histórico. Peter Ervin considera que sí es un ejemplo de Historia: “Al leer *Biografía de un cimarrón*, surge una duda esencial: muchos cuestionan lo apropiado de aceptar esos textos como muestras históricas antes de identificarlos como literatura; no obstante, a pesar de las limitaciones que surgen de sus orígenes ambiguos y problemáticos, en su raíz son ejemplos esenciales de la historia y no meramente textos literarios” (Ervin, 2006: 2). A pesar de que Barnet traza en el prólogo que “no intentamos nosotros crear un documento histórico” (Barnet, 1966: 10).

Barnet no pretendía hacer un documento histórico ni uno literario. Al final para muchos como Ervin o Friginals terminó haciéndolo. En este sentido, Sklodowska citando a Moreno Friginals:

“Todo esto va acompañado de centenares de observaciones minúsculas, increíbles, sobre una hoja, una mujer, un juego, un vestido, un dulce, el aburrimiento de los barracones en tiempo muerto, los curas, los velorios, los bandoleros...”. Los detalles aparentemente insignificantes, diluidos o ignorados en las obras de la gran historiografía, y adquieren en la novela testimonial su valor humano, que -siguiendo a Unamuno- podríamos denominar intrahistórico.” (Sklodowska, 1990: 5).

Historia y Literatura en *Biografía de un cimarrón*

Un número reciente de la revista del Centro de Investigaciones Históricas, que tiene por título Historia y Literatura, se encuentran varios artículos sobre este tema tan actual. Algunos de ellos han sido utilizados en este apartado. Y también en estos días está teniendo lugar la vigésimo quinta edición de la Feria de Guadalajara de México. Si traigo a colación esto es porque mi también admirado Javier Cercas comentó para el periódico *El País*, lo siguiente: “La literatura no es lo que suena bonito, es lo que suena a verdad. Yo detesto la literatura ornamental. Cuando una frase que escribo me suena a bonito, lo tacho” (Cercas, 2013). Con esta cita de “lo que suena a verdad” comienzo este debate.

Barnet, como he escrito, no pretendía hacer ni Historia ni Literatura sino solamente narra vivencias. Pero parece que consiguió las tres cosas a la luz de los artículos examinados y a través de mi propio juicio.

Según Begoña Huertas, “la diferencia entre un estudio etnológico y una obra de ficción parece situarse en la actitud del autor, reproducción fiel de los datos obtenidos y explicación de éstos en el primer caso, y tratamiento literario (recreación de un personaje, uso de recursos estilísticos...) en el segundo” (Huertas, 1997: 6). Como he mencionado, *Biografía* parece circunscribirse a este segundo caso. Fijar los límites entre lo histórico y lo literario no es fácil en este tipo de obra. Pero he aquí una anécdota de Ana Lydia Vega que puede hacer entender algo más la complicación o la facilidad de unir ambas áreas de estudio.

Ana Lydia Vega en *Nosotros los historicidas*, que aparece en la revista del CIH recién mencionada, narra un pequeño suceso sobre su obra *Falsas crónicas del sur*, una serie de cuentos enmarcados en el sur geográfico de Puerto Rico. Ella misma alude a la necesidad que impone la historia a *literaturizar* ciertos eventos o sucesos. Acudió a bibliotecas y archivos para empaparse de las características propias del sur puertorriqueño, es decir, acudió a los registros históricos, y finalmente terminó escribiendo unos cuentos, que como ella explica en el artículo, sirve para acercarse a una realidad a través de la ficción. Incluso quizá a entenderla mejor. Ella nunca

encontró una de las casas de una de las haciendas a las que alude en uno de sus cuentos. Al encontrarse frente a un familiar de alguien que había vivido en los predios de la misma rápidamente le preguntó que se la describiera. La autora describió esta casa como ella la había imaginado ya que nunca consiguió ninguna fotografía de la misma. A su pregunta la persona le contestó literalmente, “¡Pues igualita como usted la pintó!” (Vega, 2012-2013: 21). La elocuencia de la misma nos cuestiona si solamente la realidad sirve para entender un proceso, si acaso la literatura no es verdad en ocasiones cuando lo que se pretendió inicialmente fue recrear y terminó dando con una verdad que creía mentira.

En las memorias de Montejo no sabemos qué es cierto y lo que no lo es. No se hicieron las indagaciones pertinentes en este sentido. Hay aspectos que por más que uno quiera demostrar es imposible a la luz de los recuerdos, como por ejemplo cuando Esteban nos habla sobre las religiones, la santería y el palo, sobre su vida en el monte ni siquiera sobre su participación en la guerra de Independencia al no haber seguramente registros de los participantes. Pero sí hay familias nombradas los Rojas, los Manuelillos (Barnet, 1966: 152) o la mención a la benefactora de Santa Clara Marta Abreu (Barnet, 1966: 137) con la implantación de la luz eléctrica.

Tampoco sabemos a qué responde esta estructura narrativa con la ausencia de las preguntas formuladas. En este sentido es inexcusable tratar el tema de la memoria y sus fracturas y olvidos. Barnet lo explica en el prólogo, “Indudablemente muchos de sus argumentos no son rigurosamente fieles a los hechos. De cada situación él nos ofrece su versión personal. Cómo él ha visto las cosas. Nos da una imagen” (Barnet, 1966: 10). También Montejo lo dice en varias ocasiones: “Al menos eso me dice la memoria” (Barnet, 1966: 19) o “Aunque estuve unos años en Airosa, las cosas se me han olvidado un poco. Lo mejor que hay para la memoria es el tiempo. El tiempo conserva los recuerdos. Cuando uno quiere acordarse de las cosas del tiempo nuevo, no puede. Sin embargo, mientras más atrás uno mire más claro lo ve todo” (Barnet, 1966: 93). Si bien esta última afirmación puede ser cierta desde ciertos puntos psicológicos, la realidad es que la memoria plantea silencios, fracturas, recuerdos y olvidos. Toda memoria como apunta Paul Ricoeur es una reconstrucción más que un recuerdo, por eso toda aquella reconstrucción posee verdades, olvidos y podemos afirmar, ficciones (Jelin, 2000: 17). En este sentido, solemos asumir que todo aquello que tenga que ver con las memorias de una persona es por defecto, real y no tienen por ende, nada de ficción. Es hora de revisar ese estereotipo.

Diferentes opiniones de escritores de renombre como Carpentier o Fraginals han hecho sendos comentarios sobre la presencia de lo real y de la ficción en *Biografía de un cimarrón*. Por ejemplo, según Huertas, “en la contraportada de la edición de Alfaguara (1984), se afirma que esta obra es “exponente en estado puro de lo que Alejo Carpentier definió como “lo real maravilloso”. De esta forma, la primera novela testimonio de Miguel Barnet lejos de presentarse en oposición a la corriente

"fantástica", se presenta en relación a ella y perfectamente encuadrada en su dominio" (Huertas, 1997: 8). Y según Sklodowska, "en uno de los comentarios más perspicaces sobre la *Biografía*, Manuel Moreno Fragnals nos dice:

"La primera característica que sorprende en la *Biografía de un cimarrón* es el respeto y el amor con que ha sido escrito. Barnet no ha pretendido en forma alguna hacer literatura, aunque haya logrado una de las más acabadas obras literarias cubanas del siglo. La belleza extraordinaria del libro, la fuerza de vida captada, ésta precisamente en esa honestidad. Esto sólo podía lograrlo quien reuniera las dotes de investigador y de poeta" (Sklodowska, 1990: 5).

Si como ha afirmado Magali García Ramis en Felices días, tío Sergio "como nunca me dijeron que teníamos historia ni cultura, me siento como si nos hubieran estado engañando", la literatura ha podido suplantar esas carencias. Barnet lo dice en su prólogo al referirse que el testimonio de Esteban está dirigido a muchos de su misma nacionalidad y se lee implícito en el mismo que muchos han sentido esa ausencia de la Historia porque era la colonia, España en este caso, que negaba cualquier otro tipo de Historia anterior a la misma. Porque en definitiva se está historiando a los que "no" han tenido historia, al menos no sobre los que se ha escrito. Por eso Fragnals se refiere al concepto de intrahistoria de Unamuno, siendo la oralidad y las historias de vida parte de esa historia.

Así que en definitiva y en mi opinión, nos encontramos ante una obra histórico literaria, pues se encuentra apoyada en ambas disciplinas, la de la Historia por estar relacionada a la historia de una persona y a la literatura por lo que puede haber de ficción en ella. Quizá la única forma de poder entender algo es a través de una parte ficcional de la realidad. Porque las tradiciones y las costumbres de las religiones, por ejemplo, se pueden observar en Cuba y ver cuán ciertas son esas descripciones. Porque aprendemos de los barracones, de cómo estaban distribuidos, de los horarios. Ni siquiera sabemos si Esteban nació donde él cree que nació ni la fecha exacta. Pero eso no lo hace menos real en tanto en cuanto podemos acercarnos a cómo debió de ser la vida de esta persona. Igualmente, imaginamos la vida en el monte de un cimarrón, en las cuevas que Esteban relata y en los sustos que pasó. Porque yo no me lo imagino igual que tú y ninguna de las dos es más real ni verdadera que la otra. Coincido con aquellos escritores que afirman que la ficción y la literatura sirven para entender los procesos y los cómo de cómo se vivió, incluso para la Historia.

Tres capítulos de una historia de vida

En el primer capítulo y más breve denominado *La esclavitud*, Esteban Montejo nos habla de dónde y cuándo nació, de su experiencia como esclavo y de cómo fue su huida a los montes. Nos da detalles tan concretos como la importancia del uso de la leche para los esclavos por su creencia en sus propiedades nutritivas y de cómo se

vestían. De la vida en los barracones, los cuales describe como poco ventilados y sucios una esquina conformaba un sanitario con lo que la pestilencia en los mismos era considerable. En el sentido de la vida del esclavo nos aporta datos que quizá ya conociéramos como es el horario indiscriminado de trabajo pero él nos lo cuenta de “primera” mano.

Ya desde los comienzos toca el tema de la religión. Él diferencia entre los *lucumíes* (que serían los que profesan la santería), los *congós* (relacionados a la religión del palo) y menciona brevemente el catolicismo en tanto en cuanto al ser esclavo sus horarios estaban marcados por los rezos. Él llega a afirmar de forma convencida que la Virgen era señorita, así que los contactos con esta última religión fueron obvios por parte de los españoles colonos en la isla.

Nos comenta sobre los juegos que se hacían en los barracones entre esclavos ya que el domingo no se trabajaba. Este día era una fiesta y como él mismo comenta era extraño ya que la gente se veía contenta ese día a pesar de la vida rutinaria y extenuante que llevaban en las haciendas. Sobre los juegos menciona los bolos, el tejo y el *mayombe*. Este último se refiere a la brujería ya que Esteban, a pesar de afirmar que nunca le ha interesado la brujería, cree en ella por lo que ha podido ver. O como mejor dice el “yo vide”. Por ejemplo, un dato curioso es que una de las formas que conoce de hacer daño a alguien, era que más te valía no portarte mal con uno de estos negros porque si no ellos veían el camino que tomabas, cogían la tierra por donde pasabas y hacían con eso una serie de rituales y peticiones a los muertos para que la muerte viniera a buscarte o algo insatisfactorio te ocurriese, dependiendo de la naturaleza de la afrenta.

Otros juegos tenían que ver con la cuestión de la virilidad como uno de los que él comenta que consiste en meter el miembro viril en una botella para ver quién lo tenía más largo. Para poder saber eso se ponía un poco de ceniza en la botella de forma que se el miembro llegaba a hacer contacto con ella sabrían quién ganaba dicha competencia.

Los castigos ejemplares que hemos escuchado sobre la esclavitud los relatan, más o menos, y voy a hablar en propiedad, como yo me los imaginaba. Los latigazos eran comunes en orden de castigar a los negros que desobedecían alguna orden. Después de haber leído *El Negrero* de Lino Novás Calvo, precisamente también la vida novelada de Pedro Blanco, e imprescindible para saber sobre la esclavitud y el transporte de negros desde África hasta América, vemos que lo que Novás relataba sobre los castigos a las mujeres embarazadas coincide con lo que Esteban cuenta. A ellas, para no dañar al bebé, se les castigaba de forma que pusieran la barriga en un hoyo hecho expresamente para ese motivo de forma que el bebé no se viera en peligro, ya que a los colonos les interesaba que parieran favorablemente en orden de tener otro esclavo más para trabajar. Pero también Esteban comenta que a alguna de ellas se le dieron latigazos en la misma barriga.

Nos habla de la vida casi célibe del esclavo, ya que a los propietarios de esclavos no les interesaba traer muchas mujeres ya que la fuerza para el corte de caña no se parece en nada a la de un hombre y además porque la presencia de éstas creaba serias disputas entre los negros por cuestiones de celos o de “enamoramientos” imprevistos. Cosa que los desenfocaba y llegaba incluso a peleas que podían terminar con la vida de uno de los contrincantes. Pero sí Esteban recuerda a algunas mujeres en la esclavitud, las cuales ayudaban a parir y eran enfermeras que sanaban con diferentes hierbas. Porque en este sentido Montejo está claro y es que considera que para toda enfermedad hay una hierba que la cura pero ahora con los medicamentos es otra cosa. Siguiendo con la sexualidad nos comenta que hubo relaciones homosexuales entre hombres a falta de mujeres y que incluso llegó a pensar en tener relaciones con una yegua, cosa que no ocurrió porque era muy difícil manejarla.

Un dato interesante y conocido por muchos es que a muchos de los españoles afincados en América se les denomina gallegos, a pesar de que no todos, obviamente, pertenecen a este grupo étnico. Esto se debe a la gran emigración de gallegos de Galicia a América a finales del siglo XIX y principios del XX por motivo de la economía. Muchos de ellos fueron precisamente a Cuba. De ahí que el padre de Fidel Castro no sea de otro lugar que Galicia. Hoy en día muchos latinoamericanos aún usan la denominación de gallego para referirse a los españoles, sobre todo, los argentinos. Pues este punto es interesante porque el mismo Montejo se refiere en varias ocasiones a los gallegos en el mismo sentido de españoles. En este sentido del lenguaje, Esteban utiliza palabras como *fajatina* para referirse a una pelea o *enkangues* para referirse a los hechizos que los congos realizaban. Por eso no es extraño acudir al pequeño diccionario que hay al final del libro y que Barnett realizó para poder entender estas palabras e incluso expresiones. Sin este diccionario muchas situaciones y descripciones se hubieran quedado cojas de ahí la importancia del mismo. Interesante también los arcaísmos como el ya mencionado “*yo vide*” y también “*es positivo*” para referirse a que algo es cierto.

Tras tirar una piedra en la cabeza de uno de mayores sale hacia el monte. Lo había intentado una vez anterior fallidamente pero esta vez, con éxito, se refugia en el monte y en las cuevas hasta la abolición de la esclavitud. En este orden de cosas, nos relata sobre la ansiedad que le producían ciertos ruidos en orden de no ser descubierto. Pues como algunos esclavos fueron cimarrones se mandaban grupos de perros para buscar al huido. Cuando eso ocurría Esteban lo que hacía era desnudarse para que a los perros se les dificultara la búsqueda. Pasó largo tiempo de esta forma hasta que escuchó los rumores de la abolición de la esclavitud.

Así es como, efectivamente, comienza el segundo capítulo de la vida de Esteban Montejo, La abolición de la esclavitud. En ella nos cuenta cómo comenzó a trabajar en diferentes lugares. Esteban nos dice que a pesar de que la esclavitud había finalizado como tal, muchos españoles seguían tratando a los negros con la misma crueldad. Nos

cuenta lo que se le pagaba por jornada de trabajo. También nos habla sobre su relación con las mujeres, *canchanchana* que les dice en varias ocasiones. A lo largo de todo el relato comenta que no le gusta la fiesta y que por eso no salía mucho de los ingenios donde trabajó. Ahora bien, siempre confirma que lo que más le gusta de la vida son las mujeres. Cuando tenía oportunidad se iba a alguna fiesta por poco tiempo en lo que “cazaba” alguna negra. Con algunas llegó a vivir con el tiempo pero nunca tuvo una sola mujer por largo tiempo. Cuenta que se vestía de blanco porque a las negras les encantaba ver a los negros vestidos de ese color ya que acentuaba su piel e imagen. Definitivamente que esto me recordó a la actualidad donde aún muchos de ellos eligen ese color para vestirse.

En esta segunda parte sigue mencionando a las religiones, menciona *Oggún* y *Obatalá*, dioses yorubas de la santería. Incluso una de las mujeres que tuvo estuvo dedicada a la santería. A Esteban las religiones le producían mucho respeto pero por su condición de cimarrón siempre afirma que le gusta la independencia, que prefiere estar solo a pesar de echarse de vez en cuando alguna mujer y que no habla mucho, prefiere estar callado, es mejor por la desconfianza que produce el hombre, y él estuvo tanto tiempo solo que prefiere el silencio al ruido y el bullicio.

En una ocasión un *congo* le comentó de hacer su propia *nganga*, esto es, su propio santuario de un muerto al que debía cumplir con las peticiones de éste. Este es un proceso bien concreto. Para poder realizar una *nganga* primero hay que seleccionar un muerto. Una vez se ha escogido y el muerto afirma su conformidad (pues no siempre ocurre y en ocasiones hay que estar un tiempo en la búsqueda hasta que uno te diga que sí, que quiere ser tu muerto) se le tienen que hacer ofrendas que pueden ir desde las sobras de una comida como por ejemplo los huesos de un gallo o algo que le gustaba al muerto como puede ser una bebida. Al muerto es al que se le encomienda la petición de lo que uno desea y una vez realizada debes cumplirle con la promesa que se le hizo, es decir, hacer determinada cosa o traerle concretas ofrendas que se le dijeron al mismo. Como dije, Esteban comenzó brevemente a hacerlo pero rápido terminó con ello. Aunque para terminar con el muerto debe hacerse un proceso concreto e importante de forma que el muerto no se ponga en tu contra. Terminar estos “contratos” no es tarea fácil.

Siguiendo con la religión también menciona a los ñañigos que son miembros de la secta *Abakuá* que es exclusivamente de hombres. En mi viaje de Cuba, que mencioné al comienzo, conocí a uno de ellos, o al menos eso él afirmaba, teniendo una actitud bastante despectiva hacia mi persona por ser mujer, de que yo no entendía o yo no sabía.

Interesante es la mención que hace en varias ocasiones a los chinos. Los describe como buenos comerciantes (no muy diferente a hoy en día), como su forma de ser callada y reservada (igual) y cómo celebraban sus fiestas siendo un gran espectáculo ya que se caracterizaba por ser algo bien diferente a lo habitual. El Barrio Chino en

Cuba se encuentra justo detrás del Capitolio actual en pleno centro de Cuba. Lo que queda de él es el letrero que lo indica. Hay varios restaurantes chinos pero no hay chinos ya. Barnet en el prólogo menciona que Esteban les dijo que cómo era que no le preguntaban sobre los chinos pues le sorprendía su ausencia interrogante. Pero como muy bien dice el escritor cubano, gracias a las digresiones de Esteban se pudieron descubrir otras cosas que quizá nunca se hubieran preguntado. Igualmente menciona brevemente a los filipinos que también estaban metidos en las cuestiones de brujería.

Menciona sobre el bandolerismo, sobre la llegada de la luz eléctrica a Santa Clara y sobre varias familias de la zona. Poco a poco va adentrándose en la incomodidad y en el creciente malestar contra los españoles debido a sus abusos de poder. Poco a poco se estaba fraguando la guerra de la Independencia en la que Esteban participó considerablemente al hilo de su relato.

Y en este el tercer y último capítulo donde Esteban finalmente nos describe las luchas contra los españoles, la violencia ejercida por ambas partes, la juventud de los españoles, muchos de ellos de Canarias que estaban tremendamente asustados. Nos habla de los diferentes jefes de los batallones a los que describe como atroces y sanguinarios. Menciona a personajes históricos tan importantes como Maceo y Máximo Gómez. Muchos cubanos llegaron a desertar y entregarse a los españoles, incluso uno de sus compañeros del que nunca, afirma, se lo hubiera imaginado.

Los castigos dentro del ejército también están presentes en la descripción. Al mismo Esteban lo pusieron un día completo con las piernas abiertas por donde se le ponía algo entre ellas de forma que fuera bien doloroso. Indica el hambre y la sed que se pasaba, siendo esta última más devastadora si cabe.

Alude a los guerrilleros a los que critica duramente por dedicarse a robar y matar sin miramientos. Finalmente cuenta sobre la llegada de los americanos, sobre el jolgorio en las calles de La Habana con la expulsión de los españoles y cómo finalmente los americanos comenzaron a ser y actuar de forma incluso peor que los anteriores. Menciona la Revolución como la situación ideal de su actualidad para el año 1966 en donde convergen los ideales de libertad y respeto.

Conclusión

Todo lo anteriormente relatado de la vida de Esteban Montejo configura una idea de cómo debió ser esclavo, posteriormente cimarrón e incluso haber vivido etapas tan dispares debido a la longevidad del entrevistado como la esclavitud, la guerra de la Independencia y la Revolución Cubana que triunfó en 1959. Al menos esto es lo que Barnet nos ofreció ya que seguramente muchas cosas quedaron en el tintero de las grabaciones a consideraciones varias propias del contexto del momento. Y al menos esto es lo que Esteban recuerda a través de la mano editora de Barnet. Al final del mismo se incluyen unas pequeñas anotaciones en las que se cita a Moreno Friginals y otros académicos en orden de dar valor histórico al relato.

Muchas de las anécdotas que Esteban cuenta como la visión de ciertos diablos de la religión así como la fiabilidad de los congos en sus hechizos pueden o no ser ciertos. Eso siempre dependerá de a quien le preguntes. Pero, y por mi experiencia en Cuba, muchas de las descripciones de la religión desde cómo se hace una nganga hasta los pequeños rituales que relata coinciden en muchos sentidos con las prácticas que aún perviven en la Cuba del siglo XXI.

Ciertos o no, novelados o *literaturizados*, imaginados o creados, ciertos o de ficción nos ayudan a tener una idea más acertada de esta época de la que muy pocos testimonios nos han llegado. *Biografía de un cimarrón* junto con la autobiografía de Juan Francisco Manzano, *Autobiografía de un esclavo*, sean quizá las únicas muestras hasta el momento que tenemos de las formas de vivir esclavas. Si las películas, con todo lo que ellas tienen de ficción, pues por más fidelidad a los hechos siempre serán como el escritor los pudo transmitir y como el director las imaginó, este relato de Esteban, definitivamente, nos acerca un poquito más a una etapa de la Historia cruel y de la que no quedan declaraciones de los subyugados al horror del ser humano por tantos siglos en la Historia.

La cita con la que comienza este pequeño trabajo se refiere a la capacidad de la novela para historiar lo que no se tuvo el interés en documentar. La intrahistoria de Unamuno, concepto que él mismo creó y de la queja de Magali García Ramis ya que nunca le dijeron que tenía Historia. El ejemplo de Ana Lydia Vega es elocuente sin añadirle nada. ¿Será que, como le gustaba recordar a Manuel Ramos Otero, un escritor es un embustero que, al mentir, a veces suelta sin saberlo una verdad? (Vega, 2012-2013: p. 22).

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HIP-HOP, DANCEHALL AND REGGAE GOSPEL IN THE PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT – A NEW RELIGIOUS CULTURE

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For a long time scholars have predicted the secularization of society. Sociologists such as Durkheim predicted that religion's influence would decrease as society modernizes since scientific thinking would replace religious thinking while Marx predicted that Religion would one day pass away. Despite these strong views, there are theorists who do not agree. Haynes (2007) asserts that religious ideas and traditions are often connected intimately to specific cultures, but this is not to imply that they are static. On the contrary, religious traditions are generally dynamic, changing as they encounter new realities. As such, there are no 'pure', unadulterated religious traditions that have been preserved intact over long periods of time.

This article explores music as a cultural and religious phenomenon, specifically using Haynes' perspective on secularization in order to better understand the relationship between the secular and the religious especially in the face of globalization, modernization and advanced technology. In particular it seeks to determine the effect that secular factors have had on commonly accepted forms of gospel music. In a study designed to gain a better understanding of how such processes are unfolding in Guyana, twenty-five (25) pastors and worship leaders of various denominations were interviewed and one hundred (100) youths, ages 13-25 years, were given questionnaires. The religious denominations involved in the survey were Anglican, Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witness, Assemblies of God, Full Gospel, New Testament Church of God, Wesleyan, The Brethren Church and Elim Pentecostal.

According to Cullick (2009) change in the formation and delivery of faith is part of the evolution of religion. Cullick further states that religious institutions have always used popular culture to reach their target populations. Ever since the Bible came into existence, it has been translated into new editions to make it more accessible to a wider demographic and those new editions have often been met with criticism.

As was stated earlier, religion is not static and has always changed to accommodate the culture of the day. During the period of slavery, slaves took their work songs and added scripture verses to them to make spiritual songs. They also incorporated many of their

oral traditions into their worship such as the use of the drums and the call and response way of singing that was later used by rap singers. After emancipation, 'little churches' now known as evangelical churches sprang up and even though many persons still attended the 'big churches' (Roman Catholic and Anglican) since they were longer established and represented a higher social standing (high culture as opposed to popular culture), there was a growing participation in the 'little churches.' Persons of African ancestry started showing preference for the evangelical churches where they could actively participate with greater freedom. As early as the 1970s artistes experimented with gospel reggae and calypso which were genres borrowed from Caribbean secular music.

In an interview with Reverend John Smith of Central Assembly, he stated that music in the church emerged with the sound of a Hammond organ to give "pomp and circumstance" to services. There were no beats, but subsequently the bass guitar was added to bring rhythm into worship services. With the growth in size of the congregations in traditional Pentecostal churches, the call came for more music. In the meantime, traditional hymns were becoming less popular and less known among Pentecostal congregants, particularly the younger ones. In response to the call for more music, the synthesizer was introduced in the 1980s, replacing the organ in many churches. Unlike the insular Caribbean, Guyana does not have any original composition of Gospel music and the churches there have instead borrowed elements from Caribbean and North America music styles like soca, reggae, dancehall, hip-hop and calypso. Reverend Glenna Spencer of Trinity Methodist Church explains these changes by stating that life is fluid not static. She claims that secularism and advanced technology brought about these changes in the church and as a result there are some positives and negatives. She says that church leaders must accommodate to these changes and keep in touch with different genres of music because everyone comes to worship from a different place. Interviewees from denominations such as Anglican and Jehovah's Witness feel that there is no place for popular culture in the church. Anglican churches in Guyana have remained true to their traditional hymns and ways of worship. Church services last one hour and still follow the format and style of yesteryear. The Jehovah's Witnesses write their own music for their congregations and rarely sing hymns.

Although the Seventh Day Adventists write their own song books for young people, an Adventist choir leader explained that they use contemporary gospel music during their open air crusades to attract young people to the church. In church, however, only hymns are sung. She confessed that this is changing, since persons who were previously belonging to different denominations are now coming into the church and bringing with them their way of worship. This change has caused a division in some of the Adventist churches between the older and younger congregants.

The Deacon from the Central Baptist Church explained that the Baptist Churches sing hymns and contemporary music but there must be some level of reverence in the music,

and therefore they do not sing dancehall, reggae or hip-hop during worship. Over the last few decades the Catholic Church has established what is called the charismatic movement where persons have a choice of worship. Catholics who prefer the traditional way of worship can do so on Sundays while others who prefer the contemporary or Pentecostal style of worship gather on weekday nights at the main church for worship. Other Pastors and worship leaders from Wesleyan, Elim Pentecostal, New Testament Church of God, Full Gospel and Love and Faith comment that the evolution of gospel music reflects cultural diversity and that this diversity appeals to a wider section of society. Moreover, they have admitted to the heavy influence of western culture and most importantly secular culture in the church which has had positive and negative effects. However, Psalmist Sean Sobers and Sociologist Dr. Henry Hinds have admitted that sometimes the lines seem blurred between which music is secular and which music is Christian, thus putting the onus on the believer to determine which forms of music are appropriate for Christian worship.

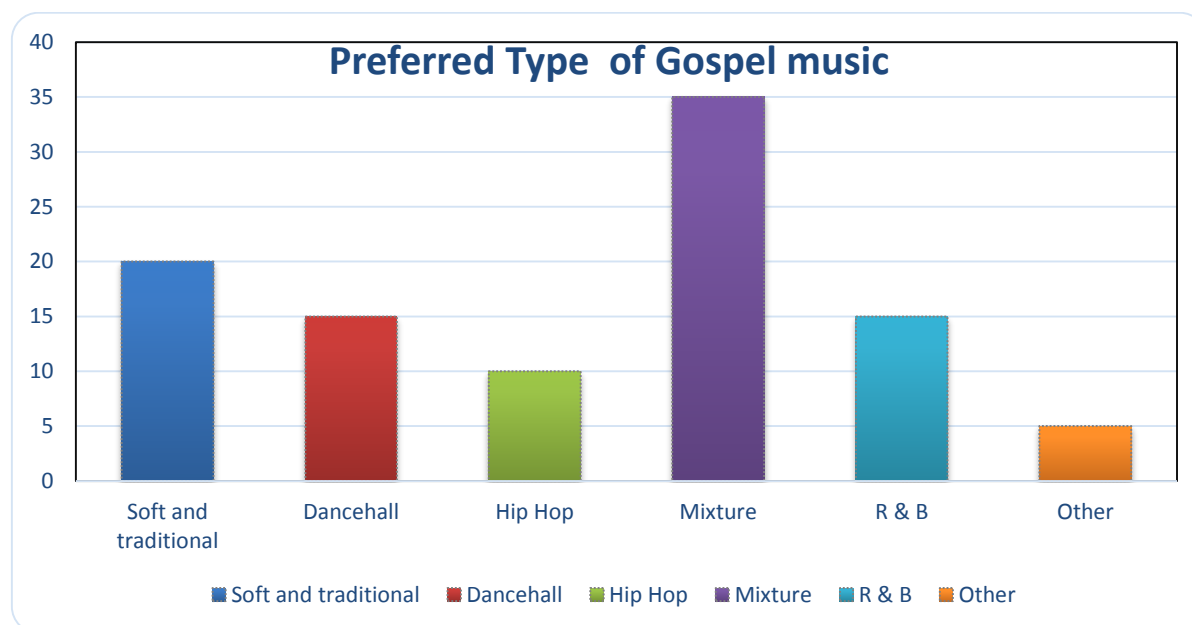
In general, popular cultural forms such as literature, films and music are becoming more visible vehicles of religious images, symbols and categories. Carrette & King (2012) speak about four typologies of spirituality: 1) Revolutionary or anti-capitalist; 2) Business ethics/reformist; 3) Individualist/consumerist; and 4) Capitalist. Apart from the anti-capitalist typology, the other three typologies involve the subordination and exploitation of religious themes and motifs to promote an individualist and/or corporate-oriented agenda:

These spiritualities are emerging in response to the rise of global finance capitalism. In addition, they are ‘post-modern’ in the sense that, grounded in an information age and the transfer of electronic data across national boundaries, they tend to disavow explicit association with traditional religions, promoting instead a highly eclectic, disengaged and de-traditionalized spirituality (Carrette & King: 67).

An example of this in the Guyana context is the newly formed company, Inspire, owned by a secular businessman which among other things aims to increase its profitability by providing paid entertainment for Christians. The owner admitted that he can bring international gospel artistes to Guyana for the Christian population while earning a profit in the process.

In the Guyana context, the interviews with Pastors and worship leaders and the results from the questionnaires reveal that many feel a need to incorporate either contemporary gospel or secular music into church services in order to win youths for Christ. Pastor Kwame Gilbert of World Vision New Testament Church of God argues that worship leaders and Pastors have to minister to people who have never been exposed to traditional hymns and songs, especially the youths. As he aptly stated in his interview, “They are the natives of today’s culture. We are migrants. We migrated into this culture.” Ninety percent of the youths revealed that they listened to such ‘secularized’

religious music not only for the lyrics but also the beat and admitted that they also listen to the related secular music genres. Reverend Glenna Spencer said, “We understand the connotations that go with music as an influence – some music plays to the emotions – the hymns feed the mind; they both have a part to play in worship.” Arguably this perspective was substantiated to an extent by the results of the questionnaire which clearly indicate that a large percentage of those polled have a strong preference for contemporary gospel music.



As illustrated above 65% of respondents prefer some type of ‘secularized’ gospel music for worship, while 20% prefer soft and traditional music, and 5% of the respondents prefer other music. It is also interesting to note that 63% of the respondents agree or strongly agree that non-traditional gospel music can transmit Christian doctrine, and 55% strongly disagree or disagree when asked if the modernization of gospel music has a negative effect on spiritual development.

These findings suggest that while many appreciate contemporary gospel music as a form of worship and entertainment, there is still concern as to whether the message of the song is being lost in the process. Some Pastors worry that due to the nature of contemporary gospel music, some may view the music more as a form of entertainment than as a form of worship. Some also worry that the promotion of these genres of music in churches blurs the distinction between gospel and secular music, making it easier for Christians to appreciate irreverent and profane genres of secular music. The use of contemporary music has also encouraged contemporary dance forms in the church, which some view as distasteful and as an encouragement for lewd conduct during what traditionally has been a solemn type of worship.

Despite these concerns, contemporary gospel music is now a significant feature in Guyanese churches. According to Oslin Campbell, worship leader of Charlotte Street

Wesleyan Church, churches started using these types of genres as part of their worship to attract the youth. Although concerns have been raised over whether these genres are effective in the church since in the secular world they are used for entertainment, some Pastors and worship leaders are of the opinion they can be effective since they are transmitting Christian ideas in a more culturally acceptable and appealing manner, while others are skeptical since they consider these genres unholy.

While it is undeniable that there has been a diversification of genres of music that have penetrated the church in Guyana and that a number of factors have contributed to this, I contend that there is really no new culture in the church. The impact of secular music on gospel music is merely evidence that the mundane and religious issues of life continue to be affected by the evolution of trends in secular society. Viewed in this light, there is really no new culture in the church. The practice of the secular and developments in the society penetrating and impacting forms of worship merely continues.

Given the popular support contemporary music has in church there is every likelihood that it will continue to blossom even as the gospel music industry continues to blossom locally and internationally. The appeal of contemporary music to the younger members of the society and the economic factors which have propelled the development of these new genres of music among gospel artistes cannot be overlooked as one contemplates the future of gospel music in Guyana. It is evident the concerns some still have about deviating from the traditional forms of worship are unlikely to override the increasing demand for this kind of music. Indeed, the incentive to adopt more contemporary forms of music extends beyond mere spiritual and economic considerations, since worshippers have shown a clear preference for contemporary music and are even willing to change their place of worship in pursuit of a worship experience that is more in keeping with the music of the twenty-first century.

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WHITHER CARIBBEAN INTEGRATION?: REASONING THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE CARIBBEAN REGION POST 1945

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Introduction

The achievement of a Single Market and Economy requires a singleness of vision. This has been recognized perennially by Caribbean intellectuals, but apparently lost to successive generations of regional political leaders of the island states. Bifurcation has persisted. Like an albatross around the neck, the populations of individual countries have been forced to bear with insular leadership consumed with personal political ambitions and insecurities.

This review highlights the central theses of Caribbean political economists, Arthur Lewis, Lloyd Best, Clive Thomas, and Norman Girvan based on their strong scholarship on the post-colonial governance of the Caribbean from the period of the 1950s to the current era.

As the first Nobel Laureate of the Caribbean, Arthur Lewis' *The agony of the eight* (1958) reveals the colonial political governance structure of the Caribbean and the economic considerations that undergirded attempts at establishing a federation of Caribbean states. It also introduces readers to the socio-economic and political contentions that existed among Caribbean leaders on the distribution of resources within an unequal Caribbean region.

Lloyd Best's *Independent thought and Caribbean freedom* (1967), critiques the leadership of the Caribbean in the context of post-independence governance and what he saw as their failure to effectively manage the region's resources. Clive Thomas' *The development glass: half empty or half full: perspectives on Caribbean development* (2005) leaped from 1967 to the twenty-first century while Girvan's *A single development vision* (2008) brings together two of his seminal pieces on regional integration: *Towards a single economy* and *A single development vision*, a report presented to CARICOM Heads of government in 2007, and a Paper entitled *Reflections on the vision*.

Caribbean federation, independence, development and vision

Federation and Independence

In 1958, ten British colonies came together to form the West Indies Federation. These included Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, the then St Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, Saint Lucia, St Vincent and Trinidad and Tobago. Four years later, talks collapsed on the basis of national interest that brought about disagreements among Caribbean leaders.

The agony of the eight, authored by Caribbean Nobel laureate, political economist and subsequently knighted Sir Arthur Lewis, takes readers beyond the veil of the events that preceded Caribbean regional development. Lewis felt that the best model for achieving economic and social progress and accountability resided in a federation of Caribbean states under a unitary government. He chronicles his encounter with national self-interest and economic differentiation that would beset the Caribbean integration process even decades after the establishment of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in 1973, a grouping of newly independent former British Caribbean territories.

The author introduces the culture of insularity that dominated what he described as a 'secret meeting' between Norman Manley and Eric Williams, the Premiers of Jamaica and Trinidad respectively. Given their relative national economic advantage over the smaller colonies of the British West Indies, both Manley and Williams influenced the formation of a West Indies Federation. Their meeting of August 1960, it would seem, only reinforced their closely guarded national interest as neither Trinidad and Tobago nor Jamaica was prepared to shoulder economic responsibility for the smaller colonies that would operate independent of British aid in the context of federation. As a consequence, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, the then St Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, Saint Lucia and St Vincent, that would later forge an Eastern Caribbean union, and Montserrat, were left defenseless. Barbados, the remaining colony, was considerably more developed than the other small colonies, and therefore less reliant on the economic arrangements that would undergird federal aid distribution within a unitary governance arrangement. Further, federation for the leaders of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago would also imply the free movement of the people of the smaller territories to those countries perceived as more developed.

With Jamaica's departure from the attempted federation in 1961, Lewis recounts his botched attempt at convincing the Trinidad leader to remain on course rather than pursue independence leaving the smaller colonies behind. As a nationalist, his appeal to Williams on the basis of nationalism not only revealed Williams' own political ambitions above that of collective interest of the people of the region. The island's subsequent attainment of independence in 1962 would lead to a further separation

from the eight colonies leaving Barbados as the last standing option to balance the federation arrangements.

Although Lewis highlights the high value which Caribbean leaders placed on their national resources, he felt that the federation would have addressed the uneven distribution of wealth among states of the Caribbean. Lewis also questions the ability of Caribbean leaders to effectively manage their own economic affairs in the context of independence. Lewis provides a historical analysis of the personal and political aspirations of Caribbean leaders who aborted the mission to establish a political union to follow their own path of self-actualization.

Lloyd Best's *Independent thought and Caribbean freedom* encapsulates the continuum of the exploitation of the countries of the Caribbean by the Western powers. From imperialism, through colonialism, and neocolonialism, the thread of exploitation connects Guyana with the rest of the Caribbean in the struggle for independence.

Challenging the post-colonial socio-economic construct of the Caribbean, Best unapologetically confronts issues such as slavery and its influence on Caribbean development. His writing connects imperialism, slavery and colonialism in their successive forms as thrust upon the former colonies, placing them under a new yoke of neo-colonialism and inhibiting their development. In Best's estimation, after slavery and colonialism, the new elites have not been able to employ any ingenuity in transforming the economies of the region and creating the needed jobs/employment or the conditions conducive to economic take-off. This notion is in consonant with Rostow (1960) who posited that development of agriculture and industry was necessary before such take-off could occur in traditional societies.

Best, from a critical perspective, saw elites preoccupied in a state of over-reliance on the metropolis that once exploited their energies and resources and continues to exploit them, using the "house-slave and the metropolis" metaphor. Therefore, even as they claim political independence, they have remained economically dependent, as though they were not politically independent. For Best, the lack of local initiative in production and supply was at the heart of the economic disorder.

This scholar of Caribbean political economy prescribed the emergence and cultivation of a new Caribbean mind, completely cut off from the umbilical cord of oppressive European modes of thought, which he characterizes by the use of the twin-brothers 'scientism' and 'propaganda'. While a great part of the essay was depressingly and exhaustively prescriptive, thankfully, the author remembers to provide some respite by offering prescription as a balm for the region's woes. He felt that political consciousness and commitment were also necessary among the Caribbean leadership in addition to a reorganization of the Caribbean economy to integrate the region and open the way to popular participation that will call a new world order into existence.

Development and vision

In *The development glass: half empty or half full: perspectives on Caribbean development* Thomas (2005) presents a Caribbean region characterized by modest achievements but metaphorically half-filled from the time of CARICOM's establishment to the period 2005. At the time of his writing on Caribbean development close to nine years ago, Thomas pointed to the gains achieved in the social sector of the CARICOM region including health, education and housing. He also highlights progress in enhanced governance, civil society organization and the development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the Caribbean.

However, Thomas scrutinizes the establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) as a form of regionalism underpinned by market-driven frameworks, conventions and agreements. For him, globalization magnifies the existing inequities in the Caribbean region and forces countries to respond to external stimuli rather than the needs of the people of the Caribbean.

The political economist alluded to the income disparity that still exists among countries of the region and called attention to the migration of skilled labor from the developing Caribbean to the developed world. He saw brain drain as a direct result of Caribbean governments' inability to harness their skilled resources in the region. However, the freedom of movement in the region within the Single Market also contributes to internal brain drain and not brain exchange in Thomas's analysis of the Caribbean development glass.

In a discourse with me in 2010 about CARICOM's performance, Thomas stated that global economic developments have outpaced the CARICOM decision-making process that continues to lag behind in many respects. These include the region's slow progress towards achieving a Single Economy that will require the harmonization of fiscal policies to move the economic integration process forward. Despite evidence of progress this remained unattained in 2014.

Thomas suggests that the current CARICOM leaders lack the vocation and sense of Caribbean history once shared by the earlier visionaries of the integration movement. He opined that as stewards over individual independent states many CARICOM leaders today are consumed with protecting their national sovereignty and maintaining the reins of power when, in fact, the issue of sovereignty has lost significance in the current geo-political context. As such, they have prioritized "the survival of their regime" by focusing on national programs rather than long term development priorities that have a regional outlook, said Thomas.

Thomas prescribed an ethos of political will among the leadership of CARICOM to advance the integration and development process that take into account the welfare of the people of the region.

Notwithstanding the foregoing commentary, all hope is not lost for CARICOM. According to the Caribbean economist, the grouping has succeeded in forging

functional integration among its Member States. Although the CARICOM creation of a Single Market has not been a seamless process, Thomas offered that the introduction of a CARICOM passport that allows CARICOM citizens to move around in a single space is a significant feat. He thus stated:

There is one thing that remain vital, and that is the intangible sense that everybody who is a West Indian feel they are West Indian. If we have that sense of 'folkship' I think that will continue and that must be the basis on which any future developments must take place, so I would give priority to finding means of building that up. Things like a single passport will probably mean more in the end than many of these measures....and more freedom of movement. These are the things I think that would encourage that nucleus in the region that shares a single identity to grow.

Norman Girvan's article *A single development vision* (2008) speaks to the issue that has plagued successive generations of regional leaders and academics – how to achieve regional integration in the Caribbean. His position is strikingly similar to Thomas' as they both infer an absence of unity of purpose among the current CARICOM leaders. Girvan contends that implementing the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) requires "the generation of a single development vision" from the grassroots to the halls of power in the countries of the region. This implies a development approach that incorporates the active participation of the people of the region who are the principle stakeholders of the integration process.

Girvan believes that "Articulating a single development vision offers an opportunity to show the regional public the CSME can be an instrument of achieving ... certain developmental goals that are difficult or impossible to achieve individually by Member States" (Girvan, 2008: 27). This, he argued, would provide the "shared objectives to guide policies, priorities and sequencing for further implementation of the CSME." The vision, he believes, would overcome the information deficiency and credibility gaps in the implementation of the CSME. In Girvan's vision for CSME implementation, three pillars are critical for success. Firstly, the single development vision must be set on the recognition that economic priorities should not be the exclusive concerns of the CSME. Trade, investment and business opportunities are important necessary conditions of the CSME, but they are not sufficient. He argues that for greater community buy-in the "vision should be holistic" and "must be perceived as adding value to the people of the region."

Secondly, functional cooperation is an integral pillar in the process of integration. Thus, Girvan describes functional cooperation as "essentially a process of sharing services and undertaking joint activities in order to reduce cost and achieve synergies." He contends that functional cooperation will help realize the potentials of market integration and in social, political and environmental matters, functional cooperation

“support the economic development by improving labor productivity, systemic competitiveness and sustainability” (Girvan, 2008: 28).

Thirdly, Girvan believes that foreign policy coordination is an important pillar for integration. It strengthens the community in its dealings in the globalised world, increases its ability to make external arrangements that support its development objectives and enhances the collective identity and collective capacity of member states.

Girvan concluded with the recognition that the single development vision for CSME must have the enabling environment defined by significant reduction or elimination of national and insular politics in the region, growing regional disparity and national sovereignty. These conditions continue to sink the integration flotilla.

Although not part of this review, the plethora of Caribbean integration and bleak economic forecasts by current CARICOM leaders bear similarities to much of the sentiments expressed much earlier by Bess and Girvan particularly. Sanders (2014), quoting the current Prime Minister of the Eastern Caribbean island of St Vincent and the Grenadines described the Caribbean Community as being in a state of “shambles.” Further, Sanders felt that CARICOM suffered from an “implementation deficit” and he also critiqued the disunity exemplified at UN forums.

Despite the aforementioned preexisting realities there remains a constant about Caribbean people. There is a continuum of cultural and intellectual intermingling that has quietly helped to forge integration and shifted independence of thought outside of the central “mimicry” thesis submitted by Bess. Further, the summations presented by Lewis, Bess, Thomas and Girvan point to a Caribbean region bereft of a single development vision that truly takes account of the social and economic advancement of the Caribbean people.

As put by Best and inferred by Thomas and Girvan, achieving the goals and ideals of Caribbean regional integration would necessarily require political will at the level of the Heads of Government for the people of the region. Lewis, Bess, and more recently Girvan in 2014, have joined to great Caribbean integration visionaries who have died without the dream of regionalism truly fulfilled. Perhaps it is time for the leadership of the Caribbean to place integration in the hands of the people to bring to fruition a seamless socio-economic bloc.

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NEOCOLONIALISM AND DEVELOPMENT: LITERATURE AND LAND USE PRACTICES IN THE CARIBBEAN

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One of the fundamental topics in conversations about economic growth in the Caribbean and one of the main elements in the platforms of many political parties in the region has been the issue of land development. Before embarking on any discussion about land development in the Caribbean, however, it is useful to acknowledge Huggan and Tiffin's set of questions on the topic:

What is development? How should it be defined and measured, and whose interest does it serve? What is development's historical relationship to colonialism and imperialism; whither development in an increasingly globalized postcolonial world? Is development sustainable, and what is its connection to the environment? (Huggan & Tiffin: 27)

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These questions summarize and articulate the many complexities that surround the issue of land development in Caribbean countries. I, myself would also ask, what type of development should Caribbean countries replicate? Which nations with similar geographical and political status should Caribbean countries emulate? What type of development would optimally meet their citizens' needs? Adding to these intricacies is the fact that many independent Caribbean countries have adopted paradigms for economic growth associated with old colonial models. Such neocolonial forms of development have mostly benefited foreign interests while perpetuating the oppression and the impoverishment of the people. Many critics contend that such models of development are "designed primarily to serve the economic and political interests of the West." (Huggan & Tiffin: 27)

In this article, I will take a look at two Caribbean literary works that in one way or another reflect on the negative consequences of the dominant neocolonial models of economic growth: David Edgecombe's play, *Kirnon's kingdom* and Jamaica Kincaid's essay, *A small place*. These works explore the ecological, social and economic destruction that results from neocolonial land development policy. In this article, I will focus on three typical aspects of such land development policies which are widely touted as ideal for economic growth in the region: tourism, monoculture and real estate.

Because their ways of understanding of human development have to one degree or another been conditioned by the dominant discourses on neocolonial development, people normally associate the wellbeing of any given country according to how much money is available and mobilized for the creation and satisfaction of consumerist desires, in other words, according to how “developed” that country may look. Therefore, the perception of development in the Caribbean is often based on a comparison with countries of the West. Huggan and Tiffin summarize Black’s argument stating that, “development is generally recognized to be a strategically ambiguous term, adapted to the different needs of those who use it ... based as it all too often is on the enormous cultural assumptions and presumptions of the West” (Huggan & Tiffin: 27). In other words, Caribbean countries find themselves in a constant state of socio-economic restructuring, in the hope that one day they can “catch up” to the so called developed countries (p. 31). If this sounds familiar, it is because these neocolonial paradigms are in many ways repackaged extensions of past colonial models. For Black, Huggan and Tiffin explain, “development, understood this way, is the classic example of the self-privileging discourse of *neocolonialism*, as put into practice by people and governments primarily interested in exploiting others in the name of a noble cause” (p. 30). Huggan and Tiffin recapitulate Esteva and Spybey’s view that:

Far from putting an end to old-style imperialism ... modern (post-war) development finds new ways of instantiating it, e.g. through the ongoing collaboration between national governments and gargantuan transnational companies whose economies exceed those of all but the largest ‘developing’ countries, and whose financial and technical assistance is provided in terms that continues to favor the West. (Huggan & Tiffin: 30)

Indeed, Caribbean leaders have fallen into these economic traps set up by transnational companies whose motivations are to create a false sense of economic growth within Caribbean countries. These multinational companies, which are supported by the “developing” countries and so-called ‘multi-lateral’ institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the world Trade Organization, have made the Caribbean countries one of their prime targets. They create the need for “development” in the Caribbean by emphasizing each country’s social and political “backwardness.” The end result is the propagation of neocolonial ideas of development that are perceived by “underdeveloped” countries as the way to emerge from the economic devastation left by the colonial era. Since the countries that formulate, articulate and propagate these dominant discourses of neocolonial domination are more or less the former colonial metropolises, it can be concluded that what we have come to understand as “development” in the Caribbean is nothing less than a new form of colonization.

David Edgecombe's *Kirnon's kingdom*, explores land use policies and their negative consequences in the fictitious Caribbean country of Paran. Harold Kirnon, a 40 year old farmer/sharecropper finds himself in a predicament over the future of his only son, Calvin, who has done very well in school and is now ready to take the examinations to qualify for entry into an institution of higher learning. Incapable of paying the cost of these examinations which are seen as the gate keeping mechanism to a better life, Harold and Calvin decide to venture out at night into the fields that they themselves have cultivated to "collect" some of the cotton that is ripening there. This would seem normal and inoffensive, if it were not for the fact that the land that Harold uses to farm this cotton does not belong to him.

As established by Edgecombe in his opening description of the setting, "the action occurs on Paran, an imaginary Caribbean island," from the 1940s to the 1970s (Edgecombe: 203). Therefore, the play opens during the final days of the colonial era, when possession of any significant amount of land on most islands was almost exclusively reserved for the European descended families of the colonial masters. As Harold states, "I didn't own any land so I couldn't even vote, far less run for office. You see, in those days it was only the well-to-do, specifically people with land, who were allowed to vote" (p. 210). Common people, mostly of non-European descent, were not land owners. In the case of *Kirnon's Kingdom* that right is reserved for Mas' James, the European owner of the piece of land on which Harold and his family have been toiling for generations.

As a sharecropper and like his enslaved ancestors, Harold Kirnon does not own the land that he farms. He only has the landowner's permission to work the land and is obliged to return half of the harvest to Mas' James, no matter how good or bad the harvest is. Harold Kirnon is more than convinced that there is no future for his son in sharecropping. It is important to mention that Mr. Kirnon is not against farming *per se* as a way of earning a livelihood. What he wants instead is to break away from the sharecropping practices that have kept him and his family impoverished. For him, Mas' James is the symbol of the "gud ole days" when slave-owners sat down on their verandahs contemplating their plantation and counting the money that they were making at expense of the backbreaking work done by the slaves or indentured workers:

Is a hard struggle, Calvin. You been out there in that cotton ground with me so you know how much work it is. Me and my father since before you were born clear all that land. He wid a four-rib cutlass sharpen back and belly, me wid a smaller three-rib cutlass ... One whole week it took us to clear just a tass of land, but we kept at it ill all the land was ready for planting ... After he died, me alone, or me and your mother and sometimes you. We must find the money to but cotton-seeds to plant. Then we must weed the cotton, take care of it and pray God nutt'n destroy the fruit of our labour ... And in a

good or bad year, half of everything ... must go to Mas' James. And what work he do? What risk he take? Except sit down on his behind and stretch out his fat han' for his half when time come. (Edgecombe: 212)

Before going to "collect" some of the cotton, Harold Kirnon visits Mas' James hoping to get a loan to pay for Calvin's exams. "Poor people mean less than dirt to him," argues Harold to his wife, Martha, when she asks about Mas' James and the loan (p. 211). This offense prompts Harold to act and fight against this system that has kept him and his family in a state of virtual slavery. As Calvin argues right before they go to "collect" the cotton, "it would not be stealing, Daddy. We would only be reaping what we sow. Taking up what we put down" (p. 213). Disturbed by Mas' James lack of understanding, Harold and Calvin decide to go and "collect" some of the cotton and sell it in the market to pay for Calvin's exams. As might be expected, this results in the temporary imprisonment of Harold's son Calvin, after being caught in the act of taking the cotton.

I wish to stop here and briefly analyze what land and the possession of land signifies to Harold and Mas' James. It is crucial to point out that land and the development of land take on radically different meanings depending on how one is positioned by relations of power. Colonizer and colonized people experience the landscape in different ways. In her article "*Man fitting the landscape*": nature, culture, and colonialism, Helen Tiffin argues that:

... some important (if broad) distinctions can be drawn between the "landscape" of the indigenous peoples and those of the migrant, that is, the ancestrally or recently translocated... for colonized peoples who are also ancestrally migrant, any coming to terms with the "new" landscape frequently involves a journey back through the depictions of that land by the imperium whose perceptions and representations of it exert a powerful hegemonic influenced on the colonized. (Tiffin: 199)

Although, for Harold Kirnon the landscape and the working of it represent years of investment of time and hard work by himself and his ancestors, that same land also signifies the continued enslavement of himself and his family. For Mas' James, land possession and its development by impoverished sharecroppers symbolize the continuous dominance of himself and his family over others. The small minority of European descended landowners to which he belongs "were historically cast in dominant positions where their attitudes to the land and landscape – both that to their homescapes and to the tropics and the Caribbean – necessarily exerted a powerful influence on the majority populations of African and Indian descent" (Tiffin: 200).

Thus, in the play *Kirnon's kingdom*, land and its possession is perceived as a destiny changer, not only for individuals, but also for a nation's future. Land then, for the people of Paran, becomes more than just a piece of earth, it is a tool by which they can break free from past oppression and gain real independence. After assuming the role

of the voice of the people, Harold Kirnon, becomes Paran's first post-independence Chief Minister and "by then, even the poorest families owned some kind of land" (Edgecombe: 227). In a postcolonial setting, Mr. Kirnon now encounters the reality of independence. The price and the demand for cotton falls as production by the newly empowered and energized former sharecroppers increases, so the citizens of Paran are forced to abandon their hard-won plots of land to move away to places like Canada and England in search of better life, with young people seeing "no money in farming" (p. 227).

Harold's downfall begins during this period of economic uncertainty. His first master plan for economic growth in Paran involves convincing all of the farmers in the country to devote all of their land to cultivating a single cash crop, in this case tomatoes. This typically neocolonial monoculture scheme is reminiscent of the early colonial mercantilist era when all of the agricultural land of a given colony was devoted to sugar monoculture, tobacco monoculture, etc. for the European market. Both colonial and neocolonial monoculture of cash crops are by definition not for local consumption or the local market. Harold's policy of tomato farming is based on an exclusive contract signed with a Canadian company which guarantees farmers "one cent a pound" for their tomatoes. As if the proposed rate of compensation by the company for the farmers' produce were not outrageous enough, the worst is yet to come. The adoption of the tomato project means a complete transition from traditional ways of farming to a "more modern" system, which is sold to the farmers as a sign of progress by Harold:

I agree it sounds like a small figure, but the company is introducing a new variety known as Roma Tomato ... the owners of the factory are going to assist with mechanical land preparation, planting and reaping. They are also introducing a new fertilizer which tests have shown dramatically increases tomato yields." (p. 229)

As later acknowledged by a female farmer, the company ends up charging the farmers for this assistance; and the farmers of Paran become indebted to this foreign company, with a large part of their meager earnings going to pay off their debts, just as a large part of their former earnings went to the landlord under the sharecropping system.

It does not involve a far stretch of the imagination to see how Mr. Kirnon's Canadian-inspired agrarian development plan amounts to the reinstatement of the plantation regime of the colonial period under the slavery and indenture/sharecropping systems. But in many ways the neocolonial system is worse than anything experienced under the colonial authorities, in terms of social, economic, and environmental devastation. Antonio Benítez-Rojo, in his article *Sugar and the environment in Cuba*, points out the serious ecological and environmental problems caused by Cuba's economic development strategy of sugar monoculture. He claims that "the responsibility for this

ecological catastrophe lies primarily with the sugar-making machine. "But a machine is an ensemble of indifferent parts moved by a motor ... Responsibility must be sought in the power groups that controlled it, whether of Spanish, Creole, or North American origin" (Benítez-Rojo: 43). The damage to Cuba's ecology goes way beyond the initial deforestation caused by the clearing of thousands of hectares of land for sugar cultivation, which involved the destruction of the habitats of hundreds of species of plants and animals which have disappeared from the face of the planet. Benítez-Rojo highlights the fact that this is only the tip of the iceberg. Even more devastating has been the loss of traditional knowledge of horticulture, herbal medicine, and other subsistence skills in Cuba and the more than one hundred other countries where the neocolonial development "experts" have promoted the monoculture of cash crops as the cornerstone of a modern and successful agricultural sector. Benítez-Rojo asks, "how many natural laboratories must have been lost forever in the deforestation? Wouldn't "green medicine" have been even richer without their loss? ... How many traditions disappeared when the small rural property-holder became a sugar-making proletarian? (p. 44).

Harold Kirnon's popularity among the people continues to fall when he embraces a neocolonial economic proposal for real estate development in Paran. Up to this point, land was viewed in Paran as a source of subsistence, whose produce provided for peoples' basic needs as well as providing them with something that they could sell to make a little money on the side. The perception of land changes completely once Harold subscribes to a neocolonial development plan of parceling out the land into pieces of real estate that could be sold to American retirees.

The plan for economic growth of Paran changes from field slavery on monocultural plots of locally owned land to servitude in the houses and hotels of overseas retirees and businesspeople. Land that was once used to cultivate food crops has now been transformed into summer houses with English gardens by foreigners who wish to claim their "piece of paradise". This commodification of Caribbean nature for the pleasure of foreigners does not benefit the local people or the sustainability of the country. As Braziel comments, "the lure and the allures of 'island' tourism, however, are not always so neatly aligned with the principles of sustainable development or environmental protection" (Braziel: 111).

The following confrontation between Harold and his cousin Arnold exemplifies how far he has fallen into the neocolonial development trap and how completely he adheres to and reproduces neocolonial hegemonic ideology. After years in England, Arnold returns to Paran with the dream to build a house on the land that he left Harold to take care of:

Listen, Arnold, it's not that I'm unwilling to sell you some land ... that whole Lincoln area is earmarked for new housing development project ...

We can't have cattle and goats running all over people's nice lawns ... All lands have now been zoned. Some for hotels, some for housing, some for agriculture. But apart from that ... you doan own de land at Lincoln anymore. (Edgecombe: 244)

Although in the beginning Harold Kirnon fights tyranny and oppression, perceiving land possession as the route to economic freedom, his later enlistment in neocolonial strategies of land development are clearly a departure from this. His hunger for power seduced him into endorsing Al Majors' real estate plan, turning the country back over to the domination of neocolonial corporations and to ownership by foreign individuals and enterprises.

While David Edgecombe's play focuses on the adverse impact of monoculture and real estate development, Jamaica Kincaid's essay *A small place*, examines the ecological, environmental and social degradation caused by another neocolonial development scheme: tourism. Kincaid's essay is about anger, resistance and frustration toward the tourist industry in the Caribbean. To be fair, Kincaid's anger is not directed toward any particular person, instead, she is vexed with the concept of "tourist" in general. As Kincaid puts it, "the thing you have always suspected about yourself the minute you become a tourist is true: A tourist is an ugly human being" (Kincaid 14). For the many tourists who disembark every day on the islands in search of sunny days, fun times and wonderful vacation memories, Kincaid's perceptions may be unsettling. Terry A. Hasseler's article *The promise of tourism: colonial imagery in advertising*, exposes the reaction of one of her students to Kincaid's commentary on Caribbean tourists. Hasseler writes:

After reading Kincaid's comment, a young woman in my post-colonial literature and theory course indignantly responded, 'I am not going to apologize for going to Antigua and relaxing on the beach. They should be glad that I go there because they would have nothing if it weren't for the tourist.' Her assertion captures the conventional understanding of tourism and the first-worlder entitlement that accompanies it: tourism promises an escape from one's responsibilities and accountability. (Hasseler: 19)

For Kincaid, tourists are part of the problematic that keeps Caribbean islands -- especially Antigua-- in an impoverished state. Braziel mentions that in "Kincaid's framing, the environmental and human degradation of tourism are linked to the earlier historical violence of the Atlantic slave trade and slavery in the region" (Braziel: 115). When Kincaid opens her essay with the statement that "if you go to Antigua as a tourist, this is what you will see..." she is informing you that, if you choose to become a tourist, you choose to become part of and party to the continuous pattern of abuse perpetuated by the former colonial system and the present neocolonial system on the

region, in this instance by participating in and energizing neocolonialist tourism development schemes.

Many people question Kincaid's harsh arguments against tourism, and many more might testify to the positive effects of sustainable tourism. The reality is that

“the sustainability of tourism is no less controversial than the sustainability of development, and justifiable fears remain that tourism is primarily a ‘neo-colonial extension of economic forms of under-development’ rather than an effective mechanism for the alleviation of North-South development discrepancies” (Huggan & Tiffins: 66).

The exposition of malpractices in the neocolonial model of tourist development is in my understanding Kincaid's principal contribution in this essay. At the bidding of multinational corporations, the government of Antigua has succeeded in developing the necessary infrastructure to host the hordes of tourists who visit the country each year. Sadly as Kincaid argues, the basic needs of the people have not been addressed, “will you be comforted to know that the hospital is staffed with doctors that no actual Antiguan trusts” (Kincaid: 8). Kincaid accuses corrupt government officials and local business leaders of being co-conspirators in this latest round of neocolonial degradation (Braziel: 115). In the essay, this is dramatized in her description of the Mill Reef Club:

And then there was another place, called the Mill Reef Club. It was built by some people from North America who wanted to live in Antigua and spend their holidays in Antigua but who seemed not to like Antiguan (black people) at all ... we Antiguan thought that the people at the Mill Reef Club had such bad manners, like pigs ... I believe they gave scholarships to one or two bright people ... these things must have made them seem to themselves big and good, but to us they were, pigs living in that sty. (Kincaid: 27-28)

The Mill Reef Club serves here as the quintessential symbol of abusive power relations in the colonial and post-colonial eras. This private and exclusive beach club demonstrates the disparities and inequalities inherent in neocolonial land development in Antigua. As noted by Kincaid, the land on which the Mill Reef Club is built is Antiguan land, yet it is inaccessible to the Antiguan people, except as menial hired help. Places like the Mill Reef Club are used by Kincaid to link the “colonial violence and slavery to neocolonial and capitalist, tourist exploitation” (Braziel: 116).

Kincaid's *A small place* and Edgecombe's *Kirnon's kingdom*, explore the social, environmental and economic violence and abuse that saturates neocolonial land development schemes. As presented in these two Caribbean literary works, the neocolonial developmental strategies embraced by the majority of the countries of the region do not satisfy the necessities of its people. After decades of aggressive marketing of neocolonial land development strategies by the former colonial metropolises and the international development agencies that serve them, many

Caribbean leaders have wholeheartedly adopted such obviously exploitative foreign-driven business ventures as monocultures, real estate speculation and tourism. In this way, despite the progressive and anti-colonial stance adopted by many Caribbean politicians and their parties at independence, these same politicians and parties now find themselves delivering their land and their people once again to domination by and enslavement to the forces of (neo-) colonialism.

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TRANSGRESSING CANONICAL BOUNDARIES IN LITERATURE

THE CARIB BONE-FLUTE MUSIC IN *PALACE OF THE PEACOCK*

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Wilson Harris, in his novel *Palace of the peacock*, makes a significant claim that a ‘musical unconscious’, resonating from the Carib bone-flute, has the capacity to re-establish balance and to liberate and transform threatened post-Columbian societies. This thesis extends from a larger claim submitted by Harris, in *The womb of space* (1983) where he says: “I shall attempt to bring into play certain disregarded yet exciting pathways into the reality of traditions that bear upon cross-cultural capacities for genuine change in communities beset by complex dangers and whose antecedents are diverse” (Harris, 1983: xv).

Clearly, Harris’ claims and elucidations from his novel need to be interpreted within the context of: 1) the historical conquest of Native Americans; 2) Amerindian mythology; and 3) cultural anthropological findings. To determine validity of this claim, readings and re-readings of Harris’ *Palace of the peacock* and his critical essays were done by the present author. Interviews and investigations were conducted at the Walter Roth Museum of Cultural Anthropology in Guyana and with cultural anthropologists George Simon and Jennifer Wishart. And to obtain correlational evidence, interviews were conducted with Robert Mirabal, a Native American maker and player of flutes living in the Taos Pueblo in New Mexico, USA.

Palace of the peacock, which is set in the Guyana’s dense hinterland, is suffused with a constantly morphing musical consciousness. At one time, it is the harmonious ‘music’ of the landscape, rivers, trees, and other life-forms. At another time, it is a peculiar music heard by the crew-members (the characters in this novel) when their African descended mate Carroll falls overboard and dies. Undoubtedly this ‘music’ is the mysterious music of the landscape merging with Carroll’s music and song. It is a mystic music, a morphing “musical unconscious” in the text that becomes personified in Carroll whose name means free man, song of joy or praise. Apart from the significance of his name, we also find Carroll’s voice described as “rich, musical and young” (p. 30) and we are told that Carroll’s laughter makes music. At another point in the text, Carroll is playing a guitar that mystically morphs to become a “raining harp” (p. 67). This music is deliberately linked to Carib bone-flute music since at the end of

the novel, at the point of Donne the conquistador's conversion, this musical consciousness becomes most intense. Donne reports hearing Carroll's whistling, that was "a solemn and beautiful cry"; a music "unlike a whistle" . . .; "deeper and mature"; a music that was "an organ cry almost and yet quite different"; a music that "seemed to break and mend itself always – tremulous, forlorn, distant, triumphant, the echo of sound so pure and outlined in space it broke again into a mass of music" (p. 113). Such is the nature of the musical unconscious in this text.



Painting of "Palace of the Peacock" by George Simon

Harris specifically directs attention to this musical unconscious when he writes a second preface, thirty-seven years after the first publication of *Palace of the peacock*. In this preface Harris says he is focusing on "the particular variant of 'music' (possibly original) in *Palace*", the music of "the 'spirit-bone' of the Caribs . . . the seed of the Carib bone-flute [that] constitutes an evolving tone" (Harris, 1997). This can be conceived of as a "musical unconscious" since it functions as Jung's "collective unconscious" does. This article takes its cue from Harris' own assertions and seeks to determine how Carib bone-flute music has the capacity to re-establish balance and to liberate and transform threatened post-Columbian societies. As a first step to understanding this, we are given a hypothetical bridge of rhythms in Harris' theoretical writings in *The womb of space* (1983). This bridge of musical rhythms resonates

across time and space bridging pre and post-Columbian cultures and civilizations. It arches from Mexico in Central America, to Guyana in South America.

FIRST - Quetzalcoatl

- A Meso-American deity, a feathered serpent.
- According to the Aztecs he is related to gods of the winds.
- He is the heavenly bird and wise serpent. (Harris)
- He is the bird-wing of the bridge [that] flies in space.(Harris)

SECOND - Kukulcan

- He is the Mayan equivalent of Quetzcoatl.
- He is the ancient flute player.
- He is the obscure ancestor of migrating species. (Harris)
- He is the androgynous incorporation of the womb.

THIRD - Huracan (Hurricane)

- He is the spirit of the sea, spirit of heaven and earth.
- He is the Mayan god of the winds and storms who gives energy and vitality.
- He shakes the bridge to its foundations and demolishes worlds (Harris).

FOURTH - Yurokon of the Carib bone-flute myth

- He is Quetzalcoatl's cousin. (Harris)
- He morphs into the bone-flute of Yurokon
- The first, second and third mutate and become Yurokon.

On this symbolic bridge, Harris identifies four representative gods of creation and destruction, gods who also embody the musical unconscious of the Carib bone-flute. These gods Quetzcoatl, Kukulcan, Huracan and Yurokon are associated with winds, wind instruments or music and this in itself is significant since wind represents vitality, energy and life. In Harris' novel, the Carib bone-flute music arguably triggers re-birth. To further establish the relationship among these gods on the hypothetical bridge, Harris says that the first second and third of these "masquerading" gods "mutate into or are succeeded by Yurokon" (Harris, 1983: 24). Yurokon is actually the quintessence

of the Carib bone-flute since the Carib myth tells of Yurokon's ancestors eating a morsel of the enemy's flesh and making a flute from a bone of the enemy. Harris representation of the bone-flute music in his novel therefore acquires symbolic and mythic significance. But what exactly does Harris achieve by linking the music in his text to the music of the Carib bone-flute? By following this bridge of rhythms, we will understand a little more. We will understand how bone-flutes functioned in pre-Columbian cultures and this will help us to determine how Carib-bone flute music can possibly transform threatened post-Columbian societies.

Searching for information in Guyana where the bridge of rhythms ends, we find evidence of a bone-flute at the Walter Roth Museum of Cultural Anthropology. This flute on exhibition is made from the bone of a deer and in Roth's commentary on it he says:

"Certain limb bones of various animals – e.g. jaguar, dog, tapir, deer – may be utilized for bone flageolets. The medullary contents of such a bone will be scraped and picked out through an aperture at one extremity, the latter being then nicked and shaped, as required, with beeswax, etc., so as to form a suitable mouthpiece. Three or four holes, drilled in its length, limit the number of notes obtainable. It was often alleged that these so-called "flutes" were manufactured from the bones of their human enemies." (Roth, 1924: 457-458)

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In this report, Walter Roth's skepticism is very obvious. Probing further though, I asked the anthropologist on duty if there was a flute made from human bone in the museum's collection. She said: "We have no evidence of human bone-flutes". I then enquired about the myth of the Carib bone-flute and was told: "Let them show me the evidence of a flute made from human bone" (Interview with Jennifer Wishart, 2012). This questioning attitude toward the myth is not uncommon. Harris is on record as saying that, "by and large, scholars tend to repudiate the burden of ferocity projected onto the Caribs (with whom Yurokon is associated) by the Spanish conquistadores" (Harris, 1983: 24).

Continuing the investigation, the present author interviewed George Simon, celebrated Guyanese Lokono archaeologist and visual artist, and he said: "No human bones, human bones are used by Kanaima." Simon also gave information regarding how such flutes are used. He said that these flutes are used to announce arrival of visitors, traveling along the river, from other Amerindian villages in Guyana and that they are also blown very early in the morning and in the evening; to greet the new day and at the close of day. He described this music as a solitary kind of music. (George Simon, June 2012).

Still searching for a particular understanding of how Carib bone-flutes may have functioned in the pre-Columbian Americas, I took the investigation to New Mexico in

the USA, a possible point of origin for Harris' hypothetical bridge of rhythms. Visiting the Taos Pueblo in New Mexico, the only Native American village continuously occupied for the last 1000 years, I obtained an interview with Robert Mirabal, a maker of flutes and an accomplished flute player who has twice won the Grammy award for his musical compositions.

When asked what is special about the music produced with bone-flutes as different from music produced with other flutes, Mirabal said: "Well, the bone flutes, they don't deteriorate. Once you set a tone to 'em, they stay. So the makers' intentions are still there." Asked if these intentions are like a language, Mirabal says, "It is a spiritual language of intentions. Bone-flute music is probably ancestral. It is probably connected to the ancestors." I then asked if flutes were ever made from human bones and Mirabal said: "In some cultures, if a flute maker or flute player dies, they would take his bone and make a flute out of it. If he was a good musician, his bones would be turned into medicine." Next I asked: Why may someone make a flute from the bone of his enemy? Mirabal said: "Maybe, when they blow, one note, they are calling the enemy's spirit." Of great interest also is Mirabal's comment on the Shaman's use of bone-flutes. Mirabal said: "The shaman uses the bone-flute because it gives the vitality for remembering." When asked to explain the nature of 'vitality', Mirabal said that "Like water, we absorb each other's energy, the blood vibrations. Like if I touch you so, the vitality passes." To reinforce his point, Mirabal said "Yes, vitality, encouragement, strength and reconnection and re-memory" are all transmitted through bone-flute music.

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Therefore we come to understand that the Carib bone-flute when blown gives special knowledge, a special education. And since the tone set for a bone-flute does not deteriorate, it is possible that this "knowledge" can be available whenever the flute is blown or when the music is heard. Harris in explaining the paradoxical nature of the Carib bone-flute ritual says:

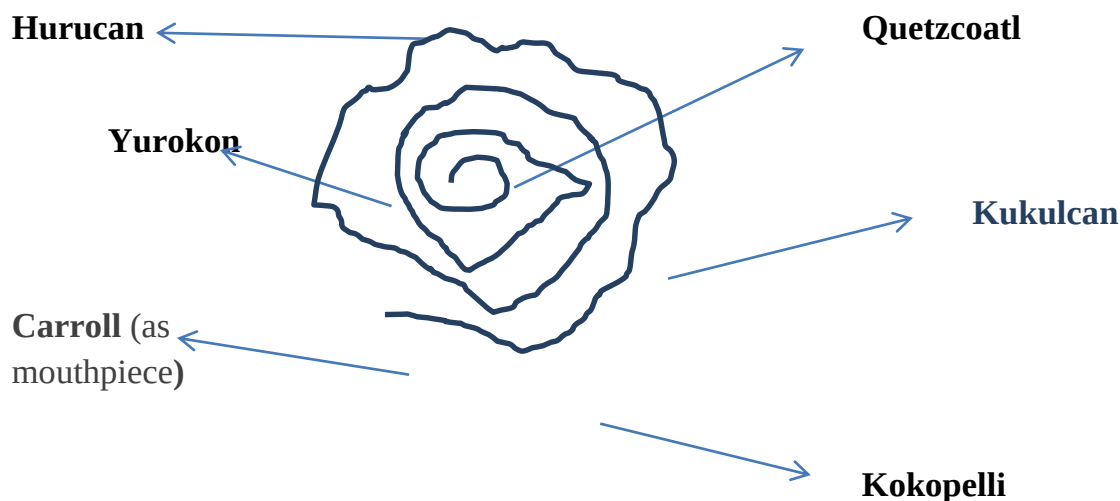
"This leads one to reflect deeply upon the inarticulate dimension of cannibal ritual implicit in the Yurokon myth. . . . A physical necessity to consume bias, to relinquish the hubris of conquest . . . so that the mystery of freedom may be born and re-born and born again and again within terrifying closure or circumstance that threatens to consume all." (Harris, 1983: 26)

Interestingly, Mirabal spoke of another possible "masquerading god", Kokopelli, the Hopi deity, who may be included on Harris' hypothetical bridge of rhythms. The humpbacked flute-player Kokopelli presides over both child-birth and agricultural fertility and he is also a trickster god who represents the spirit of music. (Baca, 1994: 9)

The identification of other representatives on Harris' hypothetical bridge is quite permissible and such additions are endorsed in Harris' *The uses of myth* (1978) as well as in Levi-Straus' *Myth and meaning* (1978). Both theorists advise that when we think we have found all the pieces of the mythical material, we will come upon other pieces. Levi-Straus says, "In order to solve the problem, we have, as sometimes happens, to make a jump from South America to North America because it will be a North American myth which will give us the clue to the South American one" (Levi-Straus, 1978: 26).



This is exactly what happened with this research and therefore we may re-configure Harris' bridge of rhythms using a cyclical petroglyph which underscores the mutating nature of the gods associated with the bridge of rhythms.



Another dimension to the bone-flute music is that is clearly metaphysical. While listening to a live performance of Mirabal on flutes at Old Town Albuquerque, this knowledge became available to me. Interlacing his music with oral poetry, Mirabal said that flute playing is about the spiritual connection of "lips on bone" and he said that several reconnections are taking place when he produces music on flutes. He said:

“It is a reconnection with ancestors, the universe, the land, the rivers, the corn plant.” He said that the reconnections are metaphysical and that we are all connected making this venue – Old Town – a sacred place (Robert Mirabal, August 2012). When Mirabal says that flute music, and other forms of music, promote “vitality, encouragement, strength, reconnection and re-memory”, he is definitely endorsing the sacred beliefs and world view of native American Indians which is similar to belief systems of the pre-Columbian Caribs and native peoples everywhere. He is endorsing a particular way of knowing, a particular attunement that is sacred and this very way of knowing is validated in Harris’ *Palace of the peacock*. Mirabal’s information sheds much light on the function of bone-flutes in pre-Columbian cultures and the application of such knowledge to *Palace of the peacock* undoubtedly clarifies how the Carib bone-flute music functions in Harris novel. Remarkably, the novel extends the resonating fields of this “musical unconscious” that is embodied in Carroll who himself is a mouthpiece for Carib-bone flute music.

We may be inclined to dismiss the understanding of a musical unconscious as defended by Mirabal and native peoples everywhere. We may be inclined to question or reject Wilson Harris’ endorsing of bone-flute musical resonances that are embedded in a present day musical consciousness transmitted by the character Carroll in *Palace of the peacock*. We may deny the possibility of bone-flute rhythms functioning as a form of communication or education that can transform threatened societies. But research findings in the scientific and psychiatric fields do not only validate the existence of Karl Jung’s collective unconscious but on-going projects are quantifying and unraveling the DNA of the collective unconscious. Consider also the usefulness of MRI – magnetic resonance imaging – in the field of medicine and surgery where pulses of radio waves produce images. Consider also developments in ultra-sound mapping.

Scientific research also validates the presence of a collective musical unconscious but it is defined as “morphic resonance”. *Phi: a voyage from the brain to the soul* (2012) by professor of psychiatry, Giulio Tononi, is maybe the most recent study on the roots of consciousness. *Nature as alive: morphic resonance and collective memory* by biochemist and philosopher Rupert Sheldrake (1995) tells us that research findings prove that the brain is not necessarily a storage tank but instead, brain neurons tap into collective morphic resonances, collective memory, which promote learning and education. Also, neuroscientists have long acknowledged that music retunes the brain and this corresponds with the point Robert Mirabal has made that bone-flute music promotes “vitality, encouragement, strength and reconnection and re-memory”. Also, an examination of theories of tuning and harmony that were long ago put forward by Pythagoras in his essay *Harmony of the spheres* reveals how precise tuning allows one tuned instrument to “call up” the tuning of all other instruments playing together at the same time. Further to this, our bodies primarily participate in such processes of natural

tuning. Our bodies constantly adjust and become attuned to different twenty-four hour cycles of day and night when we travel from north to south or east to west. Our various body rhythms can sometimes become “out of tune” and by natural processes or medical intervention, they can be “re-tuned”.

So this musical unconscious which is associated with the Carib bone-flute music not only takes the form of literal music, but it also manifests itself as music created by vibrations, resonances, rhythms, a kind of humming that everything produces, a music that may be thought to be “silent” vibrating fields, “invisible fields” says Wilson Harris who also recognizes that these musical resonances are also embedded in languages. Quoting from a later novel, Harris in an interview says:

“Listen to the voice of the flute. It sings and it tells its tale in the English language yet solid (however whispering) music gives the word that echoes in one’s frame as one kneels uncanny twists, uncanny spirals that relate ancestral tongues, . . . that have been eclipsed.” (Gilkes: 31)

This is not a music that is inconsequential. Mirabal acknowledges that perhaps bone-flute language is connected to ancestral languages and the shaman’s use of bone-flutes gives him/her vitality for remembering. Added to this, Harris strongly argues that within present day languages, “there exist the voices of dead cultures” (Gilkes, 1991: 30) and we safely deduce that if humans can enter into a relationship that allows them to hear these rhythms – to hear these voices, to hear this Carib bone-flute music – they can benefit from a special education that influences their relationship with landscape and environment. They can benefit from an education that will facilitate conversions, transformations and liberation. This kind of “musical unconscious” that is achieved with “metaphysical tuning” is what Harris promotes when he speaks of “disregarded yet exciting pathway[s] into the reality of traditions that bear upon cross-cultural communities” (Harris, 1983: xv).

This understanding of “tuning” and its capacity to transform is most obviously at work in *Palace of the peacock* when Donne the conquistador is paired with Donne the metaphysical poet. Harris uses an excerpt from John Donne’s poem *Hymn to my God, my God, in my sickness* to demonstrate the kind of “musical tuning” that accompanies transformations. In the excerpt, Donne the poet says:

“Since I am coming to that holy room
Where, with thy choir of saints for evermore
I shall be made thy music; as I am come
I tune the instrument here at the door”

When the poet says “I tune my instrument”, he is speaking of achieving a particular attunement and coming into harmony with a supernatural presence, the presence of his God. Being able “to tune one’s instrument” is similar to hearing an evolving tone, the

‘Carib bone-flute music’, a musical unconscious that triggers reconciliation. Such intunement produces healing, transformation, and rebirth. Yes, at the end of *Palace of the peacock* Carroll is re-born and Donne recognizes this since he says:

“The music Carroll sang and played and whistled suddenly filled the corridors and the chosen ornaments of the palace; I knew it came from a far source within – deeper than every singer knew. And Carroll himself was but a small mouthpiece and echo . . .” (p. 116)

As a result of this “tuning”, Donne as conquistador confesses that “all his life he had loved no one but himself” (p. 107). Describing the music he heard, he said, “It was the cry of the peacock and yet I reflected far different. I stared at the whistling lips and wondered if the change was in me or in them.” The entire “re-born” crew also becomes attuned and re-tuned and the novel ends with the collective knowledge that “Each of us now held at last in our arms what he had been forever seeking and what he had eternally possessed.” (p. 117)

The rhythms of the Carib bone-flute constitute a musical knowledge that benefits individuals and communities. This kind of tuning can avert threatened human and environmental degradation and disaster. As Harris claims, it can transform and convert human greed in all its shapes to a sense of shared responsibility that preserves human life and the cosmos. It is a tuning that constantly restores, reconstructs, recreates and reconciles the collective community.

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DAEMONS AND FURIES IN WILSON HARRIS'S *THE FOUR BANKS OF THE RIVER OF SPACE*

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Wilson Harris has acknowledged in several essays that his novels take on a life of their own; his novels practically write themselves. This is possible because he lets Spirit (or as he calls it, the collective unconscious, universal consciousness, or archetypal life) erupt into his subconscious while he is writing. His characters can then become allegories or personifications of historical figures, events, or movements transformed and transcended by Spirit as they enact an infinite rehearsal of the carnival theater of history. Characters wear a variety of masks that allow them to merge victim with victimizer; human with divine, animal, and environmental; life with death; and one culture with another in order to digest the traumas of history and envision a regenerative future.

Several of Harris's novels are prefaced by a character who claims true authorship (*Carnival*; *The infinite rehearsal*). Similarly, in the preface to *The four banks of the river of space*, Harris claims that Anselm, the protagonist, is the real author of the manuscript and that Harris only edited it. Anselm is a manifestation of Spirit through Harris's psyche. This assertion is further complicated by Anselm's own claim at the beginning of his "theatre of Dream", that his lines were written by "'daemons' and 'furies'" (p. 3). If we add Canaima's warning to Anselm in the first pages that he "will have to define the nature of a 'fury' in [his] book of dreams" (p. 5) and the Judge's admonition that Anselm needs to distinguish between daemons and furies in "The Third Bank" of the river of space (pp. 113-114), it becomes apparent that definitions of both daemons and furies are in order. In the *Four banks of the river of space* daemons and furies are spiritual entities that provide a balance between natural [catastrophes] and man-made disasters in societies. They also provide balance between the material and the spiritual. A spiritually balanced worldview is the initial requirement for the salvation of the planet.

Harris explains his concept of the furies in his essay *Apprenticeship to the furies*, written six years after *Four banks*. Harris notes that furies, such as the sirens in *The Odyssey*, and the mythological figure of Medusa, have always represented an abused nature personified as "killing goddesses" who seek revenge against civilization (p. 228). The abuse of nature by civilizations has always existed, but it has reached

unheard of proportions with the human-made instruments and machines available since the industrial revolution. Humankind's tendency to treat living landscapes as "passive furniture" has caused terrible imbalances in the ecology that lead to dreadful results: deadly environmental and climactic changes and the loss of species (p. 228). These furies or killing goddesses also constitute eruptions of a subconscious revenge-syndrome in communities who feel they have been injured and raped.

Literature has always personified these revenge-syndromes as purely evil, one-sided killing goddesses. However, Harris believes that this literary treatment of furies only breeds dead-end pessimism, nihilism, and the death of cosmic love. For Harris this is dangerous because he believes art not only reflects reality, but generates it. He proposes, that, as spiritual entities in fiction, furies play a vital role in the transformation of society: "The life of the imagination may well be at stake without a vital approach to the Furies, their potency for terror and simultaneously, paradoxically, for the regeneration of cosmic love" (*Apprenticeship to the furies*, p. 227). Instead of remaining in the guise of revenge-seekers and killers in conventional realism, a convention which makes us "immune to the deep-seated malaise of humanity around the globe" (p. 230), furies in Harris's novels stab or kill their victims in order for them to re-live, to gain awareness of their shared guilt, and by confronting this burden, to spiritually transform the world.

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In *Four banks*, Harris presents two major furies: Canaima and the twin Rose sisters. Harris borrows the figure of Kanaima (with a K), from Guyanese folklore. Kanaima is an evil killing-god who exacts revenge on the perpetrators of unpunished crimes. In his essay *The unfinished genesis of the imagination* Harris describes the dread that Kanaima spread in a Macusi village he encountered in the 1940s. According to the members of this community, Kanaima was killing the young men and women of the village to avenge some obscure crime committed by their antecedents. Their dread was intensified by the facts that they did not know what the original crime was or by whom it was committed. Thus the villagers' assumption of Kanaima's revenge had forced them collectively to address their crimes, to ponder upon the nature and consequences of these crimes, and to figure out which crime Kanaima was avenging. In like manner, Canaima in *Four banks* forces readers, along with the protagonist, collectively to admit to and to ponder upon our destruction of life on the planet.

The four banks of the river of space begins with an eighty-year-old protagonist, Anselm, who is confronted in England by the dead Canaima in Anselm's book of dreams. Anselm had last seen Canaima forty years prior bent over the Macusi dancer in the bird mask whom Canaima had murdered. Instead of reporting the murder to Inspector Robot, the police, Anselm had let Canaima escape. Now in his book of dreams, Anselm must come to terms with Canaima's accusation that Anselm had "save[d]" or at least "conspire[d] with" Canaima as far back as 1948. When Anselm insists he is innocent, Canaima stabs him with a knife, which metaphorically kills

Anselm. Anselm's death provides the opportunity to retrace his steps among the living and the dead in order to confront his void and gain the self-knowledge that leads to self-confession. Therefore Canaima is Anselm's alter-ego and guilty conscience; the evil side of an otherwise good man. For forty years, Anselm had tried to submerge his collusion with Canaima's crime until Canaima himself comes back to pierce Anselm's false consciousness.

As a fury, Canaima "was no ordinary criminal. His victims reflected the moral dilemmas of an age" (p. 4). These victims "were carefully chosen to bring home to us our involvement in threatened species, a threatened globe" (p. 4). Anselm's dilemma as a man of science – an architect, engineer, and surveyor – is that he unwittingly contributes to the technologies that destroy the environment and to the killing machines used in wars. Canaima, the personification of killing technologies, comes back now because he had seen that Anselm had at least listened to the dying message on the Macusi bird-dancer's lips forty years prior. In other words, Anselm had realized that we were destroying the environment as early as 1948, but had done nothing about it. Now, with Canaima's knife thrust in his ribs, Anselm embarks on his pilgrimage of self-discovery along "The first bank" of the river of space. He sees a Macusi woodsman who earns a living by chopping down acres of rainforest trees in 1948. The Macusi is not only destroying "the lungs of the globe" (p. 12), with his work, but, ironically, he is contributing to the possible extinction of his own tribe. Thus Harris brings home to the reader that all of us share in the guilt of environmental destruction.

As Anselm proceeds, he encounters Inspector Robot, police and "technician of artificial intelligence" (p. 30). Although Robot tempts Anselm to become a total rational/scientific nihilist, the knife in his ribs has made Anselm "sensitive to the abuse of others, to the perils that encompass the globe" (p. 16). Yet Anselm pulls Canaima's knife from his ribs, throws it up in the air and it kills a bird, an extension of the Macusi bird dancer (p. 36). This involuntary killing marks Anselm as a participant in Canaima's crime and the need for a spiritual worldview: "Did the dancer and the knife fall and rise upon an ozone door, a toppled, ruined tidal door in *The greenhouse drought-spetre of earth and sky*? . . . A double-edged knife! It pierces us with the necessity of a visionary change of heart, for a new sculpture of being" (p. 37). Therefore Canaima in *Four banks* conforms to Harris's definition of a fury in "Apprenticeship": a killing god who nonetheless has the potential for regenerating cosmic love. He causes environmental destruction, but he also helps us visualize the spiritual worldview which could end this destruction. If we saw the earth as a spiritual entity, we would not abuse it as we currently do.

Although daemons and furies in *Four banks* are considered crucial spiritual catalysts for "poetic justice, [for] poetic law" (p. 87), and for the salvation of the planet, and therefore they are often invoked as a single unit, the Judge in "The Third Bank" instructs Anselm to distinguish between one and the other. Daemons at this point are

classified as agents “that provide a balance within the risks of [nature as a vessel of] creation” (pp. 113-114). These nature-made daemons include natural catastrophes, such as earthquakes, storms, and volcanoes, which have the potential for destruction, but also create new life and landscapes. Anselm illustrates this concept when he refers to “passions’ peace at the heart of the storm” (p. 113), and environmental eruptions: “Eruption is . . . a healing process in nature. . . . the globe cleanses itself when it quakes and spews lava. There would be no flowers . . . without the quake, the lava” (p. 139).

In contrast, furies provide a balance “within . . . man-made cosmos” (p. 114). This definition of fury coincides nicely with that of *Apprenticeship to the Furies*, as personifications of an abused nature which seeks revenge. Given this distinction, how do we interpret Harris’ statement in *The unfinished genesis of the imagination* that “Canaima the fury *becomes* a redemptive daemon”? (p. 258, my italics). Since I could not find any essay that explains the daemons as explicitly as “Apprenticeship” explains the furies, I had to delve into the novel itself as the carrier of theory. In *Four banks*, Judge indicates that the daemons, as agents of balance within nature, “help us perceive another kind of balance” in the risks of human-made catastrophes. This suggests that the furies, who “are in a state of disarray, [and who embody] diseased genius” (p. 114), can learn from the creative potential of the nature-made daemons. In addition to the theory provided in *Four banks*, we can apply the role of Dr. Daemon in *Resurrection at sorrow hill* (1993). In this novel, Dr. Daemon states that “Daemons are miracle-makers in the theatre of the arts” (p. 8). Dr. Daemon represents the rational-scientific worldview that sinks into nihilism when he loses his wife, Ruth. Ruth comes back to life and stabs Dr. Daemon, which allows him to come back to life to seek Spirit. As both doctor and patient in his insane asylum, Dr. Daemon challenges Hope, the protagonist, to prove that Spirit exists. Likewise, Canaima in *Four banks* challenges Anselm to acknowledge the divine in nature, animals, and humans. Canaima has been a fury in “disarray” (p. 114), yet he is able to adopt the creative potential of the natural daemons.

The other furies in *Four banks* are the Rose sisters, who are “pregnant natures abused” (p. 63). On the realistic level, the Rose sisters have been abused by Harold, the estate owner; much like enslaved women had been raped in the past. One Rose sister gives birth to Canaima and the other Rose gives birth to Anselm. The Roses’ revenge is symbolized by the thorn in “the estate of nature plundered” (p. 78). This thorn parallels Canaima’s knife, which pierces Anselm’s Westernized worldview to educate him back to the spirituality of his root cultures. Rose’s thorn pierces all of us, since we are born with the guilt of our antecedents, whose technologies violate the earth and humankind. When Anselm was eight years old, both mother and son’s lives were threatened with Asian flu, and Rose’s revenge against Harold was to let Anselm die with her. His

uncle, Proteus, convinces Rose to spare Anselm's life so he could "create his Imaginary City of God" (p. 103) out of the materialistic, Eldoradan city of gold.

Both Canaima and the Rose sisters in *Four banks* constitute furies made from broken archetypes. Harris believes the archetypes in their wholeness embody the biases of the cultures that generated them. By breaking the one-sided vengefulness of the original archetypes, "it brings us numerous factors that take us deep into the past to question fallacious absolutes, even as it enriches our creative conscience in addressing the . . . crises that afflict us in the present and for which we require new solutions to cope with the . . . tragedies that confront civilization" (*Apprenticeship*: 234).

Although Anselm is a spiritually attuned person, he resists the furies' accusation of guilt and collusion with the evils of the world. His pilgrimage into his past finally brings him to his trial on "The third bank" where all of history is on trial, including "the natures of art and science, man-made order, [and] nature-made furies or daemons" (p. 91). This trial, then, puts human-made legal, scientific, religious, and literary institutions on trial for perpetuating the violence done to humanity and nature. It is a trial at the level of cosmic morality at which Anselm must address his guilt and confess to his contribution to cosmic violence. This process of self-knowledge and self-confession goes beyond the letter of the law; it requires literacy of the "Word" (p. 126) – reading the text of spirit in a living landscape.

Because the trial is attended by all the victims of human violence or "spiritual refugees" (p. 45), it metaphorically puts us all on trial in order to share, or balance out the guilt (pp. 23, 57, 63). This requires that Anselm make the leap of faith to Spirit, going through one of the terrifying voidings of spirit which many of Harris's protagonists endure. Anselm has been challenged by Spirit in the form of Canaima, but he has resisted because his rational/scientific world-view blinds him to his spiritual sins. At the end of the trial, Anselm makes the terrifying leap of faith necessary for the creative "resurrection of humanity" (p. 96). He again sees himself killing the Macusi bird from "The first bank" and violating the divine in animalesque nature:

"I was unable to continue. A chocking sensation! . . . I saw the chasm again. I recalled the sun's bright, sweet claw interwoven now with torment. *Were these the unpredictable features of my gestating unconscious coming to birth at last?* . . . And therein in that moment of well-nigh inexpressible passion and compassion swift as lighting upon the darkest sky – when the gestation of deepest, darkest, innermost form, innermost seed (one has been carrying in the womb of the psyche for ages and generations) turn into newborn life – I saw the furies (I saw their saving rather than destroying light) with which one wrestles in every man-made enterprise, or institutions of the heart, or cradle, or school of art." (pp. 116-117)

Anselm then goes on to "The fourth bank", accompanied by the already dead English missionaries, Penelope and Ross. Each one carries a dead Macusi child, symbolizing

the spiritual hurdle each one has to overcome for renewal. On their journey, they are captured by a tribe of “savages” and taken to Proteus’s cabin, which has become the “HISTORIC CABIN IN THE PSYCHE OF SPACE” (p. 149), or the era of human history. Anselm’s child is Canaima, Penelope’s child is the specter of patriarchy, and Ross’s child represents his skepticism of institutional religions at the same time that he distrusts the Macusis’ “primitive” spirituality, “as if [he] dreaded contamination by the very Spirit [he] serve[d]” (p. 126). The fact that each has to “surrender” to his or her “savage captors points to the need to go beyond partial institutional religions to align oneself more with the primordial spirituality of the submerged and forgotten tribes. This kind of spirituality diffuses the rational/scientific arrogance that justifies greed, wars, and the destructive exploitation of the planet. Anselm infuses in the arts of life “a moral counterpoint to civilization’s addiction to technology” (p. 13). In conclusion, Harris in his writing attempts to re-spiritualize readers, make us confront our guilt, pierce our old complacent formulas, and envision new solutions to the world’s problems through a balance of the material and the spiritual.

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WILSON HARRIS: MAGICAL REALISM, MYTH AND RESISTANCE TO COLONIZATION

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The Anglophone Caribbean nations share a history of colonialism and slavery; they also reflect different cultures and political systems. Wilson Harris, author of *Palace of the peacock* (1960) is very conscious of these shared characteristics, and he incorporates the history of different cultures and experiences of the local people to his stories.

Theodore Wilson Harris was born in New Amsterdam, in what was then British Guiana on March 24, 1921. He studied land surveying, and following graduation in 1944 he became a government surveyor. Between 1942 and 1953, Harris made numerous expeditions into the rain forest of his South American country. The Cuyuni River, the Essequibo River, the Potaro River, and several regions where he came in close contact with the indigenous peoples and landscapes, can be appreciated in one of his most popular novels, *Palace of the peacock*.

Palace of the peacock is a combination of layers of symbolism between various African and Amerindian cultural myths. By using magical realism and integrating myth to his novel, Harris combated the notion of the colonizer with one of the Caribbean's strongest and purest weapons: nature. This paper will discuss how magical realism and mythology are used to combat the notion of slavery and colonization in the novel.

Even though *Palace of the peacock* takes place in the jungles of Guyana, it represents the entire Caribbean. Donne, a white planter and enslaver, travels with his crew composed of African, indigenous, and European descended adventurers into the heart of the Guyanese jungle to recapture slaves who have escaped his plantation. Throughout this expedition, Donne kidnaps an Amerindian woman whom he believes will help him find his slaves. Harris writes: "The Aboriginal are tended to be seen as a sub-human in order to justify the extreme exploitation, to which [they] are subject, and the robbery of his [their] lands by ... new colonizers" (Harris, 2004: 6). Donne has no regard for the Amerindian villagers, because he considers them to be on a lower level than he, and only wants to exploit them for his benefit. Throughout his voyage, Donne and his men experience strange happenings which can be accounted for by Harris' use of a literary mode closely related to that of magical realism.

Magical realism has many interpretations and definitions, especially when it concerns the Caribbean. Lindsey Moore defines it as

“a literary mode rather than a distinguishable genre, magical realism aims to seize the paradox of the union of opposites. For instance, it challenges polar opposites like life and death and the pre-colonial past versus the post-industrial present. Magical realism is characterized by two conflicting perspectives, one based on a rational view of reality and the other on the acceptance of the supernatural as prosaic reality.”
(Moore, 1998)

One can see in the novel *Palace of the peacock* the representations of the pre-colonial past (nature) and the post-industrial present (Donne). At the end of the novel and thanks to magical realism, Donne and nature become one. This cannot be achieved without the union of opposites and the acceptance of the supernatural, which plays an integral part in the novel.

According to Angel Flores, magical realism involves the fusion of the real and the fantastic, or as he claims, “an amalgamation of realism and fantasy” (Moore, 1998). The presence of the supernatural in magical realism is often connected to a primeval or ‘magical’ Amerindian cosmovision, which exists in uncomfortable cohabitation with European rationality. Just like Moore, Flores agrees that there has to be a presence of the supernatural in the ‘natural’ world depicted in a literary work for it to be classified as Magical Realist. However, Flores is adamant that magical realism is connected to an Amerindian worldview. Thus, one can appreciate the magical realist character of the novel especially at moments when Amerindians and nature are foregrounded.

Another magical realist feature in the novel is Harris’ treatment of time. The linear plot of European novels is challenged, and therefore Harris presents time as fragmented. Even though history is conventionally understood by the colonizing western hegemony as a linear, monodirectional, progressive, and evolutionary sequence, Harris writes his novel in non-linear, multidirectional time. This allows the reader to question received notions of how humanity has ‘progressed’ and ‘evolved’ to become more ‘civilized’ with time, and exposes how the mind of the colonizer is as fragmented as time itself.

Another example regarding magical realism is the state of life-in-death, or the state of death-in-life of Donne’s expedition crew. When the men decide to search a village, they pass by a gravestone in which their names have been carved. “The odd fact existed of course that their living names matched the names of a famous dead crew that had sunk in the rapids and been drowned to a man, leaving their names inscribed on Sorrow Hill which stood at the foot of the falls” (Harris, 1960: 23). Benitez Rojo argues that

“The crew begins to understand itself as being the like other crew, the one that died in making the same trip. Thus it knows that its trip towards death is also towards a rebirth, toward a second chance on earth, and

this regeneration implies a psychic integration aiming to reduce the distance between the ego and the unconscious. ” (p. 190)

The duality of meaning of life and death and the contrast of actions and thought are unified to create a new Caribbean consciousness. This is why Donne’s crew sees their names on Sorrow Hill and why the indigenous people can identify them. According to Flores, the Amerindians are in tune with their spirituality. It is because of this that they can lead the crew on their way to purge their spirits and be reborn.

Lois Parkinson Zamora says in *Magical romance/magical realism* that, “Ghosts embody the fundamental magical realistic sense that reality always exceeds our capacities to describe or understand or prove.” (p. 498) One thing that separates magical realist ghosts from those found in some other literary modes is that in magical realist fiction, ghosts are three-dimensional characters. They have back stories, motivations, regrets, and passions like living characters. The members of the crew are unknowingly reliving and re-dying their deaths. It is only when the colonizers arrive at the Palace of the Peacock that they realize the wrongs that they have done and their minds and souls become clear and purged of those wrongs. All of this is framed by Donne’s elusive search for an Amerindian woman called Mariella.

In *The recalcitrant muse: race, sex and historical tension in the search for the West Indian (trans)subject*, Shona N. Jackson states:

“I argue that Mariella, the central female character, is the figure that *extends beyond the space of the text* (italics by the author) to reveal the critical tensions surrounding the folk, herself, and the land in *Palace* because of how the intersection of race and sex at different historical junctures objectively positions figures like herself in ways that illuminate the historical anxieties that surround them.” (p. 48)

In *Palace of the peacock*, Mariella can be interpreted as the embodiment of Maria Mies’ “three colonies” upon whose destruction and submission colonization depends: first, people of non-European descent, second, nature, and finally women “the last colony”. She is held prisoner by Donne on two occasions. Once as a young woman when he turns her into his lover and in another instance when Donne decides to take an old Arawak woman with him, not realizing that this woman is also Mariella. The land in which Donne and his crew are in is called Mariella as well. They are exploiting the land thus raping it/her. Mariella is the unifier of myth, magical realism and history that represents all Caribbean nations and their past suffering and hardships. It is interesting to see that Jackson thinks that “Her [Mariella’s] figure opens a space of doubt as to whether or not historical difference can be reconciled at the same time that a historical encounter/moment is rewritten from the position of a historically silenced subject” (p. 48).

According to Benitez-Rojo, there is no doubt that Mariella reconciles the differences between official history and silenced history. Mariella is ever-present in the novel and

is the crew's guide to the palace. Mariella represents the colonized, the exploited and raped land, and through her, the reader can see and feel Donne's vicious abuses of power. Benitez-Rojo comments that "He [Donne] rules despotically over the savannah, and he holds in his fist the Arawaks who work for him, among them a young woman named Mariella, whom he has coerced into being both his servant and his lover" (p. 191).

Mariella embodies many aspects of Amerindian mythology, cosmology and spirituality including that of 'seeing beyond'. I want to emphasize the word 'seeing' because Mariella and the Amerindian/Arawaks see things at a spiritual level that others, especially the colonizer, cannot comprehend. Throughout the novel, Donne and his crew are provided with numerous clues about the actual purpose of their journey, but they cannot understand it and come to terms with it until the very end. Even though most of Donne's men are characterized as being spiritually blind, there is one Amerindian crew member called Vigilance who can see and he slowly begins to understand what is happening. For this reason, he is the sole survivor of the expedition, whose task it is to carve the name of each of his mates on the gravestone at Sorrow Hill. Vigilance and Mariella retain their indigenous spiritual understanding which will play an essential role in the salvation and redemption of the Caribbean.

Magical realism acknowledges and dramatizes the deep hybridity of cultures and mythologies in the Caribbean. Harris sets up a dynamic tension between the mythology and worldview of the many different colonized peoples and contrasts them with those of the European conqueror. Ancient systems of belief and indigenous Caribbean lore permeate his writing. Mythical animals and forces of nature eventually are implicated in the death of each member of the crew, one by one.

In the introduction to *Caribbean literature and the environment: between nature and culture*, Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey, Renee K. Gosson, and George B. Handley argue that

"Harris recovers the depths of Caribbean history and charts a path for the future through the living presence of dynamic inner and outer landscapes. Aesthetics, then, emerges . . . as a vital strategy for resisting the predictions of colonial environmental discourse and resituating the perceiver within the particulars of the immediate environment." (p. 26)

The first image of Donne encountered by the reader is of him on an apocalyptic horse, transforming him into a harbinger of death. Carroll falls in the water and disappears silently and completely (p. 75), Wishrop is eaten by perai (p. 102) and one of the Dasilva twins murders Cameron by stabbing him in the back as Cameron hurts a bird with a rock (p. 115). Mariella is witness to all of these deaths, which also coincide with the appearance of spiders. For example, when Wishrop dies, "The boat still crawled, driven by the naked spider of spirit" (p. 102). Vigilance, the only one from the crew who can 'see' has a dream sequence in which he:

“saw trees growing out of the cliffs overhead parallel to the river and he wondered whether any man could climb and clamber there. He rubbed his eyes since he felt he saw what no human mind should see, a spidery skeleton crawling to the sky. It danced and gamboled a little, clutching the vertical floor that seemed to change in a shaft of cloudy sun into a protean stream of coincidence where every mechanical revolution and image was the inscrutable irony of a spiritual fate.” (pp. 102-103)

In Amerindian mythology, spiders are associated with the culturally important art of weaving, and wise spider goddesses give their assistance to the people as culture heroes. Trickster spirits are also depicted as spiders in both African and indigenous Caribbean mythologies, where the spider figure ranges in character from unconventional and entertaining in some, to violent, slightly deranged, and outright criminal in others. Spiders are also common symbols of patience and endurance. In my view, it is Mariella who is the trickster in this novel, as she allows the crew to take her captive, in order that she might weave a fateful web in which the men become inextricably entangled leaving them in a timeless and vivid dream from which they will never awake.

It is in this final dream sequence that Donne can finally see what he has done to Mariella, the slaves, and nature. His dreams and death will be repeated in an endless cycle as one final lesson that nature will always fight the colonizer. Once Donne enters the Palace of the Peacock, he can finally ‘see’ like an Amerindian and gain a notion of identity and purity. It is only then that they can realize how wrong it was to exploit the non-European descended slaves, the land, and women.

By using characteristics of magical realism, Harris is able to tell a story in which the non-european descended workers, nature, and women hold the key to salvation and redemption in the Caribbean. Marina Camboni states in *Resisting fearful symmetry* that “Harris has brought into focus the destructive legacy left by Western imperialism to their former colonies and to the Third World at large” and most importantly:

“Unlike other Caribbean writers, Harris maintains that five hundred years of conquest and colonialism cannot be brushed aside...Just as the colonizers have acquired wealth and cultural enrichment from their former colonies, so the colonized and oppressed have been – albeit by force – nourished by myths and languages that, though articulating the dreams and history of the oppressor, have become part and parcel of their culture.” (p. 10)

Without the use of myth and magical realism Harris’ message of hope for redemption and salvation would have been very difficult to articulate. Magical realism allows Harris not only to highlight the suffering of the colonized but also to highlight the strength and resilience of the people, of nature, and of women in the Caribbean. As the former colonial system has given way to a more recent wave of neo-colonialism under

the auspices of corporate globalization, the non-European descended populations, the environment, and women of the Caribbean are coming under increasing attack. At this historical juncture more than at any other time in Caribbean history, the mythical acknowledgment and the spiritual revival of redemptive resistance on the part of the formerly enslaved, nature, and women needs to be at the top of our agenda.

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THE SACRED VOTIVE IN DEREK WALCOTT'S POETRY

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For Derek Walcott poetry is a sacred calling, one that he could not ignore. In fact, he vowed never to leave his island until he “put it down” in words (Jones: 37). This poetic covenant he called an “ancestral debt” (p. 37). Sacred poetry cannot proceed from uncertainty about sacred things. In a 1997 interview, Rose Styron asked Walcott about his religious upbringing. Reared a Methodist among Catholics, he quickly rejected the dogma of both and referred to the priest as ignorant and semi-literate. He recalled that the island of St. Lucia suffered from the overabundance of religious paternalism. Early in life, art replaced organized religion as the structuring ethos of Walcott's life. In 1986, he confessed to Edward Hirsch in the *Paris Review* that he never separated the writing of poetry from prayer. Furthermore, he explained that he grew up believing the writing of poetry was a religious vocation, and described the ecstasy of writing poetry as the melting of the I – the unification of poet and universe. His first poem, printed privately in 1948 (Twenty-five poems), declares: I, with legs crossed along the daylight, watch/ The variegated fists of clouds that gather over/ The uncouth features of this, my prone island. The poem brings him resounding criticism from the church, and he recalls that learning about God through nature got him into trouble with the village priests. Nevertheless, what Walcott embraces is the African pantheism/traditional African spirituality – that Negromancy in the body's memory that he admits many people think of as superstition.

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Walcott's poetic line echoes Shakespeare and the Bible, but rarely do critics hear rhythms from African artistic traditions. Critics have commented endlessly on his themes, which they list as history and identity. With lines like “I'm just a red nigger who loves the sea / I had a sound colonial education / I have Dutch, nigger, and English in me, / And either I'm nobody, or I'm a nation” (The schooner ‘Flight’) it is clear why critics fixate on identity in particular. They claim he is haunted by the colonial past, something he denies. He rejects outright the platitude, “those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it because [he says] look at how many do know history and are repeating it anyhow” (Styron). Critics also have written endlessly on Walcott's influences and imitations of European models, Yeats, Pound, Eliot, and

Homer to name but a few. Some of this Eurocentric focus comes from Walcott. In interviews and in his own autobiographical writings he credits his British education, as in the essay *Leaving school*, published in the 1962 issue of *London Magazine*. In this essay, he acknowledges Joyce's influence on his work.

While history and identity are themes in Walcott's poetry, identity goes beyond what many see as race and/or ethnicity. I would like to focus on Walcott's use of nature, that old pantheistic African superstitious – meaning irrational, illogical, and credulous way of seeing the world as an “island prone” before the uncouth features of man. I argue that in Walcott's poetry identity is with the Spirit of Nature. The words used to describe an African way of seeing are usually pejorative but mainly so in their connotative sense. Superstitious at some point in its usage signified that which opposed so called ‘rational’ or ‘civilized’ religion. Now, more often than not, religion itself may appear to many as superstitious. However, in the Styron interview, Walcott uses superstition to focus on the mythical, the irrational, and the illogical. For the poet these are the doorways to intuition, which is the gatekeeper of inspiration. The gateway to the muse is not through logic, but as any poet knows one must be credulous – naive, innocent, trusting, uncritical and even gullible to touch the hem of its garment. Walcott takes identity and wraps it up in a sacred sense of place and that place and that self become holy whole. In spite of all of Walcott's attention to Eurocentric influences, he does in a far cry from Africa say, “how choose. How can I turn from Africa and live”? (p. 18). This poem echoes the Duboisian dilemma of double consciousness, which in the twenty-first century is multicultural consciousness. Walcott draws attention to Africa and Greece when he writes, “Between the Greek and African pantheon, lost animist, I rechristened trees” (p. 12). Here he recognizes the sacred and traditional understanding of animism – God's spirit animates all things.

From the genesis of his oeuvre Walcott, baptized in the shimmering sea, rose to meet his calling, made his vow and dedicated himself to the hallowed task of making the word flesh, setting it loose to walk among us. In an early poem titled *As John to Patmos*, meaning in the same way as John of Patmos, Walcott superimposes the slave's exile from continent to island with the biblical account of John of Patmos' exile. The I John of the Bible becomes the As John in Walcott's seventeen-line poem. The biblical Revelation 1: 9-11 identifies John as a brother and companion in tribulation where on the isle of Patmos he hears the word and writes it in a book. Walcott's John finds the “island is heaven – away from the dustblown blood of cities” (p. 5). His revelation is that black children are freed from singing songs of homelessness. Walcott's final stanza makes clear the identification with ancestral spirits for he writes: as John to Patmos, in each love-leaping air, O slave, soldier, worker under red trees sleeping, hear / what I swear now, as John did: To praise lovelong, the living and the brown dead.

Clearly, Walcott's praise song is to nature, which is sacred and the sea its metaphor. Among his many achievements, Walcott, according to critic Katie Jones, is credited for his contribution to landscape poetry (Jones: 37).

Walcott is by no means a religious poet but embraces the African sense of the sacred, that is what Walcott calls "the awe in the ordinary" (D'Aguiar: 220). In a 1986 BBC Arena Caribbean Nights recording on the culture and arts of the islands, an interviewer asked Walcott if he believed in God. His reply, after a pause, was "only if God gets me another poem" (D'Aguiar). While his response produced laughter, it should not obscure the fact that Walcott is on a spiritual quest, where landscape replaces church and becomes for Walcott a character, not a Holy Spirit, but flesh invested with spirituality. In a poem in *The Castaway* Walcott writes: "To those whom a cruel / Just God could gather / To his blue breast, His beard / a folding cloud, As he gathered my father. Irresolute and proud, / I can never go back. / I have lost sight of hell, / Of heaven, of human will" (Walcott, 1986: 37). Methodism and organized religion in general stifle creativity by presenting dichotomies of good and evil, right and wrong; thus he can never go back to old ways of knowing. Still the spiritual/ sacred nature runs deep in his poetry from his use of biblical images to his African allusions. Nature and God collide as beard is cloud and blue breast is sky. His cry is not unlike that of the disciples where in *Midsummer*, for Walcott midlife, he writes "Oh Christ, my craft, and the long time it is taking" (Walcott, 1986: xxiv). Edward Baugh believes that Walcott's conversion to the word of art takes place in *Book One of Another Life* where Walcott says with youthful enthusiasm, "I would be a preacher, I would write great hymns" (Walcott, 1986: 24). His hymns are a cosmopolitan song. Even in the autobiographical *Another Life* he sees behind the provincial church door, for he writes, "one step behind the church door stood the devil" (Walcott, 1986: 25).

The poet in maturity brings together a claim for all cultures. In *What the twilight says*, Walcott claims that the sacred urge of actors is to record the anguish of the race. We all are actors. The race is human. This recording can only take place in the hero's journey through what Walcott calls the "terrifying darkness" (Walcott, 1986: 5), the passage back from man to ape. This voyage is crucial for the artist or for anyone seeking wholeness. Walcott says, "The children of slaves must sear their memory with a torch . . . Those who look from their darkness into the tribal fire must be bold enough to cross it" (Walcott, 1986: 5). The fire is the fear that one must step through to greater glory. While the essay concerns the theater, what Walcott observes applies equally well to his poetry. He rejects, it seems to me, ethnic ancestry for faith in elemental man. What is essential man but spirit? The sacred spiritual self is the one identity Walcott seeks and finds beyond the African and outside the European. He is one with all. He writes, "Maturity is the assimilation of the features of every ancestor" (Walcott, 1986: 36); and "Every I is a fiction finally."

In The muse of history, Walcott calls history the Medusa of the New World (Walcott, 1986: 36). He strives to move past the confrontation of history, and for good reason. That which one resists grows – magnifies. As he says, “fighting tradition will perpetuate it” (Walcott, 1986: 36). Events of the past will not and cannot change no matter how much we argue with ourselves over them; in acceptance there is freedom. Whatever harm has been done to us, in terms of slavery, colonialism, poverty; there is a place within us that has never been hurt, harmed or endangered. Walcott seems to have found that place and allows his words to move out into the world from that place of absolute love.

Walcott is wary of the Medusa of history because it, according to him, “has produced a literature of recrimination and despair, a literature of revenge written by the descendants of slaves or a literature of remorse written by the descendants of masters. Because this literature serves historical truth, it yellows into polemic or evaporates in pathos. The truly tough aesthetic of the New World neither explains nor forgives history. It refuses to recognize it as a culpable force” (Walcott, 1986: 37). The essay offers theory but the proof is in the poems. In striving for spiritual identity, Walcott cannot manage to release Medusa. The Arkansas testament with its shining white crucifix calls to mind Klan violence and hatred, Roman murder, and some critics point out, Walcott’s own cross of race. However, Walcott’s metaphysical preoccupation is in yoking together seemingly irreconcilable opposites in order to demonstrate oneness – wholeness where none has been perceived.

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John Figueroa raises the question of displacement and wonders how Walcott’s claim to carrying his house inside himself, everywhere, fits with the notion of displacement. Perhaps displacement takes place internally – that where one is going is where one is. Although many fail to recognize this quirk of time, Walcott refers to it when he says, “it’s not the pressure of the past which torments great poets but the weight of the present” (Walcott, 1986: 40). Human displacement occurs not as a person from homeland but humanity from Spirit. Walcott embraces a pluralistic vision that is inclusive not exclusive, but is he successful? D’Aguiar argues that he is not. He says that only Wilson Harris “comes to grips with this complex reality made up not of composite pairs but a kaleidoscopic whole” (p. 167).

The opening lines of Omeros reveal the spiritual world and pay homage to the life of the trees soon to become vessels for fishermen. Walcott’s words cause the trees to become flesh; he writes, “because they could see the axes in our eyes” (Walcott, 1986: 3), and the trees probably thought the axe handle is one of us come to cut us down. The rewriting of Homer’s Odyssey has pointed to Greek influence. Omeros, however, like Walcott’s other poems retains African survivals in the significance of the boats; some African boatmen paint eyes on their fishing boats to recognize the spirit in the wood. As Robert Hamner recognizes, Walcott takes characters to Africa to reclaim

hereditary seeds that survived the Atlantic crossing, seeds now rooted in Caribbean soil. However, he also takes characters to Africa to reclaim the pantheistic spiritual inspiration that infuses Walcott's poetry. Walcott concludes that writing poetry is sacred, and says, "The gift of poetry . . . made me one of the chosen. There is something about it votive and humble and in a sense ritualistic" (Hirsch: 204).

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TWO BIRDS OF A FEATHER EBB AND FLOW TOGETHER: KAMAU BRATHWAITE'S TIDALECTICS IN DEREK WALCOTT'S *OMEROS*¹

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It has infamously been said that history is measured through the presence of monuments. These monuments in turn were once ruins, enhanced by others' hands to become monuments. But what happens when there are no ruins to begin with? No prime matter to transform into a monument? Would this entail that there is no history? For West Indian writers such as V.S. Naipaul the answer to these questions would be yes; there is no history in the Caribbean. For other writers sharing in the same geographical region the possibility of an absence of history yields great possibility, thus placing the Caribbean writer in a rather advantageous position. St. Lucian poet Derek Walcott and Barbadian poet Kamau Brathwaite, although different in their poetic styles, both share in a "New World poetics" (Pollard) with regard to the sea as a trope, or "alter-native" (Edwards: 9) to history. For both writers, the fluent nature of a massive, circular and therefore infinite entity such as the ocean offers a boundless answer to the Caribbean post-colonial condition of affliction that Naipaul cannot seem to break free from. The sea therefore becomes the keeper of a history that only *appears* to be missing, for the ruins are underwater, and although no human hand is able to turn these into monuments, the sea's hand transforms these ruins into organic matter that washes up on the shores of the regions that brush-up against the Atlantic, or the vessel of the triangular trade of a stolen people. The history thus comes transformed, transmuted into an organic story that will forever echo in the conch's shell, a true history, untouched by the pervasive human hand.

The purpose of this article is to briefly touch upon the role of the sea in Derek Walcott's magnum opus, *Omeros*, through Kamau Brathwaite's concept of the "tidalectic". Since a complete 'Brathwaitean' tidalectic reading of *Omeros* is beyond the scope and length of this article, this essay will take a god's eye glimpse at how the

¹ Substantial parts of this article form part of my 'working dissertation' as well as of a longer work entitled: Beyond the Can[n]on's range: Kamau Brathwaite's tidalectics in Derek Walcott's *Omeros*.

conceit of the sea in *Omeros* reflects Brathwaite's theoretical view, hence placing both artists in communion towards the forging of an alter-native Caribbean identity.

Placing Walcott and Brathwaite in unison is something that is not often done in Caribbean studies. It has become somewhat of a hackneyed terrain of thought to speak or write about these two authors as opposites, almost to the point where the literature has created a "tabloid" relation between the artists. As a result, it could be argued that Brathwaite and Walcott are indeed personifications of Achille and Hector, respectively. Like Achille, Brathwaite visits Africa and returns to the Caribbean to finally reach atonement in his magisterial poem *The arrivants*. Like Hector, Walcott turns his back on Africa, trading the sea for land, just as Hector leaves a boat for a car, trading seascape for landscape. It is not until he writes *Omeros*, almost thirty years after Brathwaite had written *The arrivants*, that Walcott is finally able to face the sea, the watery road that leads to Africa. As a result, one could also claim a parallelism between Walcott and Philoctetes. Walcott the poet, as well as the "I" in *Omeros*, kills Hector, perhaps alluding to the self-annihilation of a man who rejected his past to give way to the renewed and healed Philoctetes, cured precisely through the hand of Ma Kilman's African botany.

Nevertheless, although both Achille and Hector represent opposing points of view, they share in the love for Helen and consequently the island. In this same manner, despite Walcott and Brathwaite having opposite cosmologies, they indeed share the love for Helen and/or the Caribbean. To use Edouard Glissant's term, Walcott and Brathwaite share in a "poetics of relation" with regards to the sea as a vehicle towards a historic past that is then washed up as historic present that is anew, in other words, a tidalectic version of history.

In order to explain the tidalectic, Brathwaite utilizes the image of an old lady on the north shore of a Jamaican yard who is sweeping the sand away from her house. He explains to the audience that hers is an endless ritual, the ritual of the Caribbean existence which is anti-dialectic, anti in the sense that the people in this region cannot be "successfully dialectic", but instead tidalectic (Brathwaite: 34) because of an ongoing continuum. He defines the Caribbean experience as therefore an ongoing answer that departs from the Western Sisyphean concept of existence.

Albert Camus's description of the endless futility of pushing a rock to the top of a hill only to have it roll down again, making the labor of pushing the rock perennially of no avail is the image he uses to define human existence. For Camus existence is a pointless two-directional trajectory. For Brathwaite, the existential image for the Caribbean is not that of an individual pushing a rock up a hill, but an old woman sweeping sand. For the Barbadian poet, the challenge lies in the fact that many Caribbean people aspire to live by Western existential models; i.e. Sisyphus, that do not befit their true condition. As a result, Brathwaite proposes an alter/native model for

existence that defies Hegelian dialectic psychology in order to re-define and re-construct the Caribbean using more appropriate parameters.

For Hegel, reality is comprised of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, therefore western, “rational” thought must abide by this three-fold structure. But Brathwaite asserts both to the audience and Mackey that Caribbean peoples cannot be successfully dialectic, and are consequently set up for failure from a European standpoint. Instead, the people of the Caribbean are tide/alectic; where dialectics are tidal as the waves and their inextricable relation to the tides that in turn are receptive to the Astros. The pivotal moment at which Brathwaite realizes this newfound Caribbean epistemology resides in the image below:

And then one morning I see her
body silhouetting against the
sparkling light that hits the
Caribbean at that early dawn
and it seems as if her feet,
which all along I thought were
walking on the sand...were
really...walking on the wat-
ter...and she was tra-
velling across that middlepass
age, constantly coming from h
ere she had come from – in her
case Africa – to this spot in
North Coast Jamaica where she
now lives ... (p. 33)

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The most salient features of this tidal dialectic are the following: 1) it does not conform to Western [H]istory’s linearity; 2) it is an outright rejection of the Hegelian dialectic that governs all “civilized” thought; and most importantly 3) it merges natural and human history by positing nature as the meaning-maker, as opposed to most Western thought that places nature in a passive position from which it absorbs or echoes human thought. Nature does *not* wear the colors of the spirit in the Wordsworthian sense, but instead humans are and thus exist in response to nature. Nature *is*, regardless of humanity, and hence is the determinant force.

Ian D. Copestake’s *Madness and the sea in the American literary imagination* reveals that the perspectives towards the sea in Anglo-North America and Great Britain parallel perspectives toward human insanity. The concluding remarks in his essay pose the question as to whether or not it is possible for humans to exist outside myth. In other words, can humans experience nature directly, without saturating it with and

mediating it through layer upon layer of discursive representation? Can writers, for example, embrace the sea without taking discursive control over it? For Copestake the answer is not yet. To prove his point, he cites some iconic endings in American fictional works, such as *The great Gatsby* and *On the road*, in whose final scenes the characters stand immobilized facing the sea and pondering the very same question: can we live outside ourselves? It is where these authors come to a standstill that Brathwaite's tidalectic and Walcott's *Omeros* pick up.

Throughout *Omeros* the sea is ever-present, omnipresent and thus a constant witness to the thoughts of all the characters in the poem. As they meditate and or experience existence, the sea absorbs those thoughts only to return them through the tide, playing the role of meaning maker through the tidalectic in which a character's initial thoughts, i.e. hypotheses, are offered to the sea that contains massive amounts of others' thoughts from across the globe, i.e. antitheses, to finally wash up answers on the sand, i.e. syntheses. In sum, Brathwaite's tidalectic ideal becomes Walcott's main theme in *Omeros* where the answer to the post-colonial Caribbean conundrum is one that is all-encompassing, stretching across the Atlantic to Africa, Europe and the Americas where roots are founded in routes (DeLoughrey) and the universal becomes insular and vice-versa.

In *Omeros* the sea is the vessel that leads Achille to his ancestor Afolabe, while the seawater bath in which Ma Kilman immerses Philoctetes is the cure for the old man's infinite colonial wound. The idea of a liquid, shape-shifting, elusive, ferocious, yet beautiful, and omnipresent entity such as the sea as the solution to all of the characters' conundrums in the poem might also suggest that Walcott's ultimate authorial intent was to leave the poem in a tidalectic fashion, with the sea "still going on" (Walcott, 1992: 444) not only in order to further strengthen the sea's position as an overarching presence over all of human existence, but also as a testament to the infinity of the memory/identity/history that we hold in our hands for the fleeting moment of that existence.

After having travelled across the sea, moving back and forth, Achille, led by the sea-swift, finds himself in that never-ending sea-like movement between time spaces. He ebbs between past and present in dreams, in reality when submerging under Caribbean waters, and through his romantic relation to the wayfaring fowl. Similar to Brathwaite's "fantastical layering of New, Old, and other worlds," Achille "hears through between layers, and between times and places" (Reckin: 2). By crossing these thresholds of time Achille is able to finally be at peace. The angst of the forgotten past does not haunt him any longer; the Atlantic sweeps the past into his present in a renewed story that knows no end, only perennial novelty and therefore unending, unhindered history; ruins turned into monuments at the hands of the sea.

The sea carries with it traces of the past, it is a giant, visual, liquid ghost where ancestors roam and wash up on another shore. *Omeros* may then be regarded as an ode

to the sea, who tidalectically inhabits that interstice of eternal movement. The sea-swift takes part in the ritual of infinity, similar to Brathwaite's muse for the tidalectic: the woman who incessantly sweeps the sand, by infinitely and circularly journeying without a final destination, like the movement of the sea:

“Like our grandmother's – our nanna's – action, like the movement of the ocean she's walking on, coming from one continent/ continuum, touching another, and then receding ('reading') from the island(s) into the perhaps creative chaos of the(ir) future.” (Naylor: 34)

The knowledge that comes to Achille and Philoctetes leads them to brush against the coasts of the past and the present, living on both ends and yet on no end, inhabiting a shifting interstice of time and place making this threshold or crossroads into a place of their own, their St. Lucia, their Helen, where they find peace and *hounfort*.

It is rather uncontestable that Kamau Brathwaite and Derek Walcott share “the historical metaphor of the sea” (McGarrity: 1), thus establishing a “Poetics of Relation” (Glissant, 1997: 16) that in turn leads *Omeros* and *The Arrivants* to establish an intertextual dialectic that in a post-modern fashion advocates for an anti-dialectic, established through the tidalectic made flesh in the sea. Just as Achille and Hector are the antagonistic poles in *Omeros* (what I have designated above as an ode to the sea) many a time in academia one cannot help but associate these rival fishermen with the personas of Brathwaite and Walcott. Walcott through his poem journeys from Hector to Philoctetes, from shadow to being the primal source of light, in sum: the Adamic Man seeing things for the first time. The poet, Achille and Philoctetes can finally break free from the yoke through the aid of the sea jointly signified by the sea-swift and the sea itself that leads them to finally see Saint Lucia as a clean slate:

Why not see Helen
as the sun saw her, with no Homeric shadow,
swinging her plastic sandals on that beach alone,
as fresh as the sea-wind? (Walcott, 1992: 271)

It is here that the poet embraces Brathwaite, where Hector surrenders to Achille. Walcott heals Philoctetes with the sea, ultimately healing himself, closing the rift between Africa/Achille/Brathwaite and the Caribbean/Hector/Walcott by means of the very same thing that sets them all apart: the sea.

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NOT READY FOR AFRICA

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In the Caribbean it seems that it is always about how much Europe can one get rid of and how much Africa can one get back. But the truth is that opportunists find neocolonialist business opportunities far too profitable to resist and academics trained to propagate neocolonial discourse are not sure how much in common they have with the islands in the first place. How eager the Caribbean seems to be to ask Mother Europe for help and Father Africa for acceptance. However, there is far more serious study devoted to things European than to things African. This is perhaps connected to the fact that, when it comes to formal speech and the written word, these colonized islands almost exclusively express themselves in the colonizer's tongue. It is interesting to note how eager so many of my fellow Caribbean academics can be to deny their African skin while putting so much effort into dominating European ways of thinking and speaking, leaving African ways of knowing and creating the world behind.

These multiplex contradictions are encapsulated in Derek Walcott's poem "A far cry from Africa":

I who am poisoned with the blood of both,
Where shall I turn, divided to the vein?
I who have cursed
The drunken officer of British rule, how choose
Between this Africa and the English tongue I love?
Betray them both, or give back what they give?
How can I face such slaughter and be cool?
How can I turn from Africa and live?

Here Walcott is accepting that he cannot live without his language and without facing up to the violent past of his people. In his play "Dream on Monkey Mountain" he asserts that while he cannot turn away from all of this, he also cannot bring it back. One of the characters, Makak, is a prophet from Africa with a Catholic mask who is on his way to realize his dream of return to Africa (pp. 240-241). His faithful companion Moustique, however, does not understand Makak's mission. Moustique can be seen as

the more survival-focused and therefore perhaps more human character, who is not led on by the magic of his friend Makak.

When he meets a man who has been bitten by a snake, Moustique proclaims: "I see a sick man with snake bite, and a set o' damn asses using old-time medicine. I see a road paved with silver. I see the ocean multiplying with shilling. Thank God" (p. 253). Moustique sees religion as a means of survival by creating a 'healing ministry' while Makak sees it as a mission. After dividing the money earned from the healing Moustique explains his position:

Pray for the world to change. Not your friend. Pray for the day when people will not need money, when faith alone will move mountains. Pray for the day when poverty done, and for when niggers everywhere could walk upright like men. You think I doubt you, you think I don't respect you and love you and grateful to you? But I look at that moon and it like a play that a dog lick clean, bright as a florin, but dogs does chase me out of people yard when I go round begging, "Food for my master, food." And I does have to stoop down, and pick up the odd shilling they throw you. Look, turn your head, old man, look there, and that thing shining there, that is the ocean. Behind that is Africa! How we going there? You think this...[*Holds up mask*] this damned stupidity go take us there? (p. 255)

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Though he may be wise, Makak seems foolish in thinking that just keeping the idea of going back to Africa alive is all that is necessary to get there. In the Caribbean, poverty is a major barrier to education. Academics can speak of returning to Africa but the truth is that the peoples of the Caribbean cannot read or think about such abstract ideas on an empty stomach. Here, Walcott portrays Makak as an individual who is speaking on behalf of a community that does not share his point of view. He has only performed one miracle with his hands and this "damned stupidity", as Moustique says, is not bringing Africa back.

When Moustique dies, Makak lets loose. He chooses a violent path for his return to Africa. Makak is thrown into prison, and there he finally manages to gain support of a community, his army as he calls it. The prophet loses all consideration for humanity as he frantically searches for Africa. Tiger, Sours, and the Corporal all become caught up in Makak's mission. Souris seems more ignorant than Tiger, and he seems perplexed by how they will eventually reach Africa. Although he is just playing the part to survive, Tigre acts as if he is in control and swears to go to Africa as Makak's general. Tigre and Souris do not completely understand the quest for Africa nor have they assimilated to European culture. The Corporal, however, is in an even more confusing situation, because his revulsion at his considerable assimilation to European culture has propelled him to embrace Makak's vision:

All right. Too late have I loved thee, Africa of my mind, sero te amavi, to cite Saint Augustine who they say was black. I jeered thee because I hated half of myself, my eclipse. But now in the heart of the forest at the foot of Monkey mountain [*The creatures withdraw*] I kiss your foot, O Monkey Mountian. [*He removes his clothes*] I return to this earth, my mother. Naked, trying very hard not to weep in the dust. I was what I am, but now I am myself. [*Rises*] Now I feel better. Now I see a new light. I sing the glories of Makak! The glories of my race! What race? I have no race! Come! Come, all you splendours of imagination. Let me sing of darkness now! (pp. 299-300)

Corporal's "Africa of my mind" highlights the extent to which Africa has remained an abstract and individual notion in the Caribbean, instead of a concrete and communal reality. The corporal does not even now what race he is speaking of until he yells "I have no race!" Yet he follows Makak who has become the leader of the movement for African cultural revival in the Caribbean. This shows the extremes and how unstable and confusing this culture is when the world is seen as either black or white. In the final analysis, the Corporal and Makak are the only characters who seem seriously committed to returning to Africa.

The end of the play reveals just how violent Makak's quest for return has become. He has come to feel superior to everyone. His friend Moustique, returns from the grave to make a last-ditch attempt to reason with Makak:

Look around you, old man, and see who betray what. Is this what you wanted when you left Monkey Mountain? Power or love? Who are all these new friends? You can turn a blind eye on them, because now you need them. But can you trust them for true? Oh, I remember you, in those days long ago, you had something there [*Touching his breast*], but here all that gone. All this blood, all this killing, all this revenge. So go ahead, kill me. Go ahead. Is for the cause? Go ahead then, (p. 315)

The pathway for return to Africa has been traced in blood for Makak, who must violently destroy all that he sees as European in himself, his people, and his environment. The Corporal, who has chosen a similar path, encourages Makak in this: "Nun, virgin, Venus, you must violate, humiliate, destroy her; otherwise, humility will infect you. You will come out in blotches, you will be what I was, neither one thing nor the other" (p. 319). In this binary, zero-sum game, one is forced to choose between two polar opposites, both of which are dangerous abstractions that have disastrous consequences when applied to real living beings, with all of their multiple identities and contradictions. The moment of Makak's long awaited arrival in Africa coincides with his awakening from sleep and his realization that Moustique's death and all of the events that appeared to have transpired since, were merely a bad dream.

Once he has arisen from his nightmarish slumber, Makak leaves with Moustique to return to Monkey Mountain, to go home. He does so without the violence that he experienced and perpetuated in his dream, and a sort of defeated mood takes over. Nothing in the dream has transpired, and Makak will indeed return to Africa but too early, much like Nietzsche's Zarathustra. Africa is for many in the Caribbean like a dream that at present is too violent to become a reality. Many Caribbean people are like Moustique, preoccupied with survival and they are not ready to become Makak-like *Übermenschen*. Instead, they are caught up in a liminal space between the dominant discourses of the oppressor and the skin of the oppressed. When the Corporal boldly tells Makak and the others that they must go forward, Souris responds: "Where? The world is a circle, Corporal. Remember that." (p. 307)

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TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES IN LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

IRISH IDENTITY AND PIRATICAL RESISTANCE IN THE CARIBBEAN

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Before there were pirates in the Caribbean, there was piratical resistance to English imperialism, in what was not yet the nation of Ireland. There was Grace O'Malley, or rather, *Gráinne Ni Mháille*, chieftain of the Ó Mháille clan, a trader, smuggler and pirate in 16th century County Mayo. It was the end of an era – proto-industrialization – a decentralized maritime economy that took place in households and sailboats, involving all members of the family or clan. It was the end of a subsistence economy and the beginning of a capitalist economy. Granuaile, as she is more familiarly known, represents a last bastion of Gaelic self-governance. The English conquest and near extinction of the Gaelic groups was successful and later replicated in the Caribbean and other territories.

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This was also a time where vestiges of goddess worship remained, as the stronger forces of Christianity and other patriarchal religions paired with continental empire-making. While witch-burnings and the eradication of druidism had not begun in earnest; the exploitation of nature and women had, molding the emerging Irish identity. This is important in understanding why Granuaile disappeared from Irish historical records in Ireland and why she is mainly known as a historical persona from the written records of her English enemies. In her book, *Granuaile: Grace O'Malley – Ireland's pirate queen, c. 1530-1603*, Anne Chambers states, "Like many of her sisters, Granuaile was also a victim of the mainly male orientation of history", and further notes in the introduction that, "as one of her male detractors wrote of her, 'a woman who overstepped the part of womanhood', who allowed neither social, political nor religious convention to deter her, did not readily conform to the patriotic, untainted, God-fearing and dutiful picture of Gaelic womanhood promoted by later generations of historians." She rather resembled the guises of Morrigan, Irish goddess of sex and battle with a raven on her shoulder (Rankine & d'Este, 2005); Aphrodite, Artemis and Athena, all rolled into one.

Grace O'Malley was both a smuggler and a pirate. According to Karras, smugglers, the ultimate free traders, are low-key, clandestine and use violence only as a last resort. They do not accept commercial restrictions and welcome opportunities to

violate them, but live within the system. Pirates are violent and create an alternate socioeconomic order for themselves (Karras, 2010). Within Gaelic Brehon Law, Granuaile was a smuggler; under imposed English law, she was a pirate. Her first marriage was officiated by an Irish wayward priest – not considered a full priest but politically under the sway of Rome. After she became a widow, her second marriage was under Brehon Law – a law equally fair to both men and women. Under this law, either party could divorce after one year of marriage. He was away when the year came up and found Rockfleet Castle’s doors closed upon return. Granuaile threw his clothes out of a tower window, said, “I dismiss you”, and she was divorced. She never married the Scottish sailor and bard she rescued at sea during a storm, but lived with him until he was killed by a rivaling clan. For this act, the McMahons perished under her knife. She had a special love for the dying art of the bards (Druett, 2000; Sjöholm, 2008). Bards were druids; not to be confused with neodruidism.

The caste of Druids, male and female, according to Oxford scholar Cunliffe, “... has its roots deep in prehistory, possibly as far back as the 2nd millennium” (Cunliffe, 2010: 4; Price, 2013). Table 1 below contains a preliminary synopsis of features attributed to Celts from Cunliffe and Lonigan’s texts which are then compared to features attributed later to pirates in the Caribbean.

Table 1 Similarities between Celts and Pirates

Sources on Celts		Celts (from texts)	Pirates (from chroniclers)
Cunliffe	Lonigan		
36 63	102	-Reverence for skulls at neolithic sites -The cult of the severed head - <i>Sacrifices</i>	-Skull and crossbones
37	91	-Oval shaped pits containing the remains of sacrificial cattle - <i>Conjurers, diviners, necromancers</i>	-Boucan-strips of wild cattle meat smoked on a rack of branches (Buccaneers) -Davy Jones’ locker (very common Welsh name)
49	112	-Charting passage of seasons - <i>Tree diviners</i>	-Sailing south or north during hurricane seasons -Knowledge of woods for ship repairs
54	89	-Archaeoastronomy - <i>Astrologers and prophets, interpreters of lucky and unlucky times and days</i>	-Sailing by stars -Superstitions
55		-Lunar based religion	-Measuring time based on moon

Sources on Celts		Celts (from texts)	Pirates (from chroniclers)
Cunliffe	Lonigan		
		-Bards	phases -Sea shanties
58		-Belief in the immortal soul, transmigration Birth-Death-Rebirth	-No fear of death -Risk takers
88		-Belief in female power of earth goddess, Morrigan	-Female nautical figureheads on ship bow
91	92 94	-Lawmakers (Brehon Law) - <i>Guardians of sencha (ancient tradition), law, and genealogy</i> - <i>Law interpreters and advisors</i>	-Brehon law practices (i.e., selecting leader by vote, not inheritance) -Sea stories -Pirates code
	114	-Warriors	-Fighters
	96	-Philosophers, Adepts	
	100	-Physicians, Healers	
	106	-Speakers of divine language	

Druid reverence for skulls and the cult of severed heads may be one factor in the emergence of Caribbean pirates' skull and crossbones flags. Smoking beef, charting passage of seasons and time, knowledge of stars, fearlessness, female figureheads on ship bows, birds onboard, pirate codes, and fighting spirits are all cultural and behavioral features associated with pirates which could have Celtic practices as one of their sources (Konstam, 2010; Marley, 2012).

Mother earth and nature worshippers, Druids believed in the tripartite goddess, sometimes known as Badb – Birth, Death, Rebirth. What was later judged to be a sexual or fertility symbol, is now interpreted by scholars such as Joseph Campbell, as a symbolic return to the womb after death; preparing the dead ones for rebirth into another expression of nature (1991). The arts of healing and speaking divine languages in poetry and song took the members of the Druid order a good 20 years to master formally (Brabazon, 2002; Graves, 1975; Markale, 1999). These were the PhDs of pre-historic Ireland.

St. Patrick, patron saint of Ireland is known for chasing the snakes off of the island. Although there were no snakes in Ireland; the druid's staff was carved as a coiled snake. Without bards, healers, priests, lawmakers and law interpreters, the clans were cut adrift from the past.

In an even more distant past, before continental empires, there were islands and coasts. The Portolan maps illustrate the inconsequentiality of continental interiors at the time. Coasts and islands were labeled; interiors were not. John Gillis states that,

“Divine providence did not lead automatically from sea to land, and destiny did not become landlocked until the nineteenth century, when the future finally departed from islands and attached itself to continents” (2012: 21).

Not surprisingly, Granuaile chose to live in Clare Island, off the coast of Clew Bay; a world that straddled land and sea, in the ecotone, where ecosystems overlap. As Chambers states, “To seafaring folk like the O’Malleys the sea was ever a highway, while landlubbers saw it only as a barrier” (p. 192). Chambers and others further note that as a child Granuaile sailed with her father to trade in Spain with other Gaelic people. Her best and fastest ship was built in Spain. At her son’s wedding, wines from Spain were served (Chambers, 2012; Llywelyn, 1986; Maxwell, 2008). In La Coruña, Galicia, one finds the ancient *Torre de Hércules*, from which, on a clear day, they claim one can see Ireland. (Personally, I think you’d have to ingest a few druidic mushrooms to see it.)

In the episode titled *Grace O’Malley: the pirate queen* of the documentary series *Warrior Women*, it is noted that both Queen Elizabeth and Grace O’Malley were born in 1530 and died in 1603. At the age of 65, Granuaile had an audience with the Queen of England to petition for her family and clan, which angered the Irish government representatives and offended their emerging English law-based sensibilities. She never genuflected to the queen, and introduced herself as a free person. They spent some time seated by a fire, communicated in Latin, and all Gráinne’s requests were granted. At the age of 67, she performed one last recorded act of piracy in her coastal waters, retaliating against a Scottish chieftain who had raided her land (*Warrior Women*, 2003).

Choosing island and coastal movements over water was not an exception but a continuation of what wet archaeologists have named the ‘prehistoric superhighway’ or the ‘kelp highway’. Sea levels were lower and vast aquatic forests sustained humans coasting from the true Eden in Pinnacle Point, South Africa, up the coasts east and west. In his most recent book, *The human shore: seacoasts in history*, John Gillis presents a map of world migrations from 100,000 BCE, out of Africa (p. 23). He states, “Voyages across waters were viewed as transformative. Elite voyagers were invested with great prestige, while dead heroes were imagined to have been transported to an eternal life on legendary islands like the Isles of the Blest, which were thought to lie beyond the Pillars of Hercules” (p. 60). These mythical distant islands are also known as the Isles of the West. Ireland, the Hebrides, the Caribbean perhaps?

The Gaelic Celts, Gauls, and Celtiberians were seafarers. From Ireland to Spain, they were connected by the sea, traditions, and language. Ethnological, genetic and typological approaches “have been applied to the Celtic languages, each successive view further refining and narrowing the scope of inquiry” (Ball & Fife: 3). Not even English is exempt from Celtic influence in the use of what McWhorter calls the

meaningless ‘do,’ and ‘-ing’ present constructions. No other Germanic languages have these features; Celtic languages do. Yet, many scholars still view “such close correspondences between English and Celtic as accidents” (McWhorter: 10). Barry Cunliffe states that:

“The language spoken across the swathe of Gaul had close similarities to that spoken throughout much of central and western Iberia at the time and is ancestral to the ‘Celtic’ languages spoken in Brittany, Cornwall, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland in recent times. It is for this reason that we need to look, as dispassionately as possible, at the cultural development of western Europe throughout the *longue durée* of the prehistoric period.” (2003: 18)

This *longue durée* or natural human evolution was interrupted by an artificial patriarchal continental-empire’s ‘progressive’ force. Neither genocides nor heretical burnings can eradicate what is ingrained in our memories, myths and ancient cultures. It traveled with slaves and indentured servants to the Caribbean. Grace O’Malley was embodied in Caribbean female pirates, such as Mary Read or Anne Bonny. Rediker states, “Bonny may have been drawn to the sea and to piracy in particular by popular lore in her native Ireland about Grace O’Malley, a pirate queen who in the late sixteenth century marauded up and down the Emerald Isle’s western coast” (Rediker: 113). In the Caribbean, he adds, “Roughly one pirate in ten (9.8 percent) was in some manner Irish; one in fourteen (6.3 percent) was Scottish; and one in twenty-five (4.0 percent) was Welsh” (p. 52). Though the Welsh numbers are small, they boast big pirate names like Bartholomew Roberts (Burl, 2006). About 25 percent were associated with the West Indies and North America, and the remainder with coastal areas of Europe and Africa. Most were formerly deep-sea sailors. Ancient stories of coasts and islands were reborn in the Caribbean.

Caribbean pirates of Celtic origins were deep-sea sailors, identifying more with the ship’s clan and the sea than with emerging national identities. Coincidence? As the druid character in Llywelyn’s historical novel, *The Greener Shore*, says: “There are no coincidences, just unexpected glimpses of a hidden pattern” (p. 188).

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PIRATING POLITICS: WHEN THE IRISH RULED MONTSERRAT

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Introduction

Whether plucked from the treacherous streets of Dublin, prowling the Atlantic seas, or sweltering on a sugar plantation in West Indies, from the 1650's to 1730's many Irish rebels engaged the English Empire in most unusual ways. That these engagements corresponded to "The Golden Age of Piracy", an era when piracy flourished throughout the Caribbean, is not so much coincidental, as evocative of the fact that Irish people have always challenged English authority. Thus, Irish exceptionalism within the early Caribbean context presents a unique area of study in how the Irish transplanted to the West Indies challenged English expansionism and not only "pirated" imperial ships, but, on at least one small island, pirated plantation societies and colonial hierarchies of race, class, and ethnicity.

As a case study, the tiny island of Montserrat might seem an unlikely location to challenge English imperialism. Yet, in his book *If the Irish ran the world: Montserrat, 1630-1730*, noted historian Donald Akenson makes the case that, for over fifty years, the island managed to operate 'under the radar' of English bureaucracy in a manner that frequently defied English directives. Akenson's scholarship posits that several unique factors make this phenomenon an interesting study of how English imperialism may have found its limits in remote areas of the Empire. His theory that Montserrat offers a microscopic view of how colonized groups might respond to imperialism once they have gained local power and control gives a new twist to social studies of the region. Specifically, the big question is whether or not on gaining control of the island, the Irish became kinder gentler masters than the English. This is a thought-provoking question that begs further study on other islands of the West Indies. As in all the island colonies, ethnic strife existed between the ruling classes and those serving them, regardless of race; thus, Akenson's study goads the reader to contemplate colonial ethnicities from multiple perspectives – something beyond that of the racially color-coded binary of Black vs. White.



Figure 1 Montserrat's Coat of Arms is an Irish girl holding a cross and an Irish Harp

Two important factors are key to Akenson's study:

- The interaction of Irish emigrants with English imperialism took place in a context where the Irish were not a small or easily bullied minority among the white settlers.
- Historians have ethnic data from both a 1678 census and a 1729 census that compared the ratio of Irish to English as Monserratian society evolved.

The first factor contests the stereotyped notion that an Irish presence in the Caribbean was limited to enslaved or indentured servants, or miscreants. While it is true that thousands of Irish women and children were forcibly transported to the West Indies as cheap or enslaved labor, and that many Irish felons were banished to the colonies, the fact remains that, at least in Montserrat, the Irish somehow managed to maintain control of their local government through Irish governors who managed the island as a *de facto* Irish colony for over fifty years.

The second factor provides concrete social data that is invaluable to a more inclusive view of the Irish presence and influence throughout Caribbean region. According to Akenson, the 1729 Montserrat census is unique among the British colonies for its systematic survey of social data. However, the earlier 1678 census is also unique in its focus on providing census data based on ethnicity and religion (Akenson, 1997: 7-8). No other island collected and recorded this degree of ethnic or social data.

The consequence of these two factors is particularly important to any study of the Early Caribbean. Because we have comparative data from both the 17th and 18th centuries, the time span covered offers a snapshot view into an extended period of development.

An Irish haven

The exact date and circumstances for the early non-indigenous settlement of Montserrat are uncertain. We have no records to indicate when the first European settlers arrived, nor when the first slaves were imported. What we do know is that Christopher Columbus sighted the island in 1493 and named it after the monastery Santa Maria de Montserrat in Catalonia. However, he did not land there and apparently no other Europeans settled on the island until sometime between 1631 and 1633. These settlers probably had their origins in two groups – a small group from the Irish settlement in Guyana, which may have been

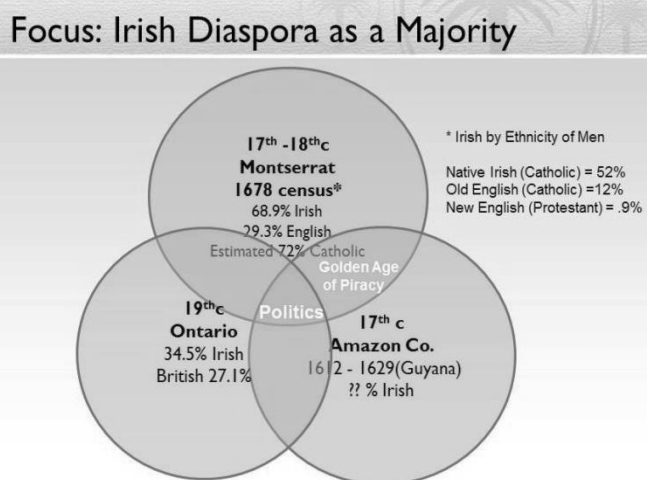


Figure 2 - Summary of statistics provided in "If the Irish Ruled the World" (Akenson, 1997)

captured in the Amazon and escaped sometime in 1629 or 1630; and another group of Irish that had been expelled by the English from the Virginia colony for being Catholic. One theory is that Montserrat's small size, mountainous terrain, and its proximity to St. Christopher created an ideal environment for anyone wanting to settle "off the grid".

How the Irish came to govern Monserrat seems to be more serendipitous than planned. Akenson notes that, due to "the pyrotechnics of the European empires" a significant number of Irish were directly involved in the expansion of European imperialism as either colonizers or victims, or occasionally both. However, for the most part Irish participation was scattered, undocumented, or conflated with English history. The exceptions to this are the early pre-1630s Irish colonies in Guyana, Newfoundland, and Virginia. These early colonies were not typified by the forced labor of Cromwell's era, but instead were frontier settlements established by a particular brand of aggressive, adventurous Irish emigrants looking to improve their lives and fortunes.

Despite this history of conflation and scattered Irish displacement, two areas of the New World have social data that document the Irish as the largest ethnic group: Montserrat in the 17th and 18th centuries and Ontario in the mid-19th century. Interestingly, these two instances also correspond to two separate and distinct eras of English imperialism – the first, developmental era of colonialism which lasted until the end of the Golden Age of Piracy in the 1730s; and the second, a more political and problematic type of imperial expansion which was reached its peak from the 19th to early 20th century. For scholars, access to social data representing these two distinct stages of English imperialism offers an opportunity to study not only Irish influences in the Atlantic region, but to study how English imperialism may have altered over time and space. Along these lines, in *No peace beyond the line: the English in the Caribbean*, Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh argue that "most West Indian historians stress society as it existed in the second half of the eighteenth century largely, because of more abundant sources" (qtd. by Akenson, 1997: 7). Thus, Montserrat possesses some of the best sources of social information for any of the British colonies in the New World. This includes not only data on the planter elite, but on the poor whites, the indentured servants and, to a lesser degree, the slave population. From a historiographical perspective, Montserrat is located at an important nexus in the history of the first stage of English empire, namely the question of whether or not ethnicity would become central to the making of the colonial world.

Equally important to understanding the ethnic configurations is Montserrat's geographical location. Situated in the English Leeward Islands among or the Lesser Antilles, Montserrat is strategically located among the four Leeward Islands of Anglo-Celtic settlement in the 17th-Century: St. Christopher (St. Kitt's), Nevis, Antigua, and Montserrat. St. Christopher was considered the "Mother Colony" of the British

Caribbean and the hub of communications with London. Too small to be the hub, Montserrat was nonetheless conveniently located nearby.

These four islands formed part of an original land patent given in 1627 to the Earl of Carlisle, a Scot aristocrat. Unlike the freehold land given to charter companies, the patent meant that the landholders were under a type of a neo-feudal grant based on tenancy rather than in fee simple (land that could be held in perpetuity). This also meant that the governors were appointed by the Earl, not by the King or Parliament. After 1660 when the islands became Crown Colonies, the resulting confusion of land titles generated years of litigation over property ownership (Akenson, 1997: 10). While extensive scholarship has focused on the many problems arising from the overlapping of Royal Patent and Crown Colony status, the analysis typically focuses on the legal, not the social or ethnic ramifications.

Socio-political culture

In many respects, one cannot understand colonial politics in Montserrat without understanding how politics and piracy intertwined with colonial community culture and with the formation of West Indian societies in general. Unlike in the romantic mythology of piracy and the Disney version of pirates, the institution of piracy in the Caribbean evolved from imperial collisions that were far removed from the islands, and had little to do with either race or ethnicity, and much more to do with power and the acquisition of wealth that impacted colonial communities.

Earlier, I referenced Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh's book, *No peace beyond the line: the English in the Caribbean*. The term "beyond the line" derived from a secret clause to the 1598 Treaty of Vervins between Spain and France that ended the Wars of Religion. Under the terms of this clause, despite whatever peace might prevail between the two countries in European waters, there was no truce west of the Azores or south of the Tropic of Cancer. Those areas were declared a "free-fire zone". Thus, from this treaty forward the entire area became a "free-fire zone" for other European powers. The result was that piracy in all of its forms became a New World geopolitical mode of business – everyone participated, none claimed responsibility.

The piratical mode of business had cultural meanings that spilled over into all aspects of colonial behavior. For the purposes of our discussion, this phenomenon is crucial to understanding both why and how Irish settlers in Montserrat developed a neo-feudal society 'beyond the line' of English politics and government. In the case of the Irish, a propensity to adopt piratical methods for coping with English politics might be viewed as a *quid pro quo* survival tactic. After all, despite the proliferation of charters and regulations for English settlements in the American and West Indian colonies, none existed for the English occupation of Ireland during this time. England had for all intents and purposes sacked and pillaged Ireland since the 16th century, confiscating land (pirating by another name) and developing large English controlled plantations in

Ireland. The process reached a climax during the Interregnum (1649-1660) when Cromwell forcibly transported thousands of Irish men, women and children to the West Indies as a cheap source of labor. On a larger scale, one might argue that from 1580-1630, as English and Scottish colonizers poured into Ireland and established large plantations on confiscated land, displaced Irish landowners and workers were metaphorically pushed out and over to the Americas. In turn, this dynamic could be said to trickle-down and transform the political and cultural landscape of the Empire. Thus, no one should have been surprised that, when presented the same opportunity in Montserrat, the Irish responded in kind – acquiring land and political power through trickery must have been sweet revenge.

In Montserrat, wealthy Irish planters owned large plantations, while less prosperous Irish farmers owned small plots of land which provided basic cash crops and food for their families. Some of the world's best tobacco was produced on Montserrat, so that for many years everyone, including the small farmers, was able to prosper. In contrast to Barbados, Jamaica, and other, larger outposts of the English, most Irish settlers seem to have maintained a comfortable lifestyle regardless of social level or religion.

To paraphrase the crux of Akenson's cultural argument, one might visualize the wave of colonization from the perspective that, because Ireland was geographically 'beyond the line' of central English polity, Ireland served both as a school for the colonized subjects who became the victims of power politics, and a model for how successful colonizers should behave once they gain power. His theory becomes more plausible when one takes into account statistics documenting that between 1586 and 1700 an estimated 150,000 settlers entered Ireland while approximated 132,000 native Irish moved out, and, presumably, over to the Americas and West Indies (Akenson:19-20). In particular, by the 1620's the growing economies of the Caribbean region would have been a magnet for the new settlers. Far from the civil strife and religious persecutions of English rule, the small tropical island outposts of the West Indies might logically have been perceived as new Edens with unlimited resources ripe for the plucking – or pirating.

Religion and politics

“Our ecclesiastical affairs are to the best of our endeavor agreeable to the canons and constitutions of the church of England.”
(James Cotter's report on religion in Montserrat, 1680)

Cotter's report greatly, and purposefully, understates the religious *status quo* on the island. Throughout the 17th century, Montserrat's population was predominantly Catholic. For sake of brevity, the following is a synopsis of Akenson's rather lengthy explanation on how the island managed to circumvent the dangerous issue of religion

and the turmoil which could have resulted from the enforcement of the Test Act designed to assess conformity with the tenets of the Church of England (Akenson, 1997: 44-47).

Historian Brian McGinn writes that: “The religious status of the early settlers was in fact flexible and equivocal. Rather than professing either a Catholic or Protestant faith, many Irish planters adhered to both – either at separate times, or, in some cases, simultaneously” (qtd. by Akenson, 1997: 45). McGinn explains that this reflected an ambiguity carried over from Ireland’s Old English – families of Norman descent who had settled in Ireland prior to the Reformation and who had retained their pre-Reformation Catholicism. However, the Old English were also loyal to the English Crown – thus making them both Catholic and Royalists. McGinn’s explanation accounts for the appointment of Anthony Briskett, of Anglo-Italian descent, as the first governor. To the English Irish peoples were the most barbarous people in the world and Briskett had spent most of his adult life managing Irish tenants and servants; thus, he was particularly suited to manage a colony “beyond the line” without the usual agencies of law and government (33). Briskett, a protestant raised in Ireland, was appointed primarily to keep the Irish under control. From the earliest period, Montserrat had a larger than usual Irish population that represented a potential problem for the English: the Irish were a notoriously unruly and tricky people to manage in Ireland; in Montserrat an English governor would be outnumbered and thus at a severe disadvantage.

Unfortunately, for the English, Briskett proved that Irish behavior was contagious, or perhaps that his Italian heritage (he was the grandson of an Italian merchant) combined with an Irish upbringing, created some disturbingly ‘Irish-like’ habits on his part. At any rate, Briskett controlled the island for seventeen years as, in Akenson’s words, “a neo-feudal empire”. Over the course of his governance, he recruited Irish immigrants with agricultural experience to grow tobacco on the island. In the process, his own wealth and properties increased accordingly. Thus, one might argue that Briskett, in a sense, pirated political and economic control of the island. As a side note, the Briskett family managed to keep their own plantations off of the tax rolls in the process.

Montserrat Governors (1632 – 1687)

- 1632 – 1649 – Anthony Briskett, Anglo-Italian descent but raised in Ireland, Protestant
- 1649 – 1662 – Roger Osbourne, Briskett’s brother-in-law, Irish Protestant (executes his sister’s husband after her death in 1653 the Dutch planter Samuel Waad and controls his estate in the name of Waad’s son).
- 1662 – 1667 – Anthony Briskett II, first Anthony’s son
- 1668 – 1672 – William Stapleton, Anglo-Irish soldier who helped expel French from Montserrat; he became Governor of all the Leeward Islands until 1687 (his mother was Irish, his father was Old English Catholic)
- 1672 - 1687 – Stapleton Brothers and James Cotter (Royalist and Catholic)

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Figure 3- For over 50 years Montserrat’s governors were either Irish or Catholic, or both.

As can be seen in the chart in Fig. 3, after Briskett's death his family managed to maintain control through first, his brother-in-law's appointment, and then his son's appointment as governor. How that happened is a long, convoluted tale of marriage, intrigue, deception, and murder/execution.

On a positive note, Briskett did commission the first church to be built on the island in the 1630s. This church was, according to the builder, intended to glorify God and honor King Charles I. Briskett, appointed under the theory that only an Irishman could control the Irish, failed to mention that no cleric had been appointed to the church; nor was any Anglican cleric appointed until 1670s – an error of omission, not outright lying. Equally missing was a Catholic presence on the island. Several priests had accompanied early Irish settlers to St. Christopher, but died within several years of their arrival. Sometime later, both Jesuit and Capuchin priests set up missions on St. Christopher, but a squabble over which order would dominate ended when the Jesuits were banned from the island. Then, in the 1650s a Jesuit priest, Father Stritch from Limerick, Ireland settled in St. Christopher where he attended to a backlog of marriages, confessions, and baptisms. This same priest occasionally traveled over to Montserrat where he set up clandestine services in the woods – disguised as a lumber cutter. However, the Protestant governor knew of the 'woody' chapel and while not overtly condoning the priest's services, apparently did nothing to stop them. Thus, while mass was being said, it was not a public mass and reflected a silent religious compromise. This pattern may have been repeated on other islands, but is not as well documented. For further study, I refer the reader to Father Aubrey Gwynn (1932-34: 1-54) who in the 1920's conducted a number of studies on Irish religious practices in the West Indies.

For the purposes of this article, the result was that the "official practice" of religion was virtually non-existent on Montserrat. For all public intents and political purposes, the island "conformed" with Anglican religious hegemony. Privately, people worshipped as they pleased – most as Catholics. Another logical conclusion might well be that while the smaller group of propertied governing men was ostensibly "Protestant", the larger labor force was primarily "Catholic". Since both were also of some variety of Irish extraction, the two sides apparently developed a tacit agreement to keep religion out of governance and economics. This seems to have worked, since during the first fifty years of the island's history; the Governors of Montserrat were either Irish Protestant or Irish Catholic, an unusual, if not unique occurrence in English colonial politics. By 1729, after almost 100 years of colonization, it was difficult to establish ethnicity. However, estimates were that that Catholics still formed almost half the population.

As with politics, religion on Montserrat was a piratical affair –just as pirates and privateers hoisted whichever flag was opportune at any given moment, island

residents likewise proclaimed the religion that was most opportune given the prevailing circumstances.

‘Sugar and the blue-eyed slave’

“As a nation we are more comfortable with the notion of being enslaved rather than being slave owners.” (Kearney, Documentary Broadcast, 27th July 2013)

Montserrat still celebrates its Irish roots. The seal of Montserrat is a red-haired girl with her hand draped over an Irish harp; visitor’s passports are stamped with a shamrock; St. Patrick’s Day is an island-wide holiday. This raises the question of why an island whose population is 90% of African descent continues to honor its Irish roots almost 400 years after the initial Irish colonizers arrived. Joseph Kearney, an independent documentary maker, attempts to answer that question in *Sugar and the blue-eyed slave*, produced in July 2013.



262 The web advertisement for Kearney’s documentary refers to Montserrat as “the ‘Emerald Isle of the Caribbean’” . . . [which] has long had connections with Ireland – however, lurking in its history are stories of fierce Irish slave owners.” The above quote from an interview for the documentary represents the ambiguity that island residents have about their Irish heritage. Without alluding to the slavery period, the interviews with island residents elicits answers such as “I be Irish”, “Me great gran’fadder from way back be Irish” and “We are an Irish colony”. On being questioned concerning the area of Africa from which their ancestors came, some residents comment, that “We are Black Irish” – expressing confusion that people do not recognize the possibility of being both Black and Irish. However, the truth behind their Irish heritage is undoubtedly much more complex.

By the late 17th century Monserrat’s planters were importing increasing numbers of African enslaved labor. This begs the question of what degree of Irish-African mixture was forced vs what degree resulted from intermarriage. If, as in other colonies, interracial children were largely the product of the rape of enslaved women by their masters, then the explanation for Montserrat’s continued pride in its Irish heritage becomes problematic. For example, Andrea Stuart of Barbados, author of *Sugar in the blood*, discusses the fact that the realization that she herself is a descendent from a slave owner and a slave, and that her ancestors were a mixture of English and Irish evoke strong and conflicting emotions.

In the end, *Sugar and the blue-eyed slave* does not fully answer these questions, but the documentary does reflect the pride that Montserrat has in its Irish heritage – without negating the fact that slavery was an integral part of that legacy. Perhaps in the same way that Barbados accepts its nickname of “Little England”, Montserratians have incorporated the indomitable spirit of their colonizer, Ireland. However, whether in Europe or in the Caribbean, despite enslavement and persecution, Irish descendants of all races retain a pride in their Celtic ancestry and culture.

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THE MYTH OF LITTLE ENGLAND: EXPLORING THE FORMATIVE CONTEXT OF BARBADIAN LANGUAGE AND IDENTITY

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"We all speak English, we are very English, we pride ourselves on how well we speak...we have been always very cosmopolitan and civilized and English is our bridge to the civilized world." (Barbadian newspaper editor, cited in Fenigsen, 2007: 231).

Introduction

The concept of Barbados as a diminutive reflection of a benevolent parent state is promoted by the continued fabrication of the "Little England" ideology. This concept of the island dates from its seventeenth century colonization and continued political and cultural association with England despite independence in 1966. The myth is established not only in popular discourse but also in academic scholarship, for example in publications such as Puckerein's *Little England: Plantation society and Anglo-Barbadian politics, 1627-1700* (1984), and chapter two of Gregg's *The Quaker community on Barbados: challenging the culture of the planter class*, entitled "A Little England: the development of Barbados as England's most prosperous colony" (2009). The ideology is profuse in popular media; blogger Shattuck Hoyos explains in an entry entitled *Why Barbados is called "Little England"* that the name derives from similarities in: judicial, school, spelling, and transport systems; religion; national character; topography and geology; shops; and accent. Yet her promotion of this quaint ideology is perhaps more explicitly related to her role as a representative of a U.S. apartment rental company rather than from a historical or anthropological standpoint. And there it is. Bloggers, scholars, immigrants, school administrators, and proprietors alike have all seemingly promoted the myth of Little England in order to advance their own interests, and not necessarily because such a claim is culturally viable.

This article seeks to unpack the myth of Little England as it relates to Barbadian identity with a specific focus on the underlying assumption that Barbadians speak a linguistic descendant of prestigious Mid-Eastern English. It concentrates on socio-demographic data of the seventeenth and eighteenth century, retrieved from: the

Barbados Department of Archives (e.g. legislation, shipping records); The Barbados Museum and Historical Society (e.g. estimated maritime activity, records of indenture); and Colonial Papers housed in the Public Records Office, London (e.g. census data, ships logs, letters to the administration). The data relate specifically to immigration patterns and have been used to determine approximate population demographics of the early colony, thus leading to feasible deductions about English language use in the early colonial period, which was likely to have had a formative effect on subsequent internal language change. The article also addresses patterns of population movement and evidence of maritime connectivity as they relate to potential language transfer and issues of national identity.

Origins of early settlers

The holdings of the Barbados Department of Archives have few original documents relating to the origins of early settlers, notably the 1638 list of persons who owned ten acres or over, and the 1679 census of persons who owned ten acres or over. These two documents refer to the origins of only 14 individuals between them and there is no one location with a distinctly high representation in the group. Four individuals are from the east of England, three are from the Midlands, and the remaining four individuals are from eastern coastal lands of England or Ireland.

The origins of these few wealthy individuals do not necessarily correlate to the origins of the many white indentured servants that came (or were forcibly made) to serve them, yet the fact that the landowners were prosperous may suggest that their dialects were similarly prestigious. Models of language ecology proposed by scholars such as Mufwene (2001) and Blackledge (2008), claim that the linguistic influence of small yet socio-economically dominant founder populations is considerable and lends support to the assumption that high-prestige dialects in early Barbados were potentially based on the speech of the few wealthy settlers. However, this deduction is based on the unsubstantiated assumption that there were significant numbers of upwardly aspiring servants who accommodated to the salient features of the West Midland, coastal East and Southern English dialects, which were only minimally represented themselves in the small group of wealthy individuals for whom demographic data is recorded.

The origins of the many white servants were not considered relevant to record in any of the colonial records. And, as if to confirm the difficulty of recreating a demographic profile of the servant class, even the Governor of Barbados said in 1679, “I can give no account of the people that arrive in the colony” (Atkins: 155). However, numerically speaking, the ‘Christian Servant’ class was much more dominant and thus more likely to have had a significant impact on internal language change in Barbados, it is therefore worthwhile to make informed hypotheses about their origins based on what little data is available.

Shipping records attest to the fact that prisoners were transported to Barbados from the south of England. Hotton's *List of emigrants to America 1600-1700* (1968) records 984 individuals transported to Barbados in eleven ships from ports in London in the two years between January 1634 and December 1635. It is feasible therefore to conclude that London dialects of English were spoken in Barbados in the late seventeenth century. Hotton also records a series of prisoner transports, dating from 1639 until 1685, which refer to 464 prisoners from the southwest of England: 200 from Somerset; 164 from Dorset; 77 from Bristol; and 23 from Devon. However, due to the fragmentary and highly individual nature of how these records were kept, it is unclear whether the prisoners indentified in these lists actually originate from the areas mentioned, or they were merely incarcerated (or embarked) from those areas. However, it is fair to assume that the majority of prisoners incarcerated in jails of these four counties would have likely originated in those areas and therefore would have spoken southwestern dialects of English. Thus, features of London and southwestern dialects of English are likely to have been represented in the early settler populations of Barbados, although admittedly the indentured ex-prisoners who spoke them were likely to have rendered them low-prestige forms, and thus potentially less likely to have been consciously transferred to speech communities of higher status.

Colonial legislation suggests that there were also significant numbers of Irish and Scottish indentured servants, for example, the 'Act for the prohibition of landing Irish persons' (29 Aug 1644) and the 'Act ...to suppress the insolences of the Scotch and Irish servants' (22 Nov, 1655). There are also records of prisoners transported to Barbados from the 1745 Rising in Scotland, of which Ross and Cromarty County has by far the greatest representation (80 prisoners out of 260, or 31%) followed by Inverness-shire (75 prisoners, or 29%). Both of these counties are located in the Highland regions and therefore suggest that Highland dialects of English were prevalent among these indentured populations, probably alongside Scottish Gaelic dialects (see Mackinnon, 1984: 503).

In sum, the language situation in the early Barbados colony was likely to have been significantly more varied than the myth of Little England suggests. Admittedly, a few wealthy settlers may have spoken prestigious Mid-Eastern English, but much greater numbers of English indentured and dispossessed servants spoke London or southwestern dialects. Irish and Scottish deportees and immigrants would also have brought at least two dialects of Gaelic in addition to varieties of Irish and Scots English, which may have been spoken as their second language.

Population movement

If, as the myth of Little England suggests, settler populations oriented themselves back to England and the 'parent state', then we might anticipate a circular pattern of population movement between the two locations. This assumption is seemingly

justified by the large number of people leaving Barbados seeking passage to England in the documentation that Gov. Atkins sent to London as part of the 1679 census (see figure below).

Figure 1 Destinations of 593 Persons Leaving Barbados (1679)

North America		England		Caribbean		Other	
Boston	68	London	151	Antigua	65	Holland	1
Virginia	62	Bristol	39	Jamaica	35	Beaumaris	3
Carolina	38	Liverpool	8	Leeward Is.	15		
New York	34	Topsham	3	Nevis	14		
New England	25	Poole	1	Bahamas	12		
Newfoundland	3			Surinam	5		
Rhode Island	3			Bermuda	4		
				Tortuga	3		
				Montserrat	1		
Total	233	Total	202	Total	154	Total	44

Source: Adapted from Dunn (1972: 111) and corroborated with BMHS (vol 1, pp. 155-180)

However, contrary to the expectation that England would be the most common destination for people leaving Barbados, in fact, the most common regional destination was the North American coast with 233 emigrants (or 39% of emigrants for the year). Given the assumption that the majority of people in Barbados at this time were from the current-day British Isles, this statistic suggests that rather than returning home, many people chose (or were forced) to remain in the newly established colonies, an assertion supported by the fact that an additional 154 people (or 26% of all emigrants) embarked for other English possessions in the Caribbean. Hence, in comparison to the 202 people (or 34% of emigrants) who presumably returned to England, almost twice as many people, 387 (or 65%) chose to stay in the Caribbean or move to North America. This statistic certainly suggests that seventeenth century settlers in Barbados were oriented more towards establishing new territories than heading back to England and adds further evidence to debunk the myth of the satellite community of Little England.

Evidence of maritime connectivity

The holdings of the Barbados Department of Archives and information presented in exhibitions at the Barbados Museum served to generate a picture of a colony that was replete with maritime activity in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Carlisle Bay in Bridgetown, described as “one of the most important cities of the English Atlantic world” (Barbados Museum and Historical Society, 2013a) is depicted with no less than 47 ships in the harbor in an anonymous painting c. 1742 housed at the Barbados Museum. Many of these vessels are flying the red ensign of the English merchant navy and attest to the level of maritime traffic that was considered ‘normal’ in the port town. Shipping records show that it was not unusual for passengers to arrive in Barbados from a range of merchant vessels that had called at other ports on route, or to embark in vessels that were bound for trading ports in the Atlantic and Caribbean in addition to their final destinations.

Specific information about shipping routes can be derived from the passenger lists that Gov. Atkins sent to London as part of the 1679 census. These lists record the names of people who had obtained tickets for legal egress and also the name of the ship in which they had secured their transportation. When cross-referenced with colonial shipping records, these lists provide data on the route of the vessel, which, in turn, provide information on the importance of other locations to the early inhabitants of the island colony. Presumably in the context of the Little England ideology, multiple circular routes between England and Barbados would suggest strong ties with the colonial administration. However, these are not the most predominant routes.

The Ship *Resolution* is one example of many intra-Caribbean trading vessels that operated in the region. It is recorded as the transport for passengers who left Barbados destined for Antigua, Montserrat and Nevis. It is therefore probable that the ship called at multiple Caribbean ports on every trip, supported by the fact that in February of 1679 two passengers – one bound for Nevis and one for Montserrat – were granted exit tickets on February 14th and February 18th respectively, and they were likely embarking in the same vessel. It can also be surmised that this ship made repeated short trips throughout the year. This assumption is supported by the fact that two different passengers bound for Antigua were granted tickets to sail on the *Resolution* on May 10th and November 15th. Gov. Atkins explains that the exit ticket system stipulates “no man is permitted to leave the island unless he set up his name *three weeks* before his departure in the Secretary’s office” (Atkins: 155, my italics). Even reading the legal stipulation to mean that each person must set up his name *at least* three weeks before his departure, it is unlikely that the person applying for a ticket in May was bound to sail on the same date as the person who applied for the ticket in November. Far more likely is the supposition that the same vessel made (at least) two trading voyages that year, each potentially stopping at a range of different trading ports including the passengers’ destination of Antigua.

In addition to the evidence we have for intra-Caribbean trading vessels such as the *Resolution*, there is also evidence of ships making long-distance trips to Europe and the American colonies with multiple drop-off points for passengers. Some of these appear to have concentrated on northern routes in the western Atlantic, for example,

the *Providence* carried passengers bound for New England, Boston and Bermuda and the *Blessing* carried passengers destined for Boston, New York and Bermuda in addition to Providence Island in the southwest Caribbean. Other vessels evidently followed a trans-Atlantic route, for example the *Swallow* took passengers from Barbados destined for Rhode Island, New England and Liverpool; the *Eliza* carried passengers bound for Jamaica, Nevis, Boston and Holland; and the *Endeavor* carried passengers for Virginia, Carolina, New England and London (all passenger data from Atkins, 1934, [1679]).

It is clear from this data that not only was Barbados a thriving port town of the early Caribbean colonies, but it was also a hub for trade and travel among early settlers. Various ships are recorded as having connected this small island to other colonies of the wider Caribbean – such as Antigua, Jamaica, Montserrat, Providence Island, the Leeward Islands, Nevis and Suriname – and colonies of North America and the Atlantic such as Bermuda, Newfoundland, Boston, Virginia, Carolina, New England, Rhode Island, and New York. These destinations were in addition to the ‘home’ ports of London, Bristol, Topsham, and Liverpool. The data thus proves extensive maritime connections between Barbados, Europe, and North America and brings into focus an image of Barbados as an important element of an emerging trans-Atlantic trade and emigration system rather than as a subordinate appendix to English trade that the ideology of Little England implies.

Barbados had important trade ties with the Dutch. Poyer (1808) explains that there was a significant demand for raw material that Dutch ships supplied cheaper than England and the result was “unrestrained intercourse... between the merchants of Barbados and those of Holland” (p. 38). Stark (1903) describes how the Dutch traders would give almost unlimited credit to the Barbados planters in addition to daily provisions, sugar stills, slave laborers, and expertise in manufacturing processes (p. 70). Yet this lucrative trade partnership was restricted by an act passed in England in April 1650, which prohibited colonies of England from trading with foreign nations without a license (Poyer: 53). Rather than supporting the profit-driven legislation of the English, plantation owners in Barbados, much like their brethren in the North American colonies, repeatedly opposed trading monopolies and the high tariffs and shipping duties on import and export trade imposed by England. Instead, they petitioned for free international and intra-Caribbean trade in order to continue to take advantage of less costly and more robust maritime trade links. In this way, they also fomented an internationally oriented ideology rather than loyally adhering to the control of the colonial administration, as the myth of Little England would have us believe.

In addition to merchant shipping, the waters around Barbados were also frequented by whaling vessels. Ligon (2000, [1657]) documents the presence of whales in the Caribbean waters surrounding the island in his *A topographicall description and admeasurement of the Yland of Barbados*, first published in 1657. A whaling

exhibition at the Barbados Museum notes that although organized commercial whaling was not documented as operating from Barbadian ports before 1763, whales and the whaling industry had long been part of the island's history before that date, due to the fact that Barbados lies on major maritime shipping and supply routes. The museum's exhibition states that whaling boats were known to call at West Indian ports for supplies, to recruit new crew members, and to replace seamen that had either died or deserted their vessel (Barbados Museum and Historical Society, 2013b). In addition to the colonial triangular trade, these whaling vessels served to connect Barbados with other ports of the Caribbean and North America (e.g. New England and Newfoundland) that served as the home-base of whaling fleets.

The extensive maritime connectivity necessitated by trade, whaling, and passenger transit to and from Barbados in the seventeenth century also meant that people involved in the seafaring trades were frequently on the island. Frere (1768) describes the extent of this maritime activity: "It is judged... that four hundred ships of one hundred and thirty tons and upwards are employed in the trade of this island [Barbados]: from hence a nursery and support of seamen" (p. 111). And these seamen were known to take advantage of the bustling port trade to desert military service vessels or escape the harsh discipline of merchantmen captains (see Linebaugh & Rediker, 2000). This was evidently happening to such a degree that in 1824 an amendment to the shipmasters' 'bond against carrying a person away from the island without a ticket' read that the master of any vessel "shall not receive any Seaman or Mariner belonging to any other ship or vessel... before such Seaman or Mariner hath been discharged by writing under the hand of the master" (RB 9/2/1). There was also subsequent legislation against: 'boarding a vessel without leave of the master,' 'receiving seamen from other ships or leaving his own seamen,' and 'aiding deserters from Her Majesty's ships of war' (Laws of Barbados, 1946).

In addition to the legislation against jumping ship, the numbers of maritime workers around the Barbadian ports prompted legislation 'to prevent frequenting of taverns and ale-houses by seamen' (Jan 10, 1652; Catalogue of Acts, 1642-1699). However, it appears that once these seamen were banned from taverns, a number of local land-owners sought to take advantage of the situation by illegally supplying alcohol, prompting the Act of 1654 (two years later) 'prohibiting persons from keeping a common ale-house, or tippling-house, selling any liquors or this country-spirits, to be drank in their houses or plantations without a license' (Catalogue of Acts, 1642-1699). It seems that the significant number of maritime workers in Barbados was a reality that the administration was repeatedly struggling against.

The seventeenth century government of Barbados evidently had significant problems controlling transient maritime communities associated with the merchant and naval fleets. They also had to protect themselves from adventurers, buccaneers, privateers and smugglers who were ubiquitous among the emergent European colonies of the

Caribbean (Zahedieh, 2000). In 1684 they established legislation that stipulated ‘How Pyrates & Felonies done upon the sea, shall be tried & punished’ (Dec 10, 1684, Catalogue of Acts, 1642-1699). Yet they also took an active role in this type of activity, passing two acts in 1696 ‘to set out ships and encourage privateers,’ and ‘for the encouragement of privateers’ (May 14 & May 17, 1696). Hence, as much as the legislation suggests that members of the maritime community were a nuisance, they were also an essential element of the early colonial demographic.

In sum, considering the evidence of merchant, whaling, and contraband shipping in the early settlement of Barbados, in addition to the legislation designed to control transient maritime populations, it is clear that there was significant maritime activity around the island. This maritime activity is likely to have influenced the ideology and orientation of Barbadian settlers in a much more direct way than the distant English administration. The type of English spoken on the ships was also likely to have been a more fertile source of new features than provincial English dialects. Although there is still significant work yet to be done on these nautical varieties, it is reasonable to suggest that language features were transferred both in and out of the island through immigration, emigration, the extensive travel of a mobile population, and the heavy presence of maritime workers in the main coastal towns of the small island.

Summary and conclusion

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Archival materials housed in Barbados and relating to demographics of the early English colony create a picture of the early settlement that challenges the myth of Little England. Few settlers in the seventeenth century came from the West Midlands, coastal East and Southern English regions, therefore few were likely to have been speaking prestigious dialects. The significantly more numerous indentured servants of the island came predominantly from the Scottish Highlands, Ireland, London and the South West counties of England and spoke regional dialects that were likely to have been assigned low prestige and spread as a result of dialect dominance.

Population movement was not exclusively, or even predominantly, between England and Barbados. Passenger lists indicate that ships calling at Barbados took passengers mostly to Caribbean and North American destinations. Extensive maritime connectivity between Barbados, the English colonies of North America, and European colonies of the wider Caribbean suggests that settlers were likely to have oriented towards a developing set of Caribbean or American identities, and/or a set of more fluid identities more widespread amongst maritime populations. Extensive trade in Carlisle Bay meant that there were significant numbers of maritime workers in and around the port at any given time, most certainly speaking multiple varieties of English (in addition to other languages) that were likely to have impacted a nascent local identity and the nature of internal language change much more so than idealized English models.

In short, the emerging picture of Barbados based on archival data shows evidence of a pluri-dialectal, socially diverse population with a pan-colonial identity. It is therefore perhaps time we stop accepting the myth of Little England as a defining element of contemporary Barbadian identity and instead we start questioning the intentions of those who promote this ideology.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF A TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACH AND THE USE OF ORAL HISTORY FOR THE STUDY OF MIGRATORY PEOPLES: FOLLOWING THE TRAIL FROM VIEQUES TO ST. CROIX

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A feeling of alarm and concern has developed recently in Puerto Rico related to the flight of Puerto Ricans to the Continental US and the impact of this current trend on the island as well as on the people who decide to migrate. According to data from the US Census Bureau, 450,000 individuals have left the island since the beginning of the 21st century. Moreover, it is believed that 300,000 Puerto Ricans will leave the country during the current decade. Salient aspects of the data indicate that the majority of those who decide to leave are young professionals and that they make the decision purely for economic reasons: the lack of jobs in Puerto Rico and the desire for better economic conditions.

However, if we examine contemporary Puerto Rican history, it is clear that migration has been a constant pattern, one that can be closely identified with the political and economic tug-of-war between Puerto Rico and the continental US ever since the end of the 19th century (Duany, 2011). Although most emigration of Puerto Ricans has been directed toward the US, it has not been limited to that destination for a number of reasons. This phenomenon has not been thoroughly examined and the implications which this process has had for Puerto Ricans migrating to other destinations beside the US has not been sufficiently analyzed. To begin to remedy this situation, in this article, the specific case of emigration of the residents of the Puerto Rican island municipality of Vieques to St. Croix in the US Virgin Islands is considered.

If we briefly examine the history of Vieques, it becomes evident that this municipality lost approximately over 10,000 inhabitants over the last century, and a similar rate of out-migration has been sustained during the present decade. In order to understand this process, we must not lose sight of the fact that since the US invasion of Puerto Rico in 1898, the US Navy (USN) showed great interest in and a clear intention of constructing naval bases on Vieques (Estades Font, 1988). The strategic location of Vieques and the size of the island in particular were some of the reasons utilized to

justify this interest. In order to make this plan viable, the USN began to rent land there in 1933, and, in 1938, the Puerto Rican Legislature, together with the governor of Puerto Rico, an appointee of the President of the United States, began to formally consider the establishment of military bases in Vieques.

By 1940, the USN made concrete plans to build military bases in Vieques, and, in order to accomplish this, included in the planning the massive expropriation of land for the construction of these bases (Veaz, 1995; Rodríguez Beruff, 2002). As a result, of the 33,000 acres of land that make up Vieques, 25,360 were transferred to the USN. The following year, Law 247 was approved in Washington DC, an act that made the USN's ownership of the expropriated land USN official and legitimate (Ayala & Carro-Figueroa, 2005; Barreto, 2002).

The people of Vieques who were living on the expropriated land were notified in writing that they had to leave. Shortly thereafter, these people were asked to occupy other land selected by the USN for resettlement. Confronted by this situation, some families accepted re-localization while others opted for leaving Vieques altogether. The island of Puerto Rico itself (also called *la Isla Grande* or the Big Island by the people of Vieques), the US mainland, and the island of St. Croix, the largest of the US Virgin Islands, were some of the destinations chosen by those who decided to migrate (Griffith & Valdés Pizzini, 2002).

When we look back at the intertwined processes of militarization and emigration that unfolded in Vieques, it is important to underscore that many of the destinations selected by Viequenses were not unknown to them. This was the case of St. Croix, the focus of this study (Lawaetz, 1991; De Albuquerque & McElroy, 1999). The island of St. Croix and its inhabitants were well known to a wide sector of the people of Vieques (Rabin, 1992). The geographical proximity of both islands had made it feasible for them to establish and maintain cultural, social, economic and other types of exchange well before the 1940s (Highfield, 2009). In addition, many Viequense families had intermarried with Cruzans (name given to the people of St. Croix) due to the continuous contact between the two islands, for Vieques was a focus of out-migration from St. Croix due to the availability of jobs in the sugar industry there. Many Cruzans who worked in the Vieques sugar company established themselves on the *Isla Nena*, or Baby Island, as Vieques is affectionately called, while others traveled back and forth regularly.

Toward the end of the 1920s, following the closing of its sugar factories, Vieques ceased to be an attractive destination for Cruzans. Thus an inverted process of migratory movement emerged as a result of this economic debacle. Many Cruzans who had been working in Vieques were forced to look for opportunities in new places, including St. Croix, their country of origin. Viequenses themselves also began to emigrate and/or move temporarily to St. Croix as agricultural activity declined on their island in the 1920s (Oficina de Servicios Legislativos, 1970). To Viequenses, St. Croix

turned out to be a favorable option because they had relatives and friends there and because the island was in close geographical proximity to Vieques.

Later on, between 1940 and 1947, in the midst of the expropriation of land by the USN activity, another major wave of migratory movement of people from Vieques to St. Croix unfolded (Senior, 1947). At that point in time, the economic situation in St. Croix was more favorable than that of Vieques and new opportunities for work had merged that facilitated the integration of Viequenses into the Cruzan labor force (Anduze, 1992; Roopnarine, 2008). Among these, we can highlight the Homestead Program which was oriented towards the promotion of agriculture in St. Croix. Under that program, many Viequense agricultural laborers who had lost the land where they had lived and worked in Vieques were able to obtain farmland in St. Croix, which they largely put into the cultivation of sugar cane.

A number of Viequenses also made the decision to go to St. Croix in order to continue working in the fishing industry and to establish different types of businesses that focused on both their *paisanos* (Vieques community members in St. Croix) and the local Cruzans (Valdés Pizzini & Agar, 2011-2012; Valdés Pizzini et al., 2010). These businesses included guest houses or inns, small stores, grocery stores, and *friquitines* or fried food shanties.

In order to explore the significance of the migratory waves of Viequenses to St. Croix and the eventual return of some of them to the *Isla Nena*, the Institute of Caribbean Studies at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras made the decision to engage in a research project from a transdisciplinary perspective, supported by the very people who were the agents in this process. In the midst of planning our research, we decided to transcend the quantitative approach that has characterized the majority of the studies of this phenomenon in the Caribbean and to privilege the meanings, memories and particular contextualization of each individual experience. In this manner, we decided to listen to those who for decades had kept silent and who truly knew the real implications of the processes that took place. This way of recreating and understanding the multiplex meanings of migrations from Vieques to St. Croix and from St. Croix to Vieques involves an innovative approach to historical processes: innovative ways of understanding and practicing history, as Santibañez (2000) affirms. It allows continuity between the past and the present and provides historical presence to those whose voices, points of view, values and experiences have been ignored (Fabián, 2012). In a similar manner, it privileges and provides the true creators and makers of the migratory process with the protagonists' role in their effort to win the battle against the adversities they had to confront as migrants.

As researchers we firmly believe in the necessity of establishing an ongoing dialogue with the participants (the Vieques migrants and their descendants) of our study. Their testimony of events, their critical reflections concerning those events and the

exploration of the meanings attributed to those events will facilitate the rescue of the meaning of the migration processes in the community imaginary. We attempt to transcend memory or simple narration. Our focus is to make it possible to stimulate the recapitulation of events that are perhaps thought to have been forgotten, in order to grapple with their meaning and understand the conditions that caused them. Le Goff (1991) made this point very clearly when he asserted that empowering collective memory is a salient aspect in the defense of identity.

To achieve this, our research group from the Institute of Caribbean Studies at the University of Puerto Rico has held a number of discussion meetings in order to design a research proposal within the methodological perspective of the oral history interview. We have defined the scope of what we want to achieve and identified the stages that will be necessary in order to attain the objectives of our research. In addition, we have delineated the research questions, the guiding themes of the dialogues we will hold with the Viequenses and descendants of Viequenses who will participate in the study. We designed research instruments and contacted potential participants in the study, as well as assessing the existing academic literature related to our topic.

In order to pursue the project, we are submitting all the required paperwork to the University of Puerto Rico institutions who might be able to support the study, operating under the auspices of the Institute of Caribbean Studies of the College of Social Sciences' investigative unit where the leader of the research team is engaged. At present, we are awaiting authorization from the Institutional Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (CIPSHI) in order to commence our interviews, which will be transcribed and read back to each participant. Once this phase is completed, we will proceed to analyze the data (testimonials and accounts) in order to engage in a sociological, linguistic, economic and political analysis so that a final investigative report is eventually written, published, and disseminated.

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A PLAN FOR THE STUDY OF *OTHERNESS*, LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE AND NOTIONS AND ACTS OF IDENTITY AMONG PUERTO RICAN MIGRANTS TO ST. CROIX

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Introduction

The arrival of Europeans and their settlement of the islands of what is now known as the Caribbean Sea from the 15th century onward sparked the beginning of a tidal wave of *othering* practices which resulted from the classificatory and interpretative discourses used by the colonizers to motivate and justify their appropriation of indigenous land and African labor. Among the English and the French, it was not until the 17th century that those who were interested in writing about the Americas made their first attempts at doing so, and through their own particular worldview constructed “for themselves an interpretation of people and events...” (Roberts, 2008: 26). Descriptions had already been penned by the Spanish about their voyages, the inhabitants, and the flora and fauna. De Bry’s art work (1590-1634), although the product of second-hand reports supplied by others, provided the European reading public with sensationalized fantasies about cannibalism, feasts, games, rituals, and warfare. Little over a century after the initial Spanish colonial presence in the Americas, the news concerning the plunder of great quantities of gold spurred heightened interest in this part of the world among other European powers. Lacking first-hand information about the land and its inhabitants, English and French writers initially depended on Spanish accounts from the previous centuries. Once these chroniclers gained greater exposure to the Americas, they wrote about their experiences or those of others in accounts about life there. Both to sell their works in Europe as well as to justify the colonial enterprise, these writers gradually established and propagated constructions of the Americas and their peoples as radically different from and grossly inferior to Europe and its lighter-skinned inhabitants. But these centuries-old conceptualizations of difference are not the immediate focus of our study. Instead, our interest lies in the process of *othering* in St. Croix, one of the islands in the Caribbean archipelago. On this particular island, othering process unfolded as a result of conquest and settlement by more than six different European powers and the USA, the forced in-migration of primarily African descended enslaved

and indentured persons, and the movements of people from other countries and islands in the region. Among all of these influxes of peoples, we intend to focus on the migration to St. Croix of Puerto Ricans from Vieques, a small island off the southeastern coast of Puerto Rico, at different points in time during the 20th century. We are especially interested in the problems encountered by the children of these migrants in the local public schools, and more specifically, in the challenges they faced because of the linguistic and cultural differences between them and the English lexifier Creole speaking majority on the island. (Simounet, 2013). In this study, we intend to examine more closely the *othering* practices of the members of the host community, so as to gain insight into the impact of these practices both on the Puerto Rican Spanish spoken by these children as well as on their notions and acts of identity. It is clear to us that the concept of difference or alterity is not unique to St. Croix or the Caribbean. It is also evident that the processes unleashed by this conceptualization are in most cases the product of the manipulation of our mental models and ideologies by unscrupulous individuals, organizations and elites in society who wish to exert control over others (Van Dijk, 1998). The issue before us, then, could be viewed from a psychological perspective, a social-psychological perspective, or from a combination of both. For this reason, we now turn to a brief explanation of this cognitive process in social categorization in order to explain *othering* practices, their origins, make-up, and development.

The concept of *othering*

In an attempt to explain the nature of the concept of *othering*, Bhabha (1994: 64-84) suggests that the representation of people from other cultures which are different from ours as *others* is the result of an innate unconscious process. To this succinct explanation, Riggins (1997) adds that the term *others* is used to refer to all those the Self perceives as mildly or radically different. While Bhabha and Riggins explain this phenomenon as a natural process of human experience, and thus from the optics of psychology and cognition, Lustig & Koester (2013) add to our understanding by viewing it as a social-psychological process in which most people engage and which is used purposefully to classify, make interpretations, and evaluate other people and their activities. Thus one theoretical perspective explains *othering* solely as a component of our psyche for which we cannot be held responsible, while the other identifies it as a mindful, calculating type of social behavior which we utilize to categorize, understand and pass judgment over others and their social practices from the standpoint of the value and belief criteria of our own culture. In worse-case scenarios, the language of *othering* is utilized to manipulate others and control their beliefs.

The psychological aspect of *othering* can be viewed as a schema or mental template that becomes the frame of reference for the interpretation and evaluation of any object, activity, person, or idea in our immediate environs (DeVito, 2013: 64). The key

question, however, is whether such schemata are innate and unconscious or socially constructed and conscious. As human beings, our attempts to describe and interpret what surrounds us do not constitute the root of the problem of othering. It is when we enter into the areas of interpretation and evaluation that we become judges and jurors, rather than mere observers attempting to describe.

In order to understand more fully the role played by human cognition in the process of othering, social psychologists and anthropologists affirm that it is of utmost importance that we also have a full grasp of the notion of ethnocentrism. Lustig and Koester (2013: 137) assert that "...people generally perceive their own experiences, which are shaped by their own cultural forces, as natural, human, and universal...Our culture tells us that the way we were taught to behave is 'right' or 'correct,' and those who do things differently are wrong." To a certain extent, at first, when we encounter a new individual or group, as humans, we assume that these other people are like us because we believe that others perceive, reason and evaluate the world in the same way that we do. When we are faced with a response that is not in accordance with this universalistic assumption, the mental template of othering leads us first to 'highlight' and 'exaggerate' the cultural differences we perceive and then to create in us a false sense of cultural superiority (p. 138). It is not until we begin to reflect on the power of these templates that we can initiate a process of bringing into consciousness and acknowledging their implications for our understanding of worldviews that are different from our own.

Lustig and Koester's (2013) idea of purposefulness in the process of othering is given substance in the work of scholars such as Van Dijk (1998) who adopt a social-psychological stance, identifying language as the key factor connecting the triad of cognition, society and discourse. Van Dijk argues that this framework can explain how those who abuse power use everyday discourse in the construction of beliefs or ideologies that marginalize and other members of society whom they wish to demean and demonize.

There are two other aspects to the notion of othering that we wish to discuss here because of their relevance to the socio-cultural situation on the island of St. Croix, the focus of our study. To begin with, because most scholars interested in othering consider it from a monological rather than a dialogical perspective, they locate it in the mind of an ethnocentric person or the mentality of an ethnocentric group. We prefer to consider the process of othering in a more dialogical way, as a result of interaction involving mutual othering on the part of individuals from different groups in contact, as well as on the part of these groups as a whole. While othering may be considered to be a mutual process, we caution that it cannot automatically be viewed as reciprocal or symmetric, especially in contexts of the types of asymmetries of power that prevail in the Caribbean. Second, in the Caribbean and in other societies which have experienced wave after wave of in- and out-migration involving a rich mix of different cultures,

mutual othering is often accompanied by *multiple-othering*, among the different individuals and groups involved. It is important for us to carefully clarify these notions early on, because throughout the colonial history and experience of St. Croix, a significant number of large diasporic groups have arrived on its shores. The capacity(or lack of it) of St. Croix society to integrate these groups into the mainstream community in terms of education and language has had a huge impact on notions and acts of ethnic identity on the island.

Brief history of St. Croix and its major migratory groups

St. Croix is the largest of the three islands that comprise the US Virgin Islands. Europeans first landed there in 1493, a few days before their initial landing in Puerto Rico. The local indigenous groups left the island immediately following Columbus' landing and various feeble spurts of European immigration took place during the 16th and 17th centuries. Shortly thereafter, thousands of enslaved people were brought from Africa so that they became the numerically larger portion of the population of St. Croix. This island, together with St. Thomas and St. John comprise the United States Virgin Islands (Boyer, 2010).

Virgin islanders are US citizens. However, seven colonial flags have flown over St. Croix. The different languages spoken by the governing powers during colonial times notwithstanding, English emerged early on as the predominant language (Boyer, 2010). In addition to the Europeans who settled in St. Croix and the enslaved population brought across the Atlantic from Africa, other ethnic groups have left an important mark on the socio-cultural fiber of the island, including people from Puerto Rico (and more specifically Vieques), from other islands in the Lesser Antilles, from the continental US, from the Dominican Republic, from Haiti, from various Arab countries, and from the Philippines. It is thus safe to say that the people of St. Croix have been involved in a continuous process of receiving new masters, settlers, and workers for centuries. How have the children of new arrivals been received in the local schools? In her study of non-Virgin Islands children in public education, Hernández Durán (2010) found that governmental and historical records reveal consistent prejudicial attitudes and a pattern of discriminatory decisions against the children of immigrants to the island, which people born on St. Croix tended to label as "mildly or radically different" (Riggins, 1997: 3). As is the case elsewhere in the Caribbean, immigration and out-migration have been so prevalent to and from the US Virgin Islands that no single ethnic group can presently claim to constitute a majority of these islands' population. This has led to a demographic conundrum when attempting to define a 'true' Virgin Islander. It has also had an impact on issues of language policy in schools, especially in the case of students who themselves or whose parents came to the island from Vieques and the rest of Puerto Rico.

The Institute of Caribbean Studies project in St. Croix

The St. Croix study project of the Institute of Caribbean Studies in the College of Social Sciences at the University of Puerto Rico plans to direct its attention to various issues related to the immigration to St. Croix by Puerto Ricans from Vieques. For many of these immigrants, the push factor was the US Navy takeover of most of their native island in order to establish a base for military exercises and a testing range for explosives. Research thus far has been done on archival material and a series of oral history interviews will soon be carried out on St. Croix by a team led by Ana Fabián. These interviews will focus on the problems of adaptation faced by these migrants as well as on their resilience and endurance. A representative sample of interviewees (in terms of gender, age, schooling, and occupation) will be asked to relate their particular personal histories and those of their ancestors, and will be asked about their perspective on the future and possibility that they might one day return to Vieques. Special attention will be paid to their personal experiences as students in the schools of St. Croix and the othering practices (such as bullying) that they encountered there. Interviewees will also be questioned about issues of language use in school and the impact that language use has had on identity, both personally as well as within their community.

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ST. CROIX, VIEQUES AND PUERTO RICO

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The relationship among the people of the islands of Puerto Rico, Vieques and St. Croix goes back thousands of years into prehistory. The Caribbean islands were inhabited about five thousand years ago. The seafaring people who came and resided there knew how to construct and navigate sturdy vessels. The shapes and sizes of their boats are unknown because of the perishable nature of wood, but historical sources in the 15th century describe dugout canoes carrying about one hundred people (Las Casas, 1951).

One serious misconception which continues to emerge, even in scholarly works on the Caribbean is that some of those groups living in the islands were good and others were evil; that is, that the indigenous people inhabiting the Spanish territories, the Taínos, were peaceful and submissive, while the so-called Caribs, those living on the Lesser Antilles, were bad, predatory and cannibalistic. There is very little or no evidence at all to support any such contentions. Those attributes were assigned as part of “political” intrigues whose goal was to justify raids to non-occupied Spanish islands in order to subjugate their inhabitants (Sued Badillo, 1995). From the evidence we do have about them, particularly the archaeological evidence from the 14th and 15th centuries, the indigenous inhabitants of the Caribbean were brave, warlike and from time to time raided one another’s settlements with no intention of devouring their adversaries (Sued Badillo, 2003; 2007).

That there were differences among the various inhabitants of different islands, there is no doubt. Do not all of us islanders recognize differences among our several nationalities? Are there not gang incursions and fights among our young people from different communities on our own islands? Do those raids make those who come from other islands fundamentally different from ourselves? That there was travel to and from the islands by the different groups is not disputed. Several days after Columbus left San Salvador, the first island visited by him in 1492, he spotted a single native in a dugout canoe paddling his way towards the third island he was approaching (Las Casas, 1951), apparently to give notice about the strange people that had just arrived in the neighborhood. Another recorded incident that refers to indigenous navigational knowledge throughout the Caribbean happened during Columbus’ second voyage,

when his fleet picked up some women in Dominica who claimed to be from Puerto Rico. As they were sailing up the chain of islands on their way to Hispaniola, the women identified several islands that they claimed were uninhabited (Las Casas, 1951). How would they know this if they had not been on those islands before?

Archaeological data indicates that significant social and political links among the islands of Puerto Rico, Vieques and St. Croix were established prior to the arrival of the Spanish. Vieques was a stepping stone between Puerto Rico and St. Croix, as demonstrated in 1511 the date of the Taíno rebellion in Caparra, the first Spanish settlement in Puerto Rico. During that uprising, the principal allies of the indigenous Puerto Ricans were the indigenous Crucians who came to their assistance (Murga Sanz, 1971), which resulted in Spanish raids against St. Croix afterwards.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the historical trajectories of the islands diverged somewhat, with the Spanish raiding St. Croix on several occasions to displace other Europeans who were trying to settle there. When France sold St. Croix to Denmark in 1733, the island had been abandoned by the French since 1695. The Governor of Puerto Rico and the Provincial General of the English Windward islands protested the transfer, and the Spanish, in particular, were upset because Vieques had been added by the French as part of the deal with Denmark.

On July 2, 1848, there was a slave rebellion in St. Croix. The first foreign vessel to arrive to render assistance to the government of the island was a Spanish ship from Puerto Rico. The insurgency resulted in the decision by the Danish governor to free the slaves in St. Croix. Shortly thereafter, he left the island for Denmark where he was prosecuted and condemned by a Danish court. After receiving their freedom, the former slaves hoped and believed that their former situation would change; however, it did not. Their condition worsened to the point that, in 1868, there was a major upheaval on the island. Many plantations were burned down in what was labeled the “great fire burn”. As a result of this historic event, the emancipated slaves were legally guaranteed better living conditions, but by this time the island’s agriculturally-based economy was rapidly declining. There was no more free slave labor for the plantation owners to exploit, and the sugar market was depressed due to the increasing cultivation of beets as a sugar substitute in Europe. Steamships were bypassing the island to secure other markets and there was no alternate source of revenue.

After the end of the Civil War in the United States, politicians began to think about the possibility of US territorial expansion in the Caribbean. Then US Secretary of State Seward thought that the country needed a coaling station to service the Navy in the region, and was considering for this purpose the small islands of Culebra, and Culebrita, which belonged to Spain, the island of St. Barths (St. Bartholomew) a possession of Sweden, the territory of the Dominican Republic and the Virgin Islands or the Danish West Indies, principally St. Thomas. His interest in the latter islands

would eventually trigger a series of attempts to purchase the Danish West Indies over a period of more than 60 years. In January, 1865, overtures were made to Denmark's representatives in Washington. For two years, diplomatic negotiations were undertaken for the purchase of St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix, either jointly or separately. A treaty was finally agreed to in 1867, but the US Senate rejected it in 1869 for several reasons, including President Grant's lack of interest in the deal and the fear that expansion in the Caribbean could lead to problems or war with European powers such as France and England, who would have expressed their opposition to the sale. In the meantime, another problem had arisen in Europe. In 1864, Bismarck successfully dislodged the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein from Denmark. For several years thereafter Denmark tried to negotiate their return, amid rumors that the Danish crown would be willing to trade its Caribbean territories with Bismarck in exchange for its Duchies, which would represent a violation of the Monroe Doctrine.

Shortly thereafter, France obtained the island of St Barths from Sweden and entered negotiations with the government of Colombia for an inter-oceanic canal in Panama. This particular initiative on the part of the French caused concern in Washington, where it was felt that any such canal should be controlled by the US. Despite these attempts by the Europeans to increase the projection of their power on this side of the world, interest in Caribbean expansion in the US remained lackluster. Nothing further happened until the early 1890s when another opportunity arose to negotiate the purchase of the territories from Denmark. The deal looked suspicious at first, which led to a Senate investigation, but as with many political inquiries, no wrongdoing was found. The Spanish American war in the late 1890s prolonged the process because the Danish government believed that continuing such negotiations while the war was going on would be viewed as an affront to another European power. Conversations were renewed in 1902. This time, however, the king of Denmark refused to finalize the treaty for the sale of the islands because it represented a loss of prestige for Denmark (Canegata, 1968).

Negotiations continued intermittently until 1915, when the United States became concerned that Denmark would be invaded by Germany, once again over the issue of Holstein. The US understood that if Germany conquered Denmark, it would obtain a solid base in America, a fact which could threaten not only shipping but also access to the Panama Canal. Washington exerted such enormous pressure on Denmark to consummate the sale that some compared it to "placing a gun to its head". On January 17, 1917 the treaty was ratified and the Danish West Indies were transferred to the US on March 31, 1917 for the sum of \$25,000,000. This was the highest amount that had ever paid up until that time for any territory acquired by the US government. Denmark made a substantial profit on the sale by divesting itself of the islands, which had been draining its treasury. Unfortunately, the residents of St. Croix did not fare so well. When the US acquired the Danish territories, the condition of its residents did not

improve. First of all, the now United States Virgin Islands (U.S.V.I.) were placed under a military administration commanded by a Navy admiral until 1934. Citizenship was not extended to the inhabitants of the islands under the treaty, although Danish citizens were given the option to reject US citizenship after a year, similar to the option granted to the Spanish “peninsulares” who lived in Puerto Rico in 1898 when the US Navy invaded the island.

In the 1920s, after sugar factories had been closed in Puerto Rico as a result of the collapse of the sugar industry, the first wave of Puerto Ricans began to migrate to St. Croix. This was especially true in the case of the people of Vieques, an island within the Puerto Rican archipelago that is located just northwest of St. Croix. Although the economic situation in St. Croix had not improved despite the change in sovereignty from Denmark to the United States, conditions were viewed to be better in St. Croix by a number of people in Puerto Rico with a dire need of money to feed their families. This period of migration became the start of a diaspora that would eventually bring thousands of Puerto Ricans from Vieques to the island of St. Croix.

Although this migratory movement has been documented in history books about the U.S.V.I., the personal view of the people who underwent the first sea voyages to this other US island territory has not been given the exposure that such a collective memory requires. In Erik Lawaetz’ book *St. Croix: 500 years pre-Columbus to 1990* (1991), the author dedicates an entire chapter to the Puerto Ricans who were the first to embark on this journey in search of economic improvement as well as to their descendants. This chapter, entitled “Hispanics”, comprises a series of interviews with twenty-five Puerto Ricans who moved to St. Croix from mainland Puerto Rico, Vieques and Culebra. These interviewees were mainly those who themselves or whose parents had quite successfully established themselves in St. Croix by purchasing land and starting small commercial enterprises. The inter-island traffic became so intense that in the early part of the 20th century there was a schooner, christened the “Arturo”, that continuously traveled between Fajardo (in eastern Puerto Rico), Vieques, Culebra and Frederiksted (on the western coast of St. Croix), making the journey relatively easy.

Lawaetz’ introduction to the chapter is pertinent to our discussion of the Puerto Ricans who moved to St. Croix because the author himself was born on the island and spent his life there, therefore he personally knew most of the interviewees. He comments:

“Contrary to the general believe [sic] that the economy would improve after the United States took over the Virgin Islands, it actually became worse. This was partly on account of the sugar prices and the decline in rum production due to the prohibition of liquor in the Virgin Islands and in the United States. Furthermore, there were no new investments and no relief. Many of the younger men left the island, creating a shortage of

laborers. In the late 1920's the La Grange sugar factory and several estates [sic] owners began importing Puerto Ricans from Vieques and Culebra – islands off Puerto Rico.... In the 1930's the government establishes [sic] the Virgin Island Company (VI Corp) in an effort to boost sugar production. It took over Bethlehem [estate] and the central factories which had been closed for several years. Puerto Rico was feeling the economic impact, which contributed to the exodus. Culebra and Vieques which for generations maintain its [sic] contact with St. Croix caught up with the efforts shown by La Grange sugar factory and other estates and many of its residents undertook the transfer to a new land of opportunities. Many traveled as sugar cane laborers, but others with some money set up small shops, while others were able to purchase real estate. Sugar production did not improve greatly, so some of those who started as field laborers turned to carpentry and construction.” (p. 356)

The deplorable conditions that existed on the island are reflected in the following statistics from 1930: of a population of 22,012, only 91 people owned the 163 estates; 77 owned farm lands of less than 10 acres each; and 600 people were renting parcels of land of 1 to 5 acres. More than 80 percent of the land in St. Croix was owned by only 20 men and 90 percent of all cultivated land on the three islands was in the hands of one percent of the families, with less than 5 percent of the people who were engaged in agriculture owning their own land (Bonet Benitez, 1976). These serious obstacles to any equitable distribution of wealth which might have led to an improvement in the economy of St. Croix were largely a legacy of Danish rule, which allowed the unregulated concentration land in the hands of fewer and fewer families. Under US naval administration of the island, nothing was done to alleviate this situation.

In 1931, as part of the sea change in US socio-economic policy that occurred as a result of the Great Depression, the Congress finally appropriated funds to purchase large estates for their subdivision and resale to small farmers and homesteaders. Additional appropriations were made under the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) for general rehabilitation purposes as a civilian government replaced the naval administration. Under the supervision of the Department of Interior, numerous measures were approved for the benefit of the islands. When Governor Paul Pearson arrived in the U.S.V.I. as the first civilian governor in that same year, he was shocked by the living conditions of the population. He found most laborers out of work, with 25 percent of the population being kept alive by the Red Cross. No sugar factories were operating and the Danish Company had collapsed the year before from the initial

effects of the Great Depression. What upset him most was the Navy's failure to take any measures to remedy the situation.

President F.D. Roosevelt visited the island while in office, and as a result the Virgin Islands Corporation was chartered in order to help in achieving the economic rehabilitation of the Virgin Islands (Boyer, 2010). The Corporation received over \$1,000,000 dollars in grants and thus, within a year, it was responsible for the employment of 1400 field and industrial workers and great economic improvement on the island. The rum industry recovered after being devastated by prohibition. By 1940, about \$3,500,000 dollars had been allotted for the acquisition of two sugar mills, a distillery, 5000 acres of land, villages, estate houses, agricultural and industrial equipment, as well as of cattle and other animals. The government proceeded to rehabilitate and improve the sugar mills, distillery and other industrial buildings, to build and restore workers' lodgings and to clear, drain and improve land that was put to cultivation or pasturage. The projects of the Virgin Islands Corporation proved so successful that it operated without further financial assistance from 1944 to 1947.

On the other hand, the situation on Vieques deteriorated dramatically when 24,762 acres of land were expropriated by the US Navy for military purposes in 1941. With the equivalent of 72.8% of the entire area of the island thus withdrawn from local ownership and farming, the agricultural economy of the island was irreparably destroyed. This military take-over of the island became a major push-factor contributing to ever increasing immigration flows from Vieques to St. Croix. The population of Vieques plummeted by 21.9% from 1910 to 1960, with the highest historical rate of population growth being recorded on the island as far back as 1920 (Bonet Benitez, 1972).

The 1970 US Census of the U.S.V.I. counted only 4014 Puerto Ricans, but this figure did not include the substantial number of Puerto Rican descended people who were born in the V.I. Those who were from Puerto Rico or of Puerto Rican descent represented an estimated 25% of the total "white" population of the three islands; most of whom were living on St. Croix (Boyer, 2010). At least 70 percent of the Puerto Rican community consisted of people who could trace their roots to Vieques and Culebra, although more recent migrations included an increasing cohort from Puerto Rico itself. The Puerto Ricans in St. Croix comprised at least two distinct classes, a low income level blue collar working class and a middle to upper income level business class. Many of Puerto Rican descended farmers worked in the Public Works Department of the V.I. Government, given that the pay rates for government employment were higher in the V.I. than in Puerto Rico. Another major pull-factor stimulating the migration of Puerto Ricans from Vieques and Culebra was their relatively successful integration into St. Croix society via intermarriage with the

majority African descended population of the island, most of whose ancestors had been enslaved plantation laborers (Boyer, 2010).

Since the migration of Viequenses to St. Croix has been of such overwhelming importance in the lives of the people on both islands, it should have been the subject of sustained academic research long before the present study was undertaken. The levels of funding for investigative work in this area have not been equal to the importance of the subject at hand. For example, migration from Vieques and the rest of Puerto Rico to St. Croix was not considered in Law 58 of August 18, 1989 which created the Department of Puerto Rican Community Affairs in the United States. Except for the work of Senior (1947) followed on-site research carried out by, among others, Simounet (1990; 2010; 2013), a number of graduate students at the University of Puerto Rico, and Ríos Villarini & González Vélez (2010), the comprehensive and ongoing study of this phenomenon has yet to be realized. In fact, studies on Puerto Rican out-migration tend to limit themselves to population flows to urban centers on the US mainland. In this light, this recently established research project on immigration from Vieques to St. Croix by the Institute of Caribbean Studies at the University of Puerto Rico represents an important and long overdue step forward in this area.

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AY AY: DIASPORAN INDIGENOUS AFRAKAN HERITAGE IN ST. CROIX & OUR CARIBBEAN

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“Mental bondage is invisible violence. Formal physical slavery has ended in the United States. Mental slavery continues to this present day. This slavery affects the minds of all people and, in one way, it is worse than physical slavery alone. That is, the person who is in mental bondage will be “self-contained.” Not only will that person fail to challenge beliefs and patterns of thought which control him, he will defend and protect those beliefs and patterns of thought virtually with his last dying effort.” (Hilliard/Browder, 1976/1992: 235)

ENUNCIATION

In the 21st century, there are a multiplicity of ideological and literary paradigms being utilized within research and communitarian outreach initiatives that support the preservation, conservation and educational institutionalization of Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan heritage, sustainable development and performance traditions of St. Croix, the Virgin Islands and the wider Caribbean. Comparative analyses of 21st century historic preservation projects, sustainable communitarian programs, ceremonial traditions and artistic productions amongst ascendants (*descendants*) of AfRaKans (Herishetapaheru: 2007: 7) and Indigenous people have been revisited in



most historic preservation and cultural restoration initiatives in the Caribbean, CDKahina 2013

Americas and globally. Historically, colonial and post-colonial governments and publications of the 18th to 20th centuries have served as foundations for research, theories “statistically-defended” conservatism, and repressive western academic institutions that negate, ignore, obliterate and degrade the concept, perspective and universal knowledge linked to the survival and existence of the ancestral lineages and bloodlines of Indigenous Native Ameridians.

“The English entered the Eastern Caribbean in the early seventeenth century with a colonizing policy based on violent land appropriation and dispossession of the indigenous population. The use of military power to defeat native communities was matched with a mentality that made possible their extermination when met with resistance...Kalinagos were prepared to fight for their very survival...By refusing to capitulate under the collective military pressure of Europeans, however, the Kalinagos, and then the Karifunas, had kept the Windward Islands in a marginal relation to the slave plantation complex for two hundred years, and in so doing made a principal contribution of the freedom traditions of the Caribbean. This history speaks to the origins and legacy of the British official policy of genocide in the Caribbean.” (Beckles: 2013: 25)

Essentially, the historical narratives and documentation chronicles of the proactive resistance and strategic actions of Diasporan Indigenous African people – enslaved Native Ameridians and AfRaKans alike – are worthy of explication, academic inclusion and further research as these heritage journeys from pre-Columbian, colonial, post-colonial and contemporary times restore balance in any discourse on Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan culture, science, technology, arts and historic preservation.

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PREPARATION

The island of St. Croix is informally regarded as the cultural capital of the Virgin Islands of the United States of America. The Indigenous people of the pre-Columbian era called this island *Ay Ay* also referred to as *Iahi*. The historical accounts reflect that



Figure 2 Ay Ay DIA Presentation Slide: IIBC Aruba Nov.2013

a continual institutional neglect and demoralization of Indigenous and AfRa-Kan people remains in scholarly publications and academic documentation. “An early consequence of European colonialization during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the almost total destruction of the Indians. The destroyers were Western Europeans: Spaniards, Englishmen, Dutchmen,

Scotsmen, Normans, Bretons. Then came the Africans by the millions, captured, transported, sold, and enslaved on New World estates during three hundred years. The slave-based plantation effectively blocked further substantial European migration, for the potential migrant could rarely sustain the capital expenses necessary to acquire the land, labor and machinery for the cultivation of cane and the production of sugar.” (Horowitz: 1971: 1)

Comparatively, institutionalized racism and supportive educational paradigms continue to enforce ‘assimilation as liberation’ as a distraction from the efforts being proactively engaged for the cultural restoration and heritage sustainability of Indigenous AfRaKan ancient linkages. Innovative researchers and cultural education technologists are engaged in revisiting and upgrading erroneous, outdated and systemic inaccuracies of the historical documentation and cultural narratives of Indigenous people of the Caribbean. The inhumanity and physical brutality of the enslavement system launched against continental AfRaKans and indigenous Native Ameridians throughout the western hemisphere is not to be forgotten – especially as the quest for the reclamation of the rights of Indigenous people of the Americas has increased. 21st century Caribbean and global scholars are researching, implementing, documenting and publishing a multiplicity of academic, cultural and technological proactive initiatives throughout the Virgin Islands and wider Caribbean. These works are creating eclectic ideological resurrection efforts to realign, reorganize and create new transcultural intersections designed to complement ancestral teachings, practices and methodologies that restore Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan ancestral traditions to their rightful spaces and places. These efforts strengthen a new approach to cultural heritage restoration and educational technologies of scholarship and social governance with honor, liberty, integrity, respect and dignity regionally, nationally and internationally.

Throughout the Virgin Islands and Caribbean, there are a host of grassroots organizations and entities – both formal and informal – that are committed to resurrecting and reclaiming historical, spiritual and sociopolitical linkages among AfRaKan, Indigenous Native Ameridian and other cultural tradition ethnoscientists within the Caribbean. Further exploration of the progressive reclamation and reaffirmations of customs, traditions, heritage and narratives of people of AfRaKan, Taino, Kalinago and other Indigenous cultures, ethnicities, nations, ancestral traditions, histories and people is in order. Recommendations and references to the proactive and strategic roles of academics in the social, economic, political and spiritual cooperation initiatives within Caribbean Community Organization (CARICOM), the United Nations (UN), the African Union (AU), the World Indigenous People Convention (WIPC), Caribbean Ameridian Development Organization (CADO), United Confederation of Taino People (UCTP), Per Ankh M Smai Tawi (PAST), Caribbean Pan African Network (CPAN), Sixth Region Diaspora

Caucus (SRDC), Universal Negro Improvement Association -African Communities League (UNIA-ACL), Pan African Diaspora Union (PADU) and other international bodies should be included as part of any discourse on Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan academic, historic and socioeconomic affairs. There are efforts for institutional social and educational entities to make revolutionary changes in academic programs to accurately teach historic perspectives as part of undergraduate and graduate level courses in the social sciences and humanities, including colloquia, symposia, and interdisciplinary studies in the quest for accurate documentation on:

“the Caribbean islands...[that] constitute the oldest colonial sphere of western European overseas expansion. By the second decade of the sixteenth century, these territories were circumnavigated and explored, their aborigines had been dominated and Spanish colonies established on the largest islands, and the entire area had been thrust into the consciousness of European monarchs, philosophers and scientists.” (Mintz: 1966: 18)

Practical solutions have included the exploration of new media of communication, cultural heritage art works, strategic eco-planning options and related heritage restoration initiatives that respect the integrity, sustainability, security and accountability of Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan Heritage cultural, natural and human resources with holistic implementation of institutionalized programs and activities specific to St. Croix, the Virgin Islands and Caribbean neighbors.

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OPENING

Sharing ancestral voices and experiences interwoven within the multidimensional cultural heritage of the Virgin Islands – especially on the isle of St. Croix with a



Figure 3 Opia Taino International Native Ameridian Exhibit Nov.2013 @ UVI-VICCC

observed, witnessed, researched, experienced and worked with an extremely diverse composition of naturalists, environmentalists, architects, scientists, artisans, craftspersons, educators, engineers, agriculturalists, physicians, researchers, linguists, archaeologists, psychologists, anthropologists, botanists, marine biologists, geologists,

history of governance by several colonial and non-Indigenous sovereign nations – France, Spain, The Netherlands, Knights of Malta, Britain, Denmark and America – requires intricate weaving of the layers of preservation narratives awaiting revelation, preservation, and heritage restoration with respect, integrity

and honor. For nearly thirty years, the author of this essay has

historians, novelists, ethnomusicologists, filmmakers, cultural tradition griots and many others to share stories, narratives and perspectives that seek to include the oftentimes neglected indigenous and ancestral voices of these regions. These multi-talented community stakeholders have crafted, studied and disseminated a series of narratives, cultural education paradigms, stories, multidisciplinary media initiatives and research results attempting to provide principled and respectful interpretations of the historic preservation and heritage restoration experiences of the VI and Caribbean.

“We are coming together to bring benefits to our peoples as best as we can. Being traditionalists as we all are, ‘Development’ is understood by us to be that which restores as much of our tangible and intangible heritage as has been lost and ensuring that as much as possible of it is taken into the future in the hearts and minds of the generations yet unborn that will follow us down the red road of our ancestors... Today their main concerns can be described as enforced culturalisation, miscegenation, patronalism, discrimination, social marginalization plus systematic denial of their civic and land rights.” (CADO, 2012: 4)

Cultural heritage education, development and technology programs are being implemented in harmony with efforts of organizations such as CADO formed in 2012. Intertribal registries of Indigenous people of the VI and wider Caribbean are being developed to include ascendants of the Ciboneys (*Stone Age: 800-1200 B.C.*); Arawak; Kalinagos/(Caribs); Taino; Karifunas (Garifunas); Jatibonicu (*Great People of the Sacred High Waters*); Locono of South America and others with support of archaeologists, anthropologists, genealogical archivists and other cultural heritage and preservation socio-technologists. CADO works in alliance with UCTP, Opia Taino International and other Native Ameridian and Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan organizations, initiatives and campaigns in respect to early inhabitants of Ay Ay (St. Croix), the VI and the Americas.

IMPLEMENTATION

The inhumanity and physical brutality of the enslavement system launched against continental AfRaKans and Indigenous Native Ameridians throughout the western hemisphere is not to be forgotten – especially as the quests for the reclamation of the



Figure 3 AyAy Presentation Slide IIBC-Aruba 2013- Courtesy VICCC

rights of Indigenous people and decree for reparations by Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKans globally have multiplied and intensified significantly throughout the 21st century. *Stolen Legacy* authored by George G. M. James presents an ideologically appropriate methodology “to establish better race relations

in the world, by revealing a fundamental

truth concerning the con-tribution of the African Continent to civilization. It must be borne in mind that the first lesson in the Humanities is to make a people aware of their contribution to civilization; and the second lesson is to teach them about other civilizations” (James, 1976: 7). Essentially, the restoration of respect for the diversity and multiculturalism amongst natives, residents and visitors of the Virgin Islands and her Caribbean sister/brother nations while maintaining integrity and honor for the uniqueness of historic experiences are essential for increasing engagement, interaction, complimentary enrichment, economic sustainability and empowerment in the cultural heritage restoration and historic preservation movement.

Cultural heritage, traditional narratives and educational institutions within the Caribbean have the capability of strengthening national and regional identities that support societal healing. Within the St. Croix and the Virgin Islands, “native identity”, “indigenous rights” and “native culture” have a multiplicity of definitions and social outcomes that are grounded upon historical experiences impacting Diasporan Indigenous Afrakans and others that spans across pre-Columbian and 21st century time periods.

“...national identity is extremely difficult to specify, largely because the values it carries are fully articulated only rarely, and because different sectors of a national population often make different (though concordant) symbolic uses of the culture...Hence, the initial emergence of a national culture and

ideology in Caribbean societies seems to have depended to a great extent on the possibilities of growth of a “creole” group (i.e. of Old World origin, but born in the New World) whose primary identities were with the new society, rather than with their ancestral cultures of origin.” (Mintz, 1966: 34)

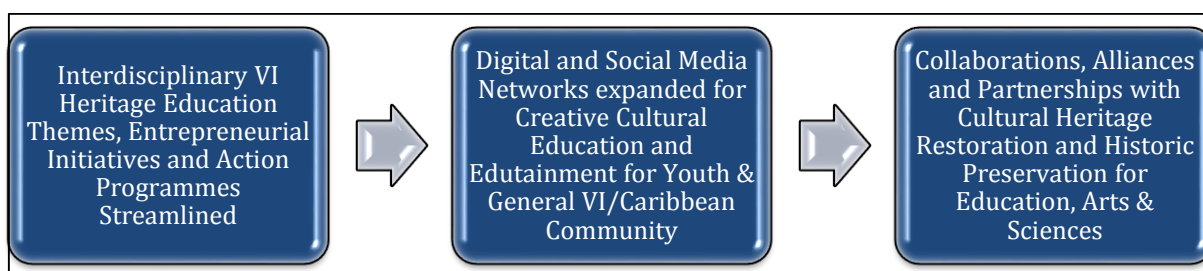
Virgin Islands Heritage Education and Arts Literacy = VIHEAL (*a paradigm developed by the author of this essay*) along with related initiatives have been creatively developed to provide complimentary programs that offer new media technologies and diversified activities that institutionalize cultural education, heritage restoration, historic preservation, edutainment and other eclectic resources. Contemporary methods for integrating historic preservation with more meaningful creative designs and methodological platforms that encourage stronger community partnerships are instituted in our VI community with outreach to neighboring Caribbean, Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan and other initiatives throughout the Americas and beyond. VIHEAL partners with Heritage Education and Cultural Architecture Preservation (HECAP – *developed by the author of this essay*) to work collaboratively with communitarian organizational entities with inclusivity of Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan affairs to implement design-build projects with opportunities for community development of creative landscapes, environmentally-secure seascapes and sacred historic preservation projects that are long term with permanency for generations to come.

Across interdisciplinary humanities and social sciences studies, the integration of intergenerational campaigns that provide historically accurate narratives and culturally-appropriate public spaces exhibiting respectful chronicles of the achievements, contributions, challenges, tribulations and civilizations of Indigenous Native Ameridian, AfRaKan, European, Asian and other people of Ay Ay-St. Croix, the VI and wider Caribbean are the primary areas of presentation. Collaborative community-wide support is strengthened via pragmatic partnerships, intellectual research and heritage legacy with: the National Park Service of St. Croix (NPS-STX); the University of the Virgin Islands’ VI and Caribbean Cultural Center (UVI-VICCC); the VI Department of Education (VIDE); the Per Ankh Khamniversity UN ECOSOC Consultative Programs (PAK/UN ECOSOC); St. Croix Unified for Community Culture Environment and Economic Development (SUCCEED); the Beyond Visions Foundation (BVF); God’s House International (GHI); Opia Taino International (OTI); and eclectic scholarly research of other global partnering higher educational institutions, cooperative and collaborative efforts of non-governmental organizations, government agencies, private sector businesses, public service entities and individuals. Complementary transcultural community workshops, interactive modeling of pilot projects associated with VI, Caribbean and American educational institutions, conferences, brain trusts and related strategic planning initiatives linked to

preservation efforts are facilitated by methods of efficient and effective smart growth with respectful sustainability of cultural heritage resources.

Cultural Interpretations: Virgin Islands and Global Landscapes

Holistic historic preservation and cultural heritage performance arts strategies and paradigms i.e. VIHEAL, are designed as natural extension initiatives, new media resources and programs that promote, institute and engage VI Caribbean cultural education, heritage restoration and edutainment for youth, elders, natives, residents and visitors to our beloved VI shores and beyond. Inclusivity of interdisciplinary academic courses, research and publications inclusive of the Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan narratives are highlighted.



Heritage Education and Cultural Architecture Preservation (HECAP)

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HECAP creates and strengthens partnerships that use cultural heritage enactments and humanities- driven dramatizations complemented with social media development for preservation legacy initiatives. Partnerships among grassroots, government, public/private sector stakeholders of HECAP's synergistic programs maximize the efficacy of work being done by contemporary and traditional preservation activists, traditional cultural bearers and the wider community. The fusion of historical narratives, cultural education, heritage arts and research technologies creates sustainability and entrepreneurial opportunities for interactive marketing and strategic planning for current and future HECAP developments. Intellectual discourse on the human trauma manifesting during the AfRaKan TransAtlantic enslavement experience referred to as *Maangamiizi* (El-Salim: 2003: 341) reflect the Native Ameridian genocide and onslaught of Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKans in AyAy- VI and so-called Americas:

“Slavery in the Caribbean has been too narrowly identified with the Negro. A racial twist has thereby been given to what is basically and economic phenomenon. Slavery was not born of racism; rather, racism was the consequence of slavery. Unfree labor in the New World was brown, white, black, and yellow; Catholic, Protestant and pagan...The first instance of slave trading and slave labor developed in the New World involved, racially, not the Negro but the Indian.” (Williams, 1966: 7)

Cultural heritage institutions and restorative technologies offer a foundation for the development and sustainable maintenance of innovative, expansive, interactive and digital inventory of interdisciplinary cultural education resources for community-wide use and implementation. VIHEAL, HECAP along with other effective homegrown Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan institutional campaigns, facilitate the journey and legacy preservation quest for assisting, supporting, coordinating, sustaining, financing and fostering eclectic approaches for the fusion of culture, education, heritage arts and sciences along with academic, vocational and technological literacy for all participants and leaders working collaboratively with these projects and initiatives. In all of these processes, we must remain conscious of the fact that the multi-faceted forms of trauma and intellectual exclusivity created by the institutionalized oppression and terroristic enslavement of the pre-20th century beyond the chattel, holocaust and hydrocaust experiences of Native Ameridians, Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKans and others still exist in the 21st century.

“The campaigns waged by the colonial usurpers and slavemasters against African people stand out as the most brutal wars of biological and cultural genocide ever conducted. This is the context in which we must understand the crisis of institution building among modern African peoples...The attack on African institutions is accompanied by a superimposition upon African communities of alien organizations...The purpose as well as the modus operandi, of these groups is defined in Eurocentric terms. Any deviation from the European form is castigated as ‘primitive’ and ‘irresponsible.’...Ironically, it is these very Eurocentric African institutions that

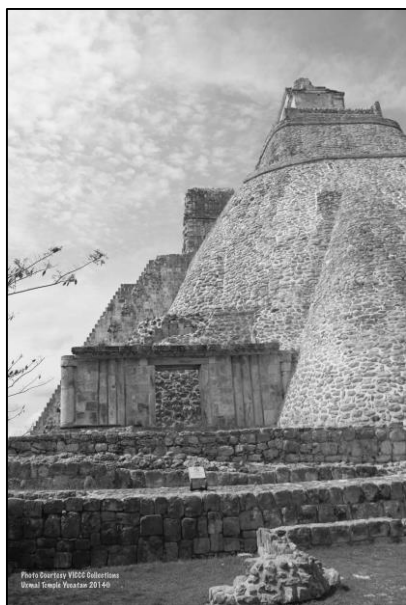


Figure 5 Uxmal Temple Site Yucatan, MX Courtesy VCCCC 2014

are continually in crisis today. They are chronically financially strapped when their European sponsors choose to withdraw support. They are usually embroiled in leadership brawls because of competing Eurocentric ambitions... They do not spring from the fertile soil of African culture...They are indeed like the African slave traders who, after they had captured scores of Africans and brutally marched them to the sea in shackles, were themselves thrown into the slave ships by their would-be paymasters.” (Carruthers, 1999: 270-272)

CLOSING

Another final example of the essential need for the institutionalization, historic restoration, legacy preservation of the cultural heritage of the VI and wider Caribbean is explicated in this experience of the illustrious pioneering professor of linguistics and anthropology of Guyana, the late Dr. Ivan Van Sertima of Rutgers University:

“I had come to the Virgin Islands a year after the Smithsonian had reported the Hull Bay find...The find must have generated considerable excitement at first...By March 1976, however...a blanket of secrecy had descended. The grave had degenerated into a garbage dump...the pre-Columbian ceramic vessel, the age of the soil layers, the evidence of an unusual dental ritual not associated with Africans of slavery times – strongly suggest a pre-Columbian context. In other words, nothing in the evidence associated with the skeletons suggests a post-Columbian dating. The find at Hull Bay remains, therefore, an open question. Further diggings in that area may establish the pre-Columbian presence of Africans in the Virgin Islands. But the matter is being prematurely closed by a conspiracy of silence, a spate of insidious rumors and by apparent ignorance of African metallurgical history. The find at Hull Bay, however is only the most recent in a series of discoveries of Negroid skeletal remains in pre-Columbian strata in the New World... My visit to the Virgin Islands was sponsored jointly by the Environmental Studies Program on St. John and the College of the Virgin Islands on St. Thomas. Mrs. Doris Jadan President of E.S.P. had invited me to study the petroglyphs carved at the bottom of an ancient freshwater pool in the Reef Bay Valley. Some of these I identified as African. The central plaque was distinguished from the others by the Gye Nyame sign (of Ashanti origin), a sign of power overturned and reasserted...”
(Van Sertima, 2003: 263-264)

UVI (formerly CVI) historically interacts in the overall development and engages in the institutionalization of cultural legacy preservation, genealogical research and intergenerational educational programs fostering *Ay Ay: Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan and Native Amerindian Heritage in St. Croix and the wider Caribbean*. With cultural restoration and reclamation efforts increasing in the Caribbean and the world community, more supporters, collaborators, partners and sponsors – of all ages – are participating in this work.

... The robbery of a people never becomes prescriptive. Reclamation of its rights is barred by no length of time...A people may endure military usurpation, and subjugated States kneel to States and wear the yoke, while under the stress of necessity; but when the necessity disappears, if the people is fit to be free, the submerged country will float to the surface and reappear,

and Tyranny be adjudged by History to have murdered its victims.” (Pike, 1871: 6)

Research, publications and related sociocultural programs may facilitate a new holistic way of healing and re-educating the community on ancestral legacy cultivation and preservation relationships that respect, restore and reclaim Native Ameridian and Diasporan Indigenous AfRaKan heritage, ancestry, cultural traditions and more in the 21st century. Academic and practical projects, programs and campaigns that increase public access, digitalization of resources, diverse educational paradigms, sustainable development opportunities, and freedoms customarily afforded to Indigenous sovereign nations amongst humanity are on the rise in the VI, Caribbean, Americas and globally.

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**TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES IN LANGUAGE
PLANNING, POLICY AND EDUCATION**

A PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF UNDERGRADUATES' PERCEPTIONS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS AT A UNIVERSITY IN GUYANA

PAMELA ROSE

RAJKUMAR SOOKRAJ

Introduction

The ability to use English Language is considered necessary for undergraduates' academic success in all of their university studies. However, many Creole-speaking students struggle to produce Standard English in their university classrooms (McLaren & Webber, 2009; Ramsay, 2011). This article reports on the results of a survey of one hundred and three (103) first-year undergraduates' perceptions of their English language needs at a university in Guyana aimed at identifying undergraduates' English language needs across faculties and the usefulness of a language course (titled "Use of English") in developing specific language skills and overall language ability. Results from this study indicate that undergraduates' perceptions of their language needs varied across faculties. Undergraduates in the science disciplines perceived reading to be the most important language need and those in the non-science disciplines perceived writing to be the most important. Also, most students believed that the Use of English course developed their listening skills and made them more effective writers. Of all of the skill areas covered, organizing essays was identified by most undergraduates as the most useful to developing their language ability. Implications of these findings for language teaching are explored in this article.

The Use of English course is one of two English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) courses offered at the university where the study was conducted. It is a compulsory course designed mainly for first-year undergraduates in all faculties at the university. This fifteen-week course comprises four (4) credit hours, divided into two (2) hours of lectures and two (2) hours of tutorials per week. Lectures are delivered by a main lecturer to very large groups of undergraduates (over two hundred students), in one two-hour session. Tutorials are done with smaller groups of approximately forty students by individual lecturers. In this course, 50% of the total marks are awarded for course work assessments and 50% for final examinations. Coursework assessments consist of in-class tests on reading comprehension and essay writing. For the academic year 2011-2012, the average course grade in both the reading and writing sections of the exam was D, just one

grade away from the failing grade F. While the aim of the course changed during 2011-2012, and the content changed during 2009-2010 and 2011-2012, no systematic analysis of undergraduates' perceptions of the course supported these revisions.

There is a growing body of literature on teaching English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in universities in different contexts including those where English is taught as a Second Language (ESL) (Leki & Carson, 1994; Read, 2008) and/or as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Abiri, 2013; Oanh, 2007). This body of research on EAP in these teaching contexts has been used to design a wide range of EAP courses. However, teaching such courses to speakers who are from a linguistically diverse background in Caribbean university settings has not received much attention in published research although Caribbean universities continue to be challenged to find ways to teach undergraduates to use Standard English in their academic studies (Dyche, 1996; McLaren & Webber, 2009; Ramsay, 2011). To effectively respond to undergraduates' challenges in using Standard English in these academic settings, educators need to gain insights into students' language learning experiences, and one means of doing so is by analysing their self-reports.

Research indicates that accommodation of learning needs and relationships between language courses and other courses in academic settings are central to designing EAP courses that can successfully respond to students' challenges in developing academic language proficiency (Hyland, 2006; Hinkel, 2006). Therefore, we found it necessary to conduct an enquiry into the kind of language needs that undergraduates perceive to be important to their academic work and whether their language courses meet these needs.

Background to the study and literature review

Many Caribbean societies such as Guyana, where Creole varieties are spoken alongside standard varieties that function as the medium of official communication, have often been referred to as bilingual communities, in a restricted sense (Craig, 1976). In this diverse linguistic environment, language learners operate between the domains of standard and non-standard varieties (acrolect, mesolect and basilect), and they create situations "characterized by forms of diglossia and code-switching" (Craig, 1978: 101). Many of these bilingual Caribbean students struggle to produce both spoken and written forms of Standard English, and they continue to perform poorly in the targeted Standard English variety in their secondary school classrooms and in the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) English 'A' examinations (CSEC Report, 2012), which is a requirement for university level studies.

With respect to undergraduates' language use in Caribbean universities, most teaching faculty complaints are about undergraduates' writing (Dyche, 1996; McLaren & Webber, 2009; Ramsay, 2011). Dyche (1996) contextualizes Caribbean first-year undergraduates' difficulties with written English in a framework that distinguishes two broad categories

of writing. One category includes writing that does not communicate ideas clearly, “disunified, incoherent or poorly developed prose” (Dyche, 1996: 143). The second category includes writing that reflects a range of grammatical and mechanical errors, including word level and sentence level errors such as inappropriate tense use, misplaced modifiers and unbalanced sentences (Dyche, 1996).

Generally, challenges in helping Creole-speaking students to overcome these categories and other kinds of writing difficulties have been linked to policy makers’ reluctance to heed the advice of linguists who have suggested that Creole-speakers should not be taught as though they are first language learners (L1) of English (Craig, 2001). Other factors have also been cited as contributing to students’ struggle to produce written forms of Standard English. These factors include unfamiliarity with Standard English in both spoken and written forms (Carrington, 2001; Ramsay, 2011; Rose & Basturkmen, 2013) and the apparent lack of studies which determine the effectiveness of existing programmes and approaches (Simmons-Mc Donald, 2004). There is thus a lack of empirical studies designed to determine both language needs and the effectiveness of language courses. By examining these areas in Creole-speaking contexts, the present study not only has the potential to fill a gap in Caribbean research and provide information critical to course design, it also has the potential to enrich the growing body of literature on teaching English for academic purposes in university settings.

Needs analysis has long been considered an important feature of language teaching and learning because it plays a critical role in course design (Munby, 1978; Belcher, 2006). While needs analysis draws on an eclectic range of theories, including genre and critical theories (Hyland, 2008) to develop and assess the outcomes of courses (Basturkmen, 2010; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998), needs analysis should not be regarded as a short-term activity. According Hyland (2006: 74), it is not a “done once then forgotten activity”; it is a dynamic reactive process of questioning and revising that is “behind every successful EAP course.”

Over the last decade needs analysis models have evolved from the specific analysis of target situations (Munby, 1978) to much broader analysis of learner factors and the situated contexts in which language learning occurs (Hyland, 2008; Basturkmen, 2010: 18). Current needs analysis is much more flexible and sensitive to practical constraints, including target and present situation, discourse features, learner factors and teaching contexts, and may now include rights analysis (Benesch, 1999; 2001). Though conducting needs analysis might be considered time consuming, its focus on situated teaching and learning contexts through systematic data collection and analysis (Basturkmen, 2010; Hyland, 2006) could provide insights into learners’ struggle to develop academic language proficiency in their university teaching and learning contexts. For example, needs analysis can provide better understanding of potential mismatches between language courses and learners’ needs and also between language courses and

other content courses (Perkins & Salomon, 1994; Bovill et al., 2011; Gimenez, 2008). Needs analysis can also identify constraints and possibilities of language learning situations (Chanock, 2000; Hendricks & Quinn, 2000; Benesch, 1996, 1999; 2001). In terms of course development, findings from needs analysis are likely to provide opportunities for accessing knowledge about the relative importance of different features of language courses, thus providing information critical to informing course programming and design (Basturkmen, 1998; Belcher, 2006).

The ability to use academic language is considered necessary for undergraduates' academic success in all of their university studies (Crusan, 2011; Fernsten & Reda, 2011); thus, in many contexts such as EFL (Chostelidou, 2010; Bacha & Bahous, 2008) and ESL (Oanh, 2007; Read, 2008), identifying undergraduates' language needs within and across disciplines, and developing a wide range of language courses that target academic language use are integral to responding to undergraduates' difficulties with using English in academic contexts. In these settings, the goals for aligning needs analysis research with language teaching do not only include integrating the findings of empirically validated studies into course programs (Oanh, 2007), they very importantly also include balancing top-down approaches with bottom-up approaches to curriculum decisions, that is, collecting data from both course designers and learners (Leki & Carson, 1994). Considering bottom-up approaches in curriculum decisions, for example, undergraduates' perception of their language learning needs is important because students' perceptions can influence how receptive they are to learning (Horwitz, 1987; Leki & Carson, 1994). Apart from adding multiple perspectives to curriculum decisions, analysis of undergraduates' perceptions of language needs can also expose gaps between undergraduates' and instructors' understanding of what should be learnt, gaps that are likely to be potential sites for language learning difficulties (Lea & Street, 1998).

To determine how well courses prepare undergraduates to develop academic language proficiency, research has focused on gathering data from undergraduates who are engaged in language courses in different language learning settings and across different disciplines (Basturkmen, 1998; Chan, 2001; Bacha & Bahous, 2008; Eslami, 2010; Chostelidou, 2010). In seminal studies, Christison and Krahne (1986) used structured interviews to gather data from 80 second language (L2) undergraduates who had completed language intensive courses in five universities. Students in their study reported listening and reading as the most important skills in their academic studies. Writing in academic tasks was considered a less important skill. In another study, Leki and Carson (1994) surveyed ESL undergraduates who were enrolled in university-level content courses in the United States. They investigated seventy-seven (77) undergraduates' perceptions of the relationship between the instruction they received in their ESL writing classes and actual writing tasks that they were required to perform in courses in their disciplines. This study indicated that undergraduates acknowledged the effectiveness of instruction in areas such as planning, outlining and drafting written work, and of

becoming familiar with, selecting, summarizing and synthesizing relevant readings. The most frequently expressed specific needs from ESL writing courses were vocabulary and grammar, but these specific need areas appeared not to have adversely affected undergraduates' grades (Leki & Carson, 1994). Chan (2001) used a survey questionnaire to investigate, among other factors, undergraduates' perception of language needs in all the departments in a university in Hong Kong. Undergraduates identified reading and speaking at seminars and meetings to be very important for their academic work.

The study

The purpose of the study which is the focus of the present article was to investigate undergraduates' perceptions of English language needs across faculties at a university in Guyana, South America. The study also investigated the usefulness of a course taught at that university, titled "Use of English" in developing their English language abilities. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are undergraduates' perceptions of their language needs in their academic setting?
2. How do undergraduates rate the usefulness of the Use of English course in developing their English language abilities?

The study was conducted using a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. Questionnaires were administered to mainly first-year undergraduates at the university. The questionnaires are divided into two sections. Section 1 included two questions which were designed to elicit background information about the undergraduates in two key areas: (1) the faculty in which they were registered and (2) their English language experience prior to attending the university. Where undergraduates were not given a diagnostic assessment of language abilities upon entry into the university, these questions seemed important to cater for a group that was not homogenous in all respects. Section 2 consisted of five questions, which sought to provide answers to the research questions: undergraduates' perceptions of language needs across faculties and the effects of the Use of English course on their English language abilities.

Participants in this study constituted a stratified random sample of 103 undergraduates drawn from a total population of 1,721 (6% of the total population). The sample was drawn from two different campuses and across six (6) faculties: Social Sciences (SS) (54), Natural Sciences (NS) (21), School of Education and Humanities (SEH) (9), Technology (TEC) (8), Health Sciences (HS) (7) and Agriculture and Forestry (AGF) (4). A random sampling technique was used to provide each and every member of the population with an equal and independent chance of being selected (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). 88 of the participants were in transition from secondary schools, with passing Grades (1-3) on the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) English 'A' exam. Six had Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) certificates, and

six were undergraduates who did not pass CSEC English ‘A’ but had passed the university’s Qualifying English Exam (UGQE). Four were undergraduates who had majored in English Language at the Teacher’s Training College.

The questionnaires used in this study to gather undergraduates’ perceptions of their English language needs were adapted from Basturkmen (1998) and Bacha & Bahous (2008). Questionnaires were first piloted on a group of twenty undergraduates who had completed the same language course across different faculties during the previous academic year. Following piloting, the questionnaires were revised and directly administered to undergraduates during the academic year 2011-2012, after they had completed the Use of English course, and before they had written the final examinations. One faculty (Health Sciences) could not be accessed before final examinations, so undergraduates in this faculty answered the questionnaires after the final examinations. Because we wanted a high response rate, questionnaires were administered and collected by lecturers in the Department of Language and Cultural Studies. The data was analysed using the SPSS statistical package, Version 19.

Results

The results are presented according to the research questions.

Research Question 1: What are undergraduates’ perceptions of their language needs in their academic setting?

To answer this research question, undergraduates were required to indicate which of the four English language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) they found to be most important for their success in other courses at the university. They were also required to indicate which items under each skill were most important for their other courses. The results of this question are displayed in Tables 1-5.

Table 1 Skills most important for success in other courses

Skills	Faculty					
	AGF n=4	SEH n=9	HS n=7	NS n=21	SS n=54	TEC n=8
Reading	75%	56%	71%	38%	59%	37.5%
Listening	50%	45%	29%	29%	46%	37.5%
Speaking	50%	67%	14%	9%	35%	25%
Writing	0%	78%	43%	29%	48%	50%

As is evident in Table 1, language needs varied with respect to disciplinary fields. Reading was rated as the most important by students in the science-related disciplines: Agriculture and Forestry (75%), Health Sciences (71%) and Natural Sciences (38%). In

contrast, writing was rated as the most important by students in the non-science disciplines: Humanities (78%) and the Faculty of Technology (50%). Students in the Social Sciences rated both reading and writing highly.

Table 2 Reading-related items most important for other courses

Reading	Faculty					
	AGF n=4	SEH n=9	HS n=7	NS n=21	SS n=54	TEC n=8
Textbooks	75 %	56%	86%	76%	59%	75%
Articles in journals	25%	44%	28.5%	19%	67%	12.5%
Manuals	25%	33%	28.5%	14%	26%	37.5%
Course handouts	50%	67%	43%	71%	24%	87.5%
Instructions for assignments or projects	50%	56%	43%	62%	83%	50%
Instructions for labs	50%	44.5%	71.5%	52.5%	61%	62.5%
Study notes	50%	56%	57%	62%	48%	62.5%

Table 2 indicates that students' responses varied according to their discipline with respect to the ratings of reading-related items which were most important for their other courses. Students in the science related faculties showed relative homogeneity, with reading of text books being identified as the most important by students in the faculties of Health Sciences (86%), Natural Sciences (76%) and Agriculture and Forestry (75%). Reading of course handouts or instructions for assignments and projects was identified as the most important item by students in Social Sciences (83%), Humanities (67%), and the faculty of Technology (87.5%).

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Table 3 Writing-related items most important for other courses

Writing	Faculty					
	AGF n=4	SEH n=9	HS n=7	NS n=21	SS n=54	TEC n=8
Lab reports	50%	45.5%	57%	48%	31%	50%
Assignments	75%	78%	72%	76%	42%	50%
Field trip reports	100%	33.5%	57%	48%	26%	37.5%
Essays	75%	78%	42%	57%	76%	12.5%
Critical reviews	50%	44%	43%	53%	44%	37.5%
Project reports	100%	67%	43%	53%	50%	62.5%
Notes in lecture	75%	44.5%	72%	62%	63%	25%

Table 3 shows that writing needs differed between students of the various faculties. Humanities (78%) and Social Sciences (76%) students identified writing essays as most

important for other courses. In contrast, Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry (100%) students rated writing field trip reports and projects as equally most important while Natural Sciences (76%) and Health Sciences (72%) students rated writing for assignments as most important.

Table 4 Speaking-related items most important for other courses

Speaking	Faculty					
	AGF n=4	SEH n=9	HS n=7	NS n=21	SS n=54	TEC n=8
Discussion	100%	56%	14%	33%	59%	50%
Ask questions	50%	45%	14%	33%	47%	37.5%
Oral presentation	100%%	56%	72%	52%	47%	25%
Answer questions	100	33%	57%	38%	47%	37.5%

Table 4 indicates that students differed slightly in their rating of speaking-related items as most important for other courses. Students of most of the faculties saw oral presentation and discussion as most important for other courses: students from Agriculture and Forestry (100%) and Humanities (56%) rated both discussion and oral presentation as equally most important. Students from Health Sciences (72%) and Natural Sciences (52%) cited oral presentation as most important and students from Social Sciences (59%) and Technology (50%) rated discussion as most important.

Table 5 Listening-related items important for other courses

Listening	Faculty					
	AGF n=4	SEH n=9	HS n=7	NS n=21	SS n=54	TEC n=8
Lectures	75%	66%	86%	86%	81%	50%
Presentation	50%	66%	28%	52%	56%	12.5%
General instructions	100%	66%	72%	1%	71%	50%
Instruction for assignments	100%	77%	72%	81%	71%	75%
Participate in discussion	75%	55%	43%	38%	52%%	75%
Ask questions in class	75%	56	43%	48%	43	37.5%

Table 5 shows that students from the various faculties differed in their rating of listening-related items most important for their other courses. Students from Health Sciences (86%), Natural Sciences (86%) and Social Sciences (81%) rated listening to lectures as most important for courses, while students from Agriculture and Forestry (100%) and

Humanities (77%), and the Faculty of Technology (75%) rated listening to instructions for assignments as most important.

Research Question 2: How do undergraduates rate the usefulness of the Use of English course in developing their English language abilities?

To answer this research question, undergraduates were required to (1) rate the usefulness of the Use of English course in developing specific language abilities, (2) state their agreement with statements on the overall effects of the Use of English course on their English language abilities and (3) determine areas of the Use of English course which developed these abilities.

Table 6 Usefulness of the Use of English course in developing language abilities

Language Ability	Rating		
	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory
Reading	58.6%	38.5%	2.8%
Writing	35.1%	51.5%	13.1%
Speaking	34.0%	46.0%	19.8%
Listening	59.6%	30.8%	9.5%
English Grammar	35.1%	52.4%	12.4%
Vocabulary	40.0%	49.3%	8.5%

Table 6 indicates that students' perception of the effect of the course was more positive for listening and reading than it was for speaking and writing.

To make reporting on the results more straightforward, in Tables 7 and 8 responses on either side of the mid-point of the scales in the questionnaires are combined into single categories, agree and disagree, and very important and not very important respectively.

Table 7 Overall effect of the Use of English course

Statements	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Effective writer	83.6%	12.5%	3.8%
Effective reader	75%	23.1%	1.9%
Effective listener	76.9%	16.3%	6.8%
Effective speaker	74.7%	19.2%	5.8%
Confused	16.3%	9.6%	74.1%

Table 7 shows undergraduates' levels of agreement with statements on the overall effects of the Use of English course on their English language abilities. While a significant majority of all students reported a high level of agreement that the course had helped

them in all areas, writing was rated slightly higher (83.6%) than listening (76.9%), reading (75%), and speaking (74.7%). A significant majority (74.1%) disagreed that the course confused them about how to use English.

Table 8 Areas of the Use of English course most useful to developing language abilities

Areas of Course	Very Important	Important	Not very important
Guyanese linguistic context	44.3%	15.4 %	40.5%
Reading comprehension	80.7%	9.6%	9.6%
Organizing essays	83.6%	4.8%	11.6%
Using primary and secondary sources	56.7%	18.3%	25%
Grammar	71.2%	13.5%	15.4%
Editing, proofreading and redrafting	54.8%	12.5%	32.7%

While Table 8 indicates that a significant majority of all students rated all areas of the course as very important or important in developing their English language abilities, the highest ratings were assigned to organizing essays (83.6% very important and 4.8% important) and reading comprehension (80.7% very important and 9.6% important) while the lowest ratings were assigned to Guyanese linguistic context (44.3% very important and 15.4% important).

Discussion

Generally, the results indicate that students' language needs vary according to disciplines, and while the present focus of the Use of English course largely caters to many of their perceived needs, there are some gaps in the course.

Consistent with the findings reported in studies for L2 undergraduates conducted by Leki and Carson (1994) and partially consistent with Christison & Krahne (1986), undergraduates in the present study identified reading and writing as the skills most important to their success in their content courses. However, faculties were divided on the relative importance of these two skills for success in content courses. The science disciplines gave higher ratings to reading and the non-science disciplines gave higher ratings to writing. One possible explanation for this difference could be the type of evaluation methods which the different disciplines use. Possibly, the science disciplines use evaluation methods which require extensive reading but short written answers or non-textual responses to multiple choice questions, while the other disciplines use evaluation methods which require much more writing such as producing extended essays. This finding is important because as Dyche (1996) pointed out, the nature of first-year undergraduates' evaluations could be a possible factor in demotivating students to improve their writing proficiency.

The results of the present study also indicate that students rated organizing essays and reading comprehension as the most useful elements of the Use of English course in developing their language abilities. Again, these findings support those of Leki and Carson's (1994) study in which L2 undergraduates in various universities credited reading and organizing essays as most useful to developing their writing proficiency. However, findings from the present study also reveal that the principal focus of the Use of English course on essay writing, which is perceived to be important in the Humanities and Social Sciences, appears not to be geared to the writing needs of undergraduates in some science disciplines, where areas such as writing field trip reports and projects are perceived to be most important.

The present study also found that of all the speaking-related areas, students in most of the faculties rated oral presentation and discussion as most important to their other courses. These results are consistent with those of Chan (2001) for an EFL context, where undergraduates identified speaking at seminars and meetings to be very important for their academic work. Thus, the present study reveals a gap between the Use of English course content, which does not formally target oral language skills and the language needs of students with respect to the area of speaking. In view of students' perception of the importance of oral presentations and discussions and the overall importance of using speaking as one means for developing learners' writing proficiency in linguistically diverse contexts (Bryan, 2010), the teacher-centred lecture mode of course delivery may need to be reduced to provide undergraduates with more opportunities to make oral presentations and participate in more interactive sessions. Also, oral presentation may need to be explicitly taught to make the course more relevant to students' needs.

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This study also found that there is a correspondence between students' self-assessment of the specific language ability most developed by the course and the mode of course delivery. Most of the undergraduates indicated that the specific language ability most developed by the course was listening, which was not considered very important for their success in other courses. This assessment is not surprising, given that the course is delivered to large groups of students through the traditional lecturing mode. For the course to develop other critical language abilities such as writing, much more attention needs to be focused on the delivery of the course – the use of alternative approaches to teacher-centred lecturing methods as well as smaller groups in both lectures and tutorial sessions.

Interestingly, this study also found that while there is a correspondence between students' self-assessment of the specific language ability most developed by the course and the mode of course delivery, there appears to be a mismatch between undergraduates' self-assessment of the general language ability developed by the course and other

observations. The undergraduates perceived that overall the course made them more effective writers than readers, speakers or listeners – a perception which is not supported by their course grades for the writing section of the final examination and lecturers' contention about students' writing. Thus, this study indicates a gap between undergraduates' and instructors' understanding of what is good writing. As Lea and Street (1998) have indicated, these gaps are likely to be potential sites for language learning difficulties.

Reasons for students' positive assessment of the overall impact of the course on their writing ability could be due in part to how their writing is marked and whether they receive feedback and the kind of feedback which they receive on the quality of their writing. If students do not receive the type of feedback that allows them to recognise problems with their writing, then they may not see the need to improve it. Another reason for students having difficulties with objectively assessing their own writing could be their inability to distinguish poor writing from effective writing because of unfamiliarity with both non-standard and standard forms of English in both written and spoken modes (Carrington, 2001; Ramsay, 2011). The findings of the present study thus suggests that opportunities should be provided in the course for students to be explicitly made aware of differences between standard and non-standard forms of English as well as differences between effective writing and poor writing in academic contexts.

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The findings of this study have implications for course design. First, course designers should be aware that even if the same type of language support is provided for all the disciplines, the support could have different relevance for each discipline. Thus, it is important for course designers to find out what language skills are required by different disciplines. This kind of inquiry would allow courses to be made more relevant to undergraduates' needs and the demands of their academic study (Long, 2005; Wingate, 2006), thereby providing opportunities to increase undergraduates' participation and motivation in developing their language proficiency (Belcher, 2006). It is therefore important that English for General Academic Purpose courses be designed in collaboration with all undergraduate faculties, in order to identify how to optimally prepare students to participate in and meet the language demands of their particular disciplines, especially in terms of the types of language tasks which they are required to perform. This kind of collaboration could maximize the effectiveness of our limited teaching resources through the provision of varied forms of language support that directly address the particular needs of learners (Long, 2005).

In both ESL and EFL contexts, researchers have recognized the importance of needs analysis to continually revise and refine courses and make them relevant to the language needs of student populations and disciplinary fields (Gimenez, 2008; Liu et al., 2011; Belcher, 2009). The present study therefore provides information which can prove useful

to designing revising a language course. Using needs analysis, course instructors can collect information which is useful to identifying various forms of academic language support that linguistically diverse undergraduates in different disciplines might require. However, because this study is limited to quantitative data, future studies that seek to collect such information should combine both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a more comprehensive picture of undergraduates' language needs. Also, because needs are complex and multifaceted (Eslami, 2010; Kavaliauskiene & Užpaliene, 2003), and students' perception of what they need might not necessarily be what their instructors or their disciplines require, it is important for future studies to include instructors' perceptions of their students' language needs. The language needs identified by instructors could then be compared with those identified by students, in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding based on a range of stakeholder viewpoints.

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SEPARATE OR INSEPARABLE: MEASURING LISTENING AND SPEAKING PROFICIENCY IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

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The nature of language and language learning makes it difficult to isolate the areas of listening and speaking as separate entities. There is a reciprocal relation between the two processes as a focus on one skill often depends on the use of the other. Thus, Oller is of the view that learners must be engaged in activities which facilitate the development of a high level of proficiency in both listening and speaking and which are designed to aid greatly in their ability to react to and activate their language (Oller: 110). The aim is to develop aural and oral skills in interactive communication with the broader goal of producing learners with effective critical thinking skills, critical listening skills and speaking skills (Wilcox-Peterson: 99). While learners relate frequently the challenges which they encounter in trying to attain proficiency in listening, Nunan is of the view that the ability to function in another language is generally characterised in terms of being able to speak that language (Nunan: 225). By the same token, although it is acknowledged that there is some diversity with learner's acquisition of the communicative skills associated with listening and speaking it is the common practise to assess their proficiency in these skills jointly. Hence, this research seeks to analyse the measurable comparability in the performance of adult Spanish-speaking learners in listening and speaking with instruction based on the Communicative Approach.

The research presents a comparative analysis of the speaking and listening proficiency of adult Spanish-speaking learners of English as a Second Language within the Anglophone Caribbean country of Barbados. It utilises the "A-B-B" variant of Single Subject Experimental Research design and focuses on the administering of instruments to effect measurement of each learner's listening and speaking proficiency based on the application of strategies related to the Communicative Approach.

Based on proficiency tests structured according to the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language criteria, eleven learners were evaluated to have levels of proficiency which ranged from Novice through to Intermediate (ACTFL:1-9). After the learners were placed within homogeneous groups for listening and speaking

activities a purposive sample of four participants was selected, based on the criteria included in the research instruments (according to which, some participants were reclassified from Intermediate to Competent). The results from a Needs Analysis Questionnaire revealed that these participants considered the ability to listen and comprehend in the target language to be the most necessary skill for them to acquire as they experienced the greatest difficulty with this skill. Accordingly, from the formative to the summative intervention period of the research, all the instruction in the sessions of listening and speaking were based on the application of strategies and methods associated with the Communicative Approach to language teaching.

The successful completion of the various communicative tasks necessitated a high level of integration between the two dependent variables and the participants were highly motivated during the sessions. In order for communication to take place, in most contexts the participants were required to correlate effectively their ability to use the skill of listening with their proficiency in speaking. Table 1 outlines the data for the participants' performance in the two variables during the Pre-test which resulted in an assessment of their proficiency levels at the baseline stage.

Table 1 Participants' percentages for oral proficiency pre-tests and listening proficiency pre-tests and the proficiency levels at the baseline phase

Year	Participants	Oral Pre-test 1 Percentage	Oral Pre-test 2 Percentage	Oral Pre-test 3 Percentage	Listening Pre-test 1 Percentage	Listening Pre-test 2 Percentage	Listening Pre-test 3 Percentage	Proficiency Level
2005	C	40	43	44	40	45	40	Competent
2005	B	25	27	27	30	30	30	Intermediate
2006	E	14	17	15	20	20	15	Novice
2006	F	8	9	8	10	10	10	Novice

The analysis of baseline data from measurement of the two dependent variables showed no strong deviation in the participants' percentages from the Oral Pre-tests and the Listening Pre-tests. Each participant maintained a steady pattern with scores in both modules of Pre-tests in the specific language skill. These criteria determined their selection as the two Purposive Samples. At the last data collection points for both dependent variables, none of the participants' performance indicated an increasing trend in their performance for the targeted language behaviour. The judgement was made that they exhibited consistent patterns in their performance during the pre-intervention period. Therefore, the results suggested that the stability in their patterns was favourable for the application of the independent variable.

The statistical and graphic representations of the performances at the baseline and intervention phases in the dependent variables speaking and listening collected for Participants B and C from Sample One and Participants E and F from Sample Two are presented.

Sample One

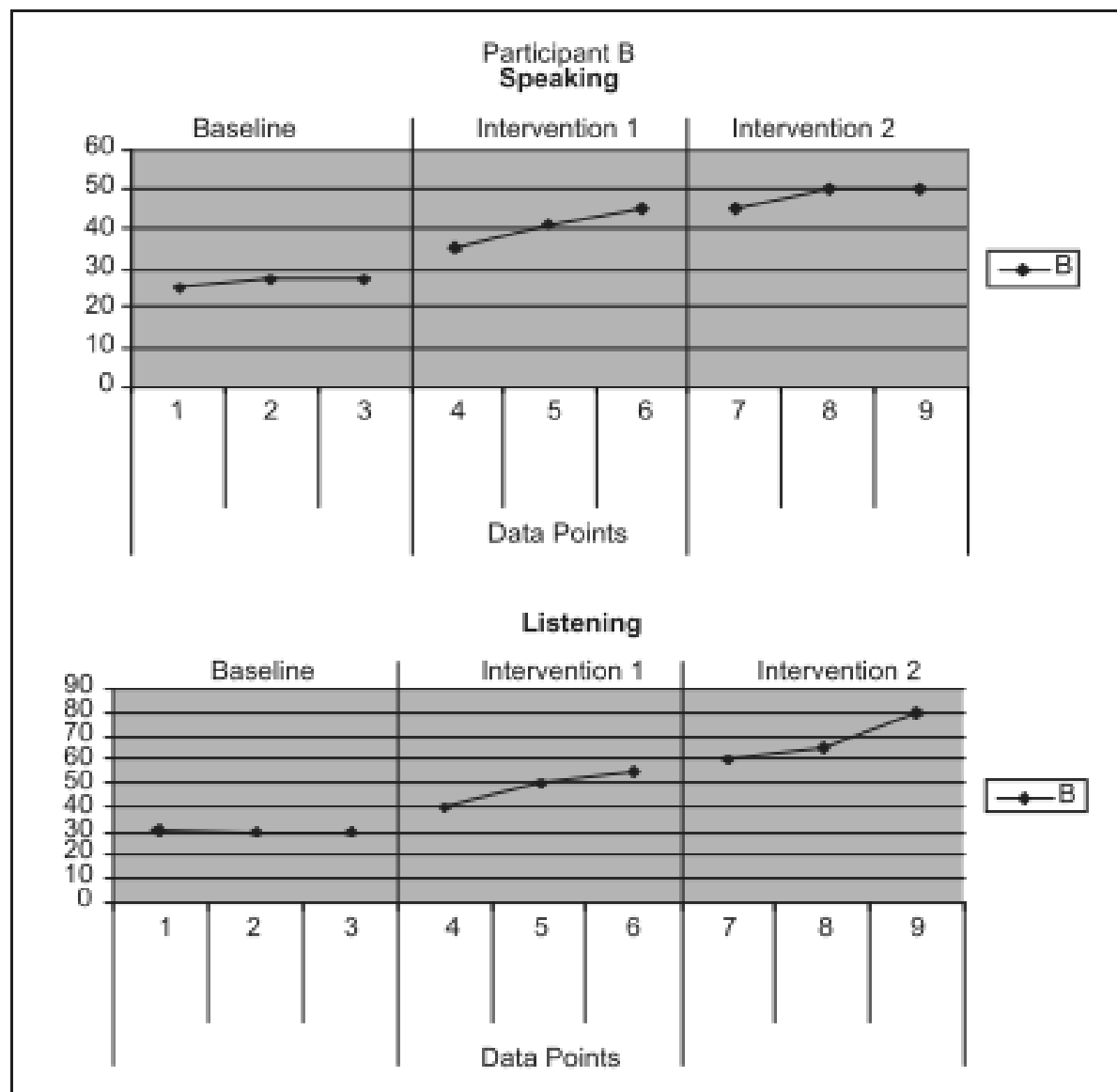


Figure 1 Participant B's performance for speaking and listening.

A comparison of Participant B's performance in both listening and speaking shows that she attained a percentage point range of 35 to 50 for speaking and 40 to 80 for listening. This indicates that she attained a higher proficiency level in listening than in speaking.

Table 2 Participant B's proficiency level based on average scores and percentages at baseline and intervention phases

Dependent Variable	Baseline Average Score %	Baseline Proficiency level	Intervention Average Score %	Point Increase	Intervention Proficiency Level
Listening	6/20 30	Intermediate	11.6/20 58	28	Competent
Speaking	5.2/20 26	Intermediate	8.9/20 45	19	Competent
Average Total	28		52	24	

Participant B's proficiency level in both dependent variables showed improvement from the baseline phase to the intervention phase. Although her performance in listening in the intervention phase was better than her performance in speaking, according to the assessment, she advanced from the Intermediate proficiency level to a Competent proficiency level in both listening and speaking. Her average percentage of 58% for listening and 45% for speaking placed her performances respectively at the higher and lower ends of the scale of Competent proficiency.

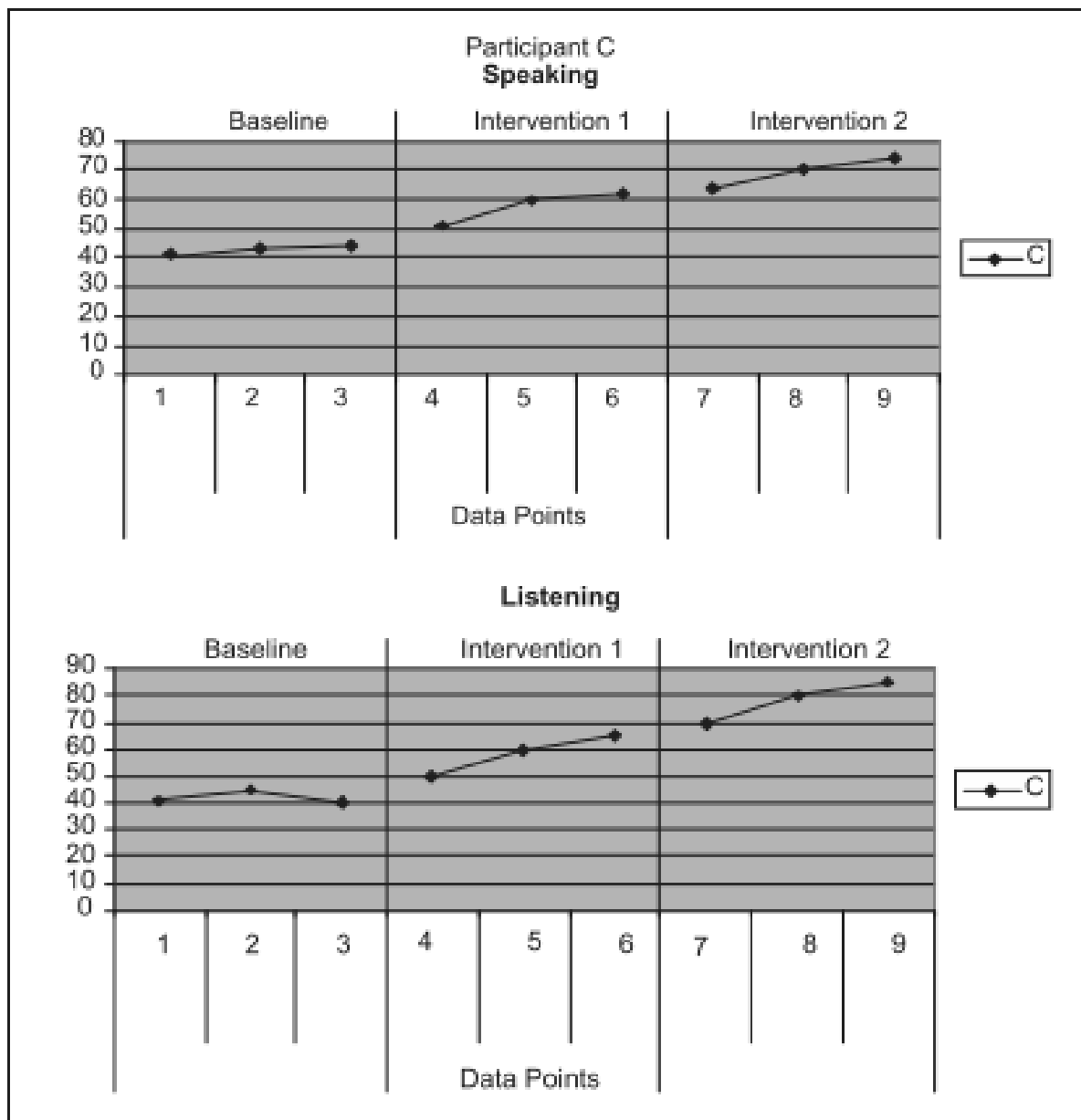


Figure 2 Participant C's performance for speaking and listening.

The results from Participant C's performance in both dependent variables show a higher percentage point range for listening. He received a range of 51 to 74 percentage points for speaking and 50 to 85 percentage points for listening. This shows a higher proficiency in listening than in speaking.

Table 3 Participant C's proficiency level based on average scores and percentages at baseline and intervention phases

Dependent Variable	Baseline Average Score %		Baseline Proficiency level	Intervention Average Score %		Point Increase	Intervention Proficiency Level
Listening	8.3/20	41.5	Competent	13.6/20	66	24.5	Distinguished
Speaking	8.5/20	42.5	Competent	12.7/20	64	21.5	Distinguished
Average Total	42			65		23	

At the end of the intervention, Participant C was assessed to have the same proficiency level for the dependent variables speaking and listening. He moved from a Competent Proficiency level at the baseline phase to a Distinguished proficiency level at the intervention phase. Based on the data, at the baseline stage, with percentages of 41.5 and 42.5 for listening and speaking respectively, he was evaluated to have a proficiency level at the lower end of the scale of Competent proficiency. Participant C's average percentages of 66 for listening and 64 for speaking at the conclusion of the intervention demonstrated a level of proficiency at the lower end of the Distinguished proficiency level for both dependent variables.

Sample Two

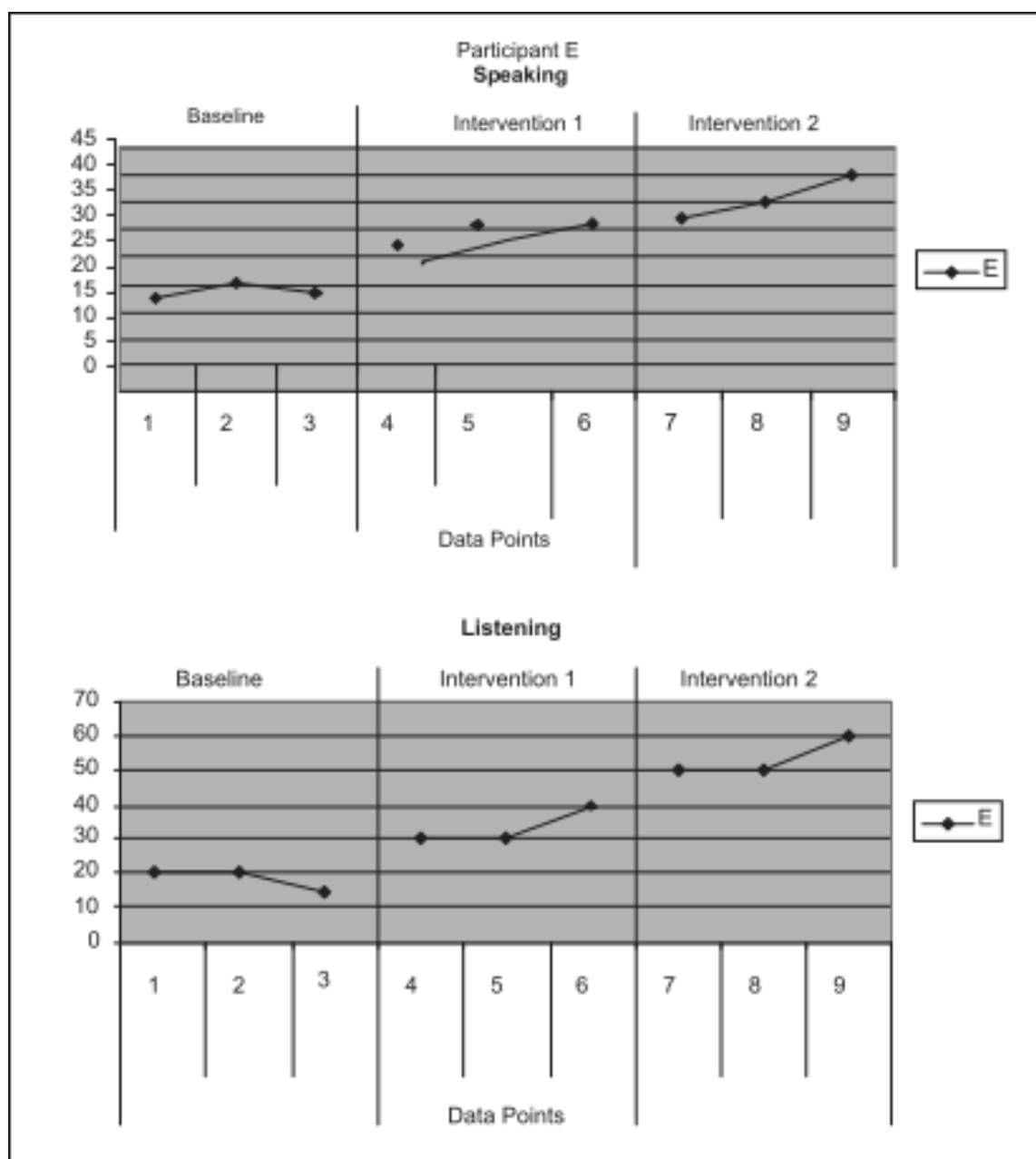


Figure 3 Participant E's performance for speaking and listening.

The data indicate that with a percentage range of 24 to 40 for the variable speaking, and 30 to 60 for the variable, listening, Participant E attained a higher level of proficiency in listening than speaking.

Table 4 Participant E's proficiency level based on average scores and percentages at baseline and intervention phases

Dependent Variable	Baseline Average Score %	Baseline Proficiency level	Intervention Average Score %	Point Increase	Intervention Proficiency Level
Listening	3.7/20 18.5	Novice	8.7/20 44	25.5	Competent
Speaking	3.1/20 15.5	Novice	6.3/20 32	16.5	Intermediate
Average Total	17	38		21	

From the baseline phase to the intervention phase, Participant E progressed from the Novice proficiency level in both dependent variables to Competent proficiency for listening and Intermediate proficiency for speaking. This meant that improvement in his listening proficiency surpassed his performance in speaking.

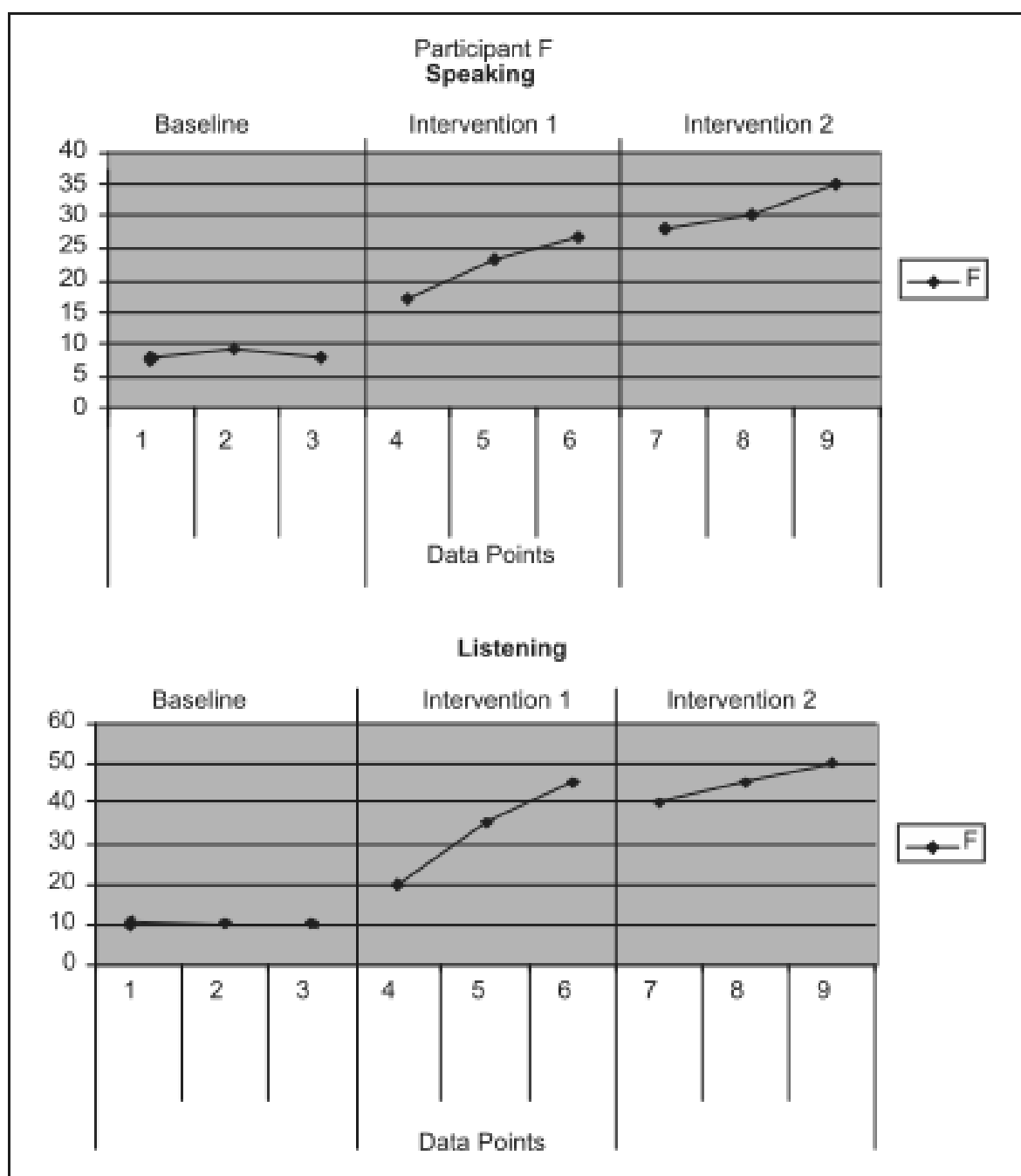


Figure 4 Participant F's performance for speaking and listening.

According to the data, Participant F's listening proficiency level improved from the baseline phase to the intervention phase. The results also suggest that her performance in listening was better than speaking.

Table 5 Participant F's Proficiency level based on average scores and percentages at baseline and intervention phases

Dependent Variable	Baseline Average Score %	Baseline Proficiency level	Intervention Average Score %	Point Increase	Intervention Proficiency Level
Listening	2/20 10	Novice	7.8/20 35	25	Intermediate
Speaking	1.7/20 8.5	Novice	5.3/20 27	18.5	Intermediate
Average Total	9		31	22	

At the beginning of the intervention, Participant F's average percentages positioned her proficiency level in both dependent variables at the lower end of the scale for Novice proficiency. With treatment, she attained 35% in listening at the end of the phase. An analysis showed that her proficiency in listening progressed to the higher end of the scale for Intermediate proficiency. Her performance in speaking continued to show improvement with marginal increases in the percentages. Participant F was evaluated after the intervention phase to have an Intermediate proficiency level in speaking. A comparison of the results show that even with a declining performance from data point 6 to data point 7, her average percentage in listening was recorded as higher than her proficiency in speaking.

Analysis of the results reveals that the sudden upward movement at the beginning of the intervention phase was caused by improved performances from the baseline phase. Overall results showed that each participant in both dependent variables showed improvement with the greatest progress evidenced in listening.

The results verify that all participants improved their overall percentages in listening and speaking and progressed to a higher proficiency level. The data showed that during the intervention, none of the participants remained at their baseline proficiency level in listening and speaking. The findings revealed similarity in the performance in listening and speaking skills, between two different groups of adult Spanish-speaking learners instructed at different time periods, using the Communicative Approach.

A major development is the distinct difference between the overall average percentages of the participants in the two dependent variables. In spite of the fact that data from the Needs Analysis Questionnaire showed the participants considered listening to be the most challenging skill to acquire, the findings revealed that although in some instances the differences were fairly marginal, in general, the change in listening which occurred in their performances was more favourable than the change in speaking. This meant that these participants increased their proficiency in listening to a

level that surpassed their speaking proficiency. The difference in performance in the two variables was most notable in the results for Participant B from Sample One and Participant E from Sample Two, both of whom attained a significantly higher percentage for listening than speaking.

The results also reveal that language instruction must be geared towards interactive listening and speaking and activities should relate directly to the concept of communicative competence. This approach provides learners with the opportunity to engage in meaningful activity and to acquire the necessary communicative skills in the areas of linguistic competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, actional competence and strategic competence.

Moreover, an analysis of the measurable variation in the participants' performance in the two dependent variables provides definite proof of variance in the participants' performances with the intervention. Although it is acknowledged that the skills of listening and speaking are linked directly, the results suggest that consideration should be given to separate assessment of these two skills. The findings validate the worth and usefulness of separate measurement of these two language skills at the baseline and intervention phases.

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SPANISH AND ENGLISH IN PUERTO RICO

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The islands that form the Puerto Rican archipelago were populated by aboriginal peoples who have been grouped together as the Taino, whose ethnicity and indigenous language, *arahuaco*, disappeared with the advance of Caribbean colonization by Spain and other European nations from the XV century onward. In the case of Puerto Rico, which was claimed for the Spanish Crown on the 19th of November in 1493, Spanish became the *de facto* language of the territory (Álvarez Nazario, 1982; Picó, 1988; Silén, 1993). The Spanish spoken in Puerto Rico is mainly a product of immigration from Andalusia, notably Huelva and Seville beginning in the XVI century. In addition to this first wave of Andalusian immigrants, a second wave of Canarian immigrants arrived at the beginning of the XVII century. Although the island was populated by diverse immigrants of diverse origin from northern, central, and southwestern Spain, Andalusian and Canarian numbers dominate (Álvarez Nazario, 1982; 1990). To these sources for Puerto Rican Spanish one can add a number of African elements introduced during the XVI and XIX centuries as a product of the slave trade (Álvarez Nazario, 1974; Lipski, 2009) and Anglophone elements beginning in the XIX and XX centuries following the Spanish-American War and the U.S. invasion of Puerto Rico on the 25th of June, 1898 and the eventual surrender by Spain under the Treaty of Paris on the 10th of December of the same year (Delgado Cintrón, 1994). As a consequence of the change in political sovereignty in 1898, the political and (socio)linguistic landscape of Puerto Rico, which for four centuries had been under the control of Spain, radically changed, and language became an issue or battlefield, which after more than one hundred years of coexistence between both languages, Spanish and English, has still not been resolved (López Laguerre, 1989; Trias Monge, 1999). This debate extends to many spheres, including the linguistic, political, sociological, historical, and pedagogical (Torres González, 2002). In this brief introduction to the main issues at hand, we examine the debate around language policy in Puerto Rico from an historical, political-judicial, and linguistic perspective.

Attempts to impose English in Puerto Rico arose very early in our most recent political history. These include the Language Law of 1902 that made both Spanish and English official by stipulating that “in all insular government departments, in all courts of this island and in all public offices, Spanish and English will be used interchangeably”, the

Notarial Law of 1906, which officialized the writing of official documents in both languages (Muñiz Argüelles, 1999; Nickels, 2005), and attempted to implement the compulsory teaching of English (Orama, 2011). The following statement made in by Philip C. Hanna, the last American consul on the island, sums up the prevailing attitudes held by the US authorities: “I hope as well that the Spanish language will be a thing of the past on this island” (Delgado Cintrón, 1988; 1993 [translated]). Nonetheless, the language policy adopted by the North Americans confronted a language with deep historical roots: Spanish (López Laguerre, 1997). Initiatives to Americanize Puerto Rico (cf. *Cruz v. Domínguez*, 1906; Trías Monge, 1981; Negrón de Montilla, 1990 among others), which met with more success in Hawaii and the Philippines, were questioned by politicians, lawyers, intellectuals, journalists and other members of Puerto Rican society. In 1911, the politician and lawyer Rosendo Matienzo Cintrón published two articles concerning language and proposals for the Americanization of Puerto Ricans (Delgado Cintrón, 1993). In 1913, José de Diego, another influential Puerto Rican lawyer, politician and poet of this era, proposed legislation in the Chamber of Deputies, the only elected legislative body, to abolish the statute of 1902. This project, which was approved, established Spanish as the language of instruction; official documents, judicial proceedings, and decisions of the Supreme Court, which sometimes were issued in English by judges appointed by Washington, ought to be translated to Spanish. This legislation, however, was eventually rejected by the Executive Board, a legislative body appointed by North American officials (Muñiz Argüelles, 2005). Such attempts to impede the process of Americanization were followed by others. In the area of education, these include the referendum of the Teachers Association in 1933 which advocated the use of Spanish as the medium of instruction; project 51 by Senator Rafael Arjona Siaca in 1946 which established Spanish as the language of instruction in the country; and the decree in 1947 by the then Commissioner for Education Mariano Villaronga, which required Spanish to be the language of instruction in public schools. In relation to the Law of 1902, these include the decision of the Puerto Rican Supreme Court in 1965 in *Pueblo v. Tribunal Superior* (reaffirmed in *Hernández Torres v. Hernández Colón et al.*, 1991) which established Spanish as the language of Puerto Ricans and, therefore, mandated that the proceedings of the courts would be conducted in that language. The legislation presented by Senator Rubén Berríos in 1976, and Senators Sergio Peña Clos and Antonio Faz Alzamora in 1986 established Spanish as the official language of Puerto Rico. None of these initiatives, however, succeeded in abolishing the Language Law. The Language Law of 1902 was finally abolished on the 5th of April, 1991 through the approval of Law Number 4, proposed by the then governor of Puerto Rico, Rafael Hernández Colón. This law recognized Spanish as the only official language of Puerto Rico, and soon thereafter the people of Puerto Rico would be collectively awarded the Prince of Asturias Award for having maintained the Spanish language after 100 years

of linguistic and cultural contact with the United States. The motivation behind this law, as expressed in the preamble, was to reaffirm our historical status as a Spanish-speaking people. At the same time, it expressed a commitment to the acquisition of English as a second language. However, on the 28th of January, 1993, the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico approved Law Number 1, proposed by Governor Pedro Rosselló Gonzalez, re-establishing Spanish and English as official languages and abolishing the previous law. The motivation to approve this legislation was of a pragmatic nature, as is clear from the preamble, which states that: “the political, economic, and social progress of Puerto Rico is intimately linked to the proposal of both Spanish and English as official languages of this jurisdiction.” This new law maintained, however, the language policy outlined in Law 68 of August 28, 1991, which stipulates that the language of instruction be the vernacular, Spanish and that English be taught as a second language.

Several proposals have been advanced to repeal the law of 1993 and to reaffirm the historic condition of Puerto Rico as a Latin American country. Among these are Law 28 of 2001 which declares that the public holiday dedicated to José de Diego be known as the Day of Reaffirmation of the Spanish Language and, more recently, legislation put forward by Senator María de Lourdes Santiago in 2013, which declares Spanish to be the official language of Puerto Rico and promotes its use in academic, professional, commercial, industrial and other activities. Nonetheless, current law regarding language status in Puerto Rico remains essentially the same as at the beginning of the past century; that is, both languages, Spanish and English, are official. This situation continues to generate extensive political, judicial, and academic debate on the island, including several very controversial legal cases such *Pueblo v. Tribunal Superior*, 1965; *Pueblo v. Moreno González*, 1984; *Aponte Rivera v. Sears Roebuck de P.R.*; *Pueblo v. Branch*, 2001; among others) and legal opinions (Colón García, López Rivera et al., 1998a; 1998b; Gonzales Rose, 2011; Muñiz Argüelles, 1999; Ramos, 2005).

Although the language policy in Puerto Rico favors the use of both languages, Puerto Rican society is not, on the whole, bilingual (Carroll, 2009; 2013; Delgado Cintrón, 1993). what is perhaps most surprising is not the well documented fact that Spanish has been maintained as the primary language of the inhabitants of the island, but rather that English, in spite of its prestige and value in terms of social mobility, has not become a second language commonly used by Puerto Ricans (Torres González, 2002). According to the 2010 Census, 66.4 percent of Puerto Ricans reported they do not speak English or do not speak it well. Despite more than one hundred years of U.S. presence on the island, extensive exposure to English through means of mass communication, the teaching of English in all years of primary and secondary school, and the continuous flow of Puerto Rican migrants to and from the United States, more than 50 per cent of Puerto Ricans admit that they do not speak English at all or have a

very limited linguistic competence in the language. Multiple interpretations have been made of this state of affairs, the most prominent one being that because English has been used for ideological purposes to Americanize them, Puerto Ricans have developed a heightened sense of Hispanophilia, and see Spanish as a symbol of their national identity. In other words, Puerto Ricans have come to view the language issue as one of conflict and opposition between ideologies of *Americanization* versus *Hispanicization* (Ortiz López, 2000; Ortiz López & González Rivera, forthcoming).

The development of a comprehensive language policy involves the formulation of several sub-components, including an external language policy which defines the role that any given language plays in society; an internal language policy which establishes grammatical standards; and an educational language policy which stipulates how any given language is to be used in the school curricula (Hamel, 1988). In the case of Puerto Rico, external language policy has been framed within the context of the island's political relationship with the United States, the Language Law of 1902, and the laws enacted by the local government. The responsibility for the formulation of internal language policy has fallen on the Puerto Rican Academy of the Spanish Language, the universities (in particular, the University of Puerto Rico) and other authorities on the Spanish and English languages. The elaboration of educational language policy for Puerto Rico, which is outlined below, has not been without controversy (López Laguerre, 1989; Orama, 2011). In the hundred years of political relations with the United States, there have been several initiatives put forward for the development of bilingualism in Puerto Rico, but none of these initiatives have attended to the matter in a comprehensive way. Before 1948, while the legal language of instruction at the elementary level could be Spanish or English, in secondary and higher education English was the only legal language of instruction (López Laguerre, 1989; Ortiz López, 2000; Torres González, 2002). While this was the legal reality, the facts on the ground and classroom practice often differed, with monolingualism in Spanish prevailing. In spite of this, Puerto Rico has been considered a bilingual territory, since Spanish and English share official status (Pousada, 1989). The language policy from 1948 to the present has maintained Spanish as the medium of instruction at all levels of public education, but this policy could be substantially modified or repealed at any moment (López Laguerre, 1989). For example, in 1997 the government, under the auspices of the Department of Education, implemented the *Proyecto para Formar un Ciudadano Bilingüe* (Project for Developing a Bilingual Citizen), an initiative which promoted the following objectives (Ortiz López, 2000):

1. Begin literacy in English and in Spanish during elementary school.
2. Allot 90 minutes of instruction in Spanish and in English at the intermediate level of instruction.
3. Utilize the English language to teach the sciences and mathematics.

4. Provide immersion programs in English for high schools students, as well as writing workshops in Spanish.
5. Promote opportunities and incentives to teachers who are teaching English so they may develop professionally and obtain certifications in teaching English.
6. Develop an exchange program which permits Puerto Rican teachers to improve their English skills in the United States and bring North American teachers to Puerto Rico in order to help Puerto Rican teachers on the island to improve their English.
7. Provide technical assistance and supervision in English and Spanish in all school districts.

To date, there has been no comprehensive study carried out to gather and analyze qualitative and quantitative data concerning the scope and achievements of the *Project for Developing a Bilingual Citizen*. This Project has, however, been criticized by various centrist and left-leaning cultural and academic institutions in the country. These critiques hold that that the project's definitions of bilingualism were based on personal opinion rather than scientific study and that the theoretical framework adopted by the project was designed to address linguistic and cultural realities that do not correspond to those of Puerto Rico. Given such findings, the Academia Puertorriqueña de la Lengua Española (APLE) recommended the following educational policy guidelines (Orama, 2011): the use of Spanish as a the language of instruction and the initiation of English learning only once communication skills in Spanish have been developed. These strategies are more appropriate to the monolingual situation in Puerto Rico than are the strategies proposed under the Project, which are more appropriate to a classically bilingual society (De Houwer, 2009). The APLE proposal not only defends Spanish from the nationalist and cultural perspectives as the vernacular language which serves all social functions in Puerto Rican society better than does English, it also advocates for the teaching of English as a second language (L2) or foreign language. It does so, however, without clearly delineating the differences between the L2 and foreign language, and without advancing a concrete proposal on how to achieve success in both languages, given the current sociolinguistic realities in Puerto Rico. Moreover, it makes no reference to the members of the Puerto Rican diaspora in the United States who, when they return to their home country, would not encounter room for sociolinguistic integration under the APLE proposal. Any viable educational language policy should incorporate both the latest scientific advances in second language acquisition research as well as the needs and concerns of the Puerto Rican diaspora.

Torres González (2002) has proposed “an imperfect language policy” framed by official policy of bilingualism and an educational strategy which “recognizes the primacy of vernacular Spanish and the importance of English as a second language” (translation by the authors). This proposal responds to current trends towards

globalization, which on the one hand promotes the expansion of *lingua francas*, like English, and on the other hand favors strong tendencies toward cultural and linguistic heterogeneity which manifest not only in ethnic, national, regional or territorial terms, but also in terms of class, gender, generational and other social groups. That is to say, Torres González defends a type of additive bilingualism which takes into account all the components of the Puerto Rican society.

Beyond the debate that has mainly, but not exclusively, been generated in the public sphere between politicians and intellectuals, it is important to consider what the Puerto Ricans think about the language policy of their country: Do they really experience the dilemma between *Americanization* and *Hispanization*?; With which (if any) of these positions do the majority of Puerto Ricans align themselves?; Are Spanish and English seen as being in conflict by Puerto Ricans?; Is Spanish a symbol of identity for Puerto Ricans?; Does bilingualism represent a threat to their ethno-sociolinguistic existence? These and many other questions emerge from the ethno-sociolinguistic tensions which have characterized debate among certain groups in the Puerto Rican society. There have been some studies concerning these issues. Here we will compile data from two studies: the first, sponsored by the Puerto Rican Athenaeum during the 1990s, years of linguistic effervescence; and the second, a study carried out by Ortiz López (2000). For reasons of economy of space, we will not discuss the methodology of the two studies, nor will we present exhaustive data from them here.

The inquiry sponsored by the Puerto Rican Athenaeum in 1990 found that 86% of Puerto Ricans accepted the current policy of both Spanish and English as official languages, with some 40% ready to accept a change to Spanish only and some 6% ready to accept a change to English only.

According to the Athenaeum's findings, economic progress is linked with learning English, since some 90% consider English very important and important (60% and 30% respectively). That said, 96% consider Spanish as important as English.

Ortiz López (2000) presents similar data collected from university students: 83% believe that given the trend towards globalization, bilingualism in Spanish and English is becoming more prevalent among Puerto Ricans and more acceptable to them. Some 88% are aware that bilingualism opens doors to better paying jobs. These findings show that linguistic coexistence is emerging naturally, with fewer of the conflicts of the past. We can cautiously conclude then, that Puerto Ricans are increasingly accepting both languages, despite controversies concerning identity and officiality, without questioning or denying the fact that Spanish is their mother tongue (Pabón, 2002; Vélez Arocho 1991).

As confirmed by the above findings, the growing instrumental and economic value of learning English has modified past attitudes and beliefs and allowed the language to penetrate some domains of Puerto Rican society, without becoming a threat to identity and Spanish (Pabón, 2002). A viable language policy for Puerto Rico must attend to

the island's complex sociolinguistic heterogeneity including: (i) Puerto Ricans of the less privileged classes, who are more monolingual in less standard dialects of Spanish; (ii) the middle and upper classes, who are more bilingual, with more dominance of the standard varieties of both languages (although many are already inclined towards monolingualism in English); (iii) members of the Puerto Rican diaspora, some of whom tend to be monolingual in non-standard English (and for some of whom Spanish does not represent a stamp of Puerto Rican identity, Lamboy, 2011), alongside other more balanced bilinguals, belonging to the more recent migrations of professionals, especially to Orlando, Florida (Duany, 2011), and (iv) the many other ethnicities to be found in significant numbers on the island, Dominicans, documented or undocumented, Cubans, Anglo-Americans, and foreigners, with their diverse attitudinal and language dominance profiles.

Further research is needed concerning the many faces of Puerto Rican ethno-sociolinguistic reality from new scientific and sociolinguistic perspectives which consider all groups and all of the multiple manifestations of the coexistence of English and Spanish in Puerto Rico. This should contribute to a language policy and planning project designed to address the sociolinguistic realities of Puerto Rico. Among the elements of such a policy we put forward a selection of proposals which, although revolutionary and utopian, can serve as an inspiration to rethink the educational language policy on the island:

- 1) As an instrument of incalculable value for human development, additive bilingualism must be a fundamental goal of educational language policy (Torres González, 2002). If educators and planners agree to the teaching of both languages and they give both languages the value and sociolinguistic space that they need (as appears to be happening naturally among young people), then this additive bilingualism will have greater chances of success.
- 2) The teaching of Spanish must be reframed to avoid a defensive and language purist stance that sees Puerto Rican identity as being under threat, in favor of an open, expansive heterogeneous scientific vision of Puerto Rican society, which incorporates advances from the field of second language acquisition as well as inputs from all ethno-sociolinguistic groups (especially the disadvantaged) within a diverse Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and Hispano-American reality.
- 3) The canonical focus of language teaching must give way to a multicultural and linguistic focus informed by an ethno-sociolinguistic hybrid vision of Puerto Rican, Caribbean, and Hispanic reality.
- 4) Language curricula and classroom teaching must go beyond the present cultural, historic and literary perspectives to incorporate contemporary models from applied linguistics which also emphasize

understanding, production, and vernacular writing. For example, Spanish must become an object of study in its own right.

The debate concerning the official status of Spanish and English in Puerto Rico has already lasted for more than a century. A positive aspect of this debate is that it has served to sharpen our understanding of the roles of both languages in Puerto Rican society both on the island and in the diaspora. In our opinion, however, a less positive aspect of this debate is that it has raised the issue to an ideological level which presents us with the dilemma of *Americanization* versus *Hispanization* (Ríos, 1995). What is urgently needed at the present moment is a reconceptualization of notions of language and identity on the island, informed by recent research (such as that carried out in Belarus by Brown (2005) in order to move beyond the present impasses toward the formulation of language policy that truly reflects the attitudes, needs, and aspirations of contemporary Puerto Rican society.

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THE IMPACT OF FREIRIAN THEORY AND POPULAR EDUCATION ON ESL EDUCATION IN THE CARIBBEAN

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“Education is fundamentally about love.” Paulo Freire

For many years English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers in the Caribbean have been trapped in a mechanical and authoritarian educational system characterized by regressive trends that inhibit the process of acquisition and valorization of students' creole languages and cultures. Sadly, I have seen many colleagues lose faith in their ESL students, but worst of all, they have lost faith in themselves as agents of change. I have found that the use of Freirian methods for empowering ESL learners in the process of acquiring language skills provides both teachers and students with a sense of hope in the power of education as a liberating force. In this process, those involved come to see education as a way of freeing minds that have been enclosed by a system that feeds on the flesh and blood and body and soul of those who have become “neo-slaves” on the neo-colonial globalized plantation. Part of this slavery involves negative and derogatory ideas regarding creole languages and cultures that have been imposed by those who consider themselves more powerful and which have been internalized by many Caribbean teachers and students themselves.

The educational postulate upon which Freirian Theory is grounded situates pedagogy within the real life context of students. Paulo Freire places education in the political and historical setting of the time and insists on the teacher's responsibility for problem-posing rather than on problem-solving. In Freirian theory, language plays a key role in education. Freire stresses the need for educators to study the everyday language and cultures of their students. Many students in the Caribbean are at a disadvantage in school because the creole languages that they speak as first languages and the creole cultures that they practice are considered ‘inferior’, ‘corrupt’ and inappropriate in the classroom.

This article proposes a departure from conventional ‘banking’ education in favor of a more liberatory approach in the learning/teaching experience of the language classroom. It discusses how educators can break away from the current practices of developing intellectually and linguistically passive students in order to move toward the development of intellectually and linguistically active students, who have been

empowered to take responsibility for their own education, so they can become agents of change who will be able to challenge a system that does not meet the linguistic and cultural needs of the overwhelming majority of its students.

Freire was born on September 19, 1921 in Recife, Brazil. As a child he knew poverty and hunger first hand and fell behind in school. As stated by Freire in Bentley: “I didn’t understand anything because of my hunger. I wasn’t dumb. It wasn’t lack of interest. My social condition didn’t allow me to have an education. Experience showed me once again the relationship between social class and knowledge.” (Bentley, 1999: paragraph 1)

Freire’s family’s economic conditions improved, allowing him to grow professionally through access to higher education. He studied law but never practiced it. He was eventually appointed to positions of authority in the Brazilian education system, from which he was able to challenge biases against the cultural and linguistic practices of the impoverished majority. In 1968, Freire published his most famous, seminal work *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. It is here that Freire explains his educational ideology and proposes a ‘critical pedagogy’.

Freire believed that the oppressed needed to regain their sense of humanity and that this could be achieved through a new pedagogy of hope which would allow students to take responsibility for their own education and to develop critical thinking skills, thus equipping them to question an unfair system, challenge it, and work towards changing it. According to Freire (1970): “No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption” (p. 54). Shor, an advocate of Freire’s critical pedagogy, asserts that:

“learning does not define students as empty vessels to be filled with packages of information on a thin path of facts and figures. This means opposing the mechanical pedagogy and the unequal tracking that take some to success and most others to cheap labor and underemployment, to despair and anti-intellectualism.” (Shor, 1984: 26)

Many authors have summarized the major postulates of Freirian Theory. Among these one can mention: Madrow and Jopling (2003); Smith (2002); Torres (1993); Street (1984); and Shor (1984). Taking as a reference the work of these authors and of Freire himself (1970; 1989; 1996; 1997; 1998), the basic tenets of the Freirian Method of Education can be simply stated as follows:

1. Most formal education is at present constructed on a “banking” model. Teachers make deposits of information which students receive, memorize and repeat. Education becomes a flow of knowledge from the “knowledgeable” (teachers) to the “know nothings” (students). Students have no need to develop critical thought; they remain passive, serving the interests of the dominant

classes. This kind of education inhibits creativity, resists dialogue, and is fatalistic in nature, resulting in apathy and inaction. Educators who are engaged in a progressive liberating education resist the “banking method”. They become facilitators of knowledge and never owners of the truth.

2. Resistance to oppression must be an educational principle. Dominant classes deny freedom to the oppressed and this role is so ingrained in society that the oppressed frequently strive to imitate the oppressor. To break this cycle a revolution of ideas must take place. The role of the educator is crucial. She/he must construct pedagogy with, not for, the oppressed. Teachers must help students transform themselves from the role of object to the role of subject and lead them to critically understand reality by unmasking oppressive ideologies.
3. Culture (including language) must be read as a ‘text’ allowing students to understand the ways in which it functions as a tool for the interests of the dominant classes. Students must assume empowerment and agency over their own language and culture, reinventing them in a way that allows them to use their own cultural practices in the process of knowledge acquisition. Teachers are “cultural workers” as the students become the main topic of the class.
4. Knowledge is socially constructed through the “dialectal tension of praxis”. Critical thought and consciousness are achieved through a process of reflection followed by action. This results in “praxis” which is educated action that leads to transformation. Dialogue is crucial to this transformation since it ensures a give and take of ideas, a flow of communication and cooperation that will ultimately empower the oppressed to transform their reality. Dialogue requires hope and faith in oneself and in others.
5. Educators and students can work together as co-learners to create pedagogies of hope. Teachers can promote such pedagogies by expressing respect for differences in ideas and positions, respecting students and never trying to manipulate them, being tolerant, open, and critical, teaching students to “learn how to learn”, challenging students to seek for the “why?” and respecting the students’ knowledge, cultures and languages content. The goal is for students to begin to see the world not as an unchangeable, static reality, but instead as a reality in progress, where transformation is possible and necessary.

Teaching ESL students in Puerto Rico who have very low proficiency in the English language poses serious problems to ESL educators. The most challenging problems that I have encountered as an ESL teacher include the following: 1) Students do not see education as a way to gain control over their lives, but instead as a task that someone has imposed on them; 2) Students never question why they have been placed in lower level achievement groups; 3) Students avoid reading, homework, class work, tests and even avoid attending class; 4) Students do question the structure of the course

or the kind of work assigned; and 5) Students expect the teacher to provide all the answers.

Teaching these students to be truly literate, to go beyond the most elementary reading levels and evaluate what they read, to incorporate what they learn in forming new ideas, and to read and think critically, requires more than assigning mechanical exercises in reading or writing in English. As stated by Gallagher (2010), education can form or deform. Teaching ESL at the college level should help students question a system that has served them wrongly. According to Gallagher (2010: 58), “past history affects success in school....a poorly funded overcrowded school can affect students’ chances at college, and link poverty and racism to problems with academic standards.” Standards are designed to be exclusive. The cycle continues; the system feeds on reproduction of a “workforce” that should not have access to higher education.

According to Roberts and Burgess (1987), most ESL texts are based on traditional methods which present an idealized view of society and a monocultural approach to language acquisition. These authors advocate for a revision of curricular material for ESL that revisits the importance of developing the ability to think critically. Teachers must examine materials and question how well they portray students’ reality, what kinds of social roles are implicit, and how much opportunity for creative and critical thinking is allowed.

According to Spener (1992), both the colonial ESL methods of the past as well as the neo-colonial methods of the present assume that the learners know the metropolitan culture associated with the metropolitan standard language before learning to read and write. This is especially true for ESL students in the Caribbean, who often do not know American or British culture. Their own cultures and languages are nowhere to be found in the classroom, so that the linguistic and cultural expertise that they have gained from their home environment is not only ignored, but also stigmatized. Practitioners of Freirian Theory in ESL have developed language skills by using experience stories, oral histories, picture stories, role plays, etc. which reflect students’ linguistic and cultural realities as well as their lived realities, values and beliefs. (Wallerstein, 1983; Faigin, 1985; Auerbach & Wallerstein, 1987; Brandt & Marino, 1983).

Spener (1992) also notes that many times students’ first language works better than English when it comes to sound symbol correspondences, because it is more consistent phonetically than English. This is certainly the case with Spanish L1 ESL students in Puerto Rico and with speakers of those English lexifier Caribbean Creoles for which an orthography exists. ESL teachers who adopt a Freirian approach use generative word lists to teach English phonics and/or the whole language approach. To assist teachers of English as a second language, Gallagher (2010) developed a method based on a variation of one previously designed by Auerbach (1990) which consists of the following steps: 1) define a problem; 2) identify a statement/quotation to support the

problem; 3) appropriate the problem to make it your own; 4) find new responses to the problem; and 5) discuss possible solutions.

In order to incorporate a more Freirian approach in my own classroom, I designed an experimental lesson plan aimed at guiding and facilitating the process of developing literacy in English. Freirian concepts were integrated into the plan, especially in the development of class objectives. For example, some of my main objectives were: building self-confidence, promoting active learning; acknowledging the importance of students' skills and knowledge; making the classroom the object of study (according to Freire, "problematizing the existential situation"); and developing communication skills in English in a relaxed environment where corrections were totally avoided.

In one lesson, students were asked to brainstorm on the word "education". Later they worked in small groups assessing their prior knowledge on their own educational histories. They then recorded a short narrative on their "best" year in school. These recordings were later listened to and discussed in class. Finally, students read a passage about a Puerto Rican woman who abandoned her dream of becoming educated, which centered on themes like learning and self-esteem. Students could relate to the narrative, since someone in their own families most likely had a similar story to tell. The story generated thought and discussion among the students. They were able to question the idea of passively accepting one's fate vs. becoming active in the process of obtaining one's education. They were thus encouraged to envision themselves as agents in the process of taking control over their own lives.

In the Caribbean, many factors have affected the teaching of English to Creole speakers as well as in the development of Creole literacy. Most Caribbean creoles have not yet been standardized for educational purposes. In most Caribbean English-lexifier Creole speaking communities, a continuum of varieties exists that ranges from less English-influenced basilectal forms to highly English influenced acrolectal forms. Although Creoles are very rich linguistic systems, their use is usually prohibited or actively discouraged in formal contexts. In Caribbean territories where English is the official language, creole languages are officially excluded from the classroom.

Elasser and Irvine (1987) conducted a study with students from all over the Eastern Caribbean who were attending the College of the Virgin Islands (CVI) on St. Thomas, an English lexifier Creole speaking island where English is the official language. According to the authors, although creole languages are used in informal contexts throughout the university, they are systematically discouraged in formal academic environments. Most of the students entering as freshmen do not meet the minimum English proficiency standards and are required to enroll in English remedial courses. Sadly, many of these students (about 60%) cannot pass the English "exit test" which is a requirement for graduation. The study revealed that most participants believed that their knowledge of an English lexifier Creole was directly related to their low

proficiency in English, because it was causing linguistic interference which impeded their ability to learn “proper” or “good” English.

In a second phase of the same study, Elasser and Irvine integrated the study of English lexifier Creole into an English composition course at the CVI. Students were exposed to both languages, making a systematic comparison between the phonological and grammatical systems of English and Creole. This acknowledgment that Creole was rule-governed just like English, and that it was an effective tool for communication made students value their mother tongue much more. Students created their own writing systems due to the lack of standardized creole orthographies. Using Creole to write their own stories and experiences produced a change in attitude toward learning and writing in general. Knowing that they could express their thoughts and ideas in Creole and English was an enlightening experience. Resistance toward writing in English was overcome by teaching both languages separately and by addressing the power relations underlying language choice and language attitudes.

One of Freire’s most important beliefs was that literacy programs and education in general need to start with the learners’ own languages, cultures and lives, and then learners need to go beyond the traditional classroom to become agents of change in their communities. This can only be achieved if students have been first empowered by expressing their own lived experiences and learning to read and write in their own languages before learning to read and write in any other language.

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Appelton Kepa observes that in traditional classrooms, “the value of the students’ language has been muted in favor of the school discourse” (2000: 63). This lack of acknowledgment and valorization of students’ first languages does great pedagogical (and in many cases irreparable) damage because it violates the principle “that each student brings a valid language and culture to the classroom” (p. 61). School curricula in the Caribbean and elsewhere in the world have almost without exception been developed within the framework of banking education and domination, where students’ own language and culture are discarded in favor of the ‘official’ language and culture of the dominant classes. The Freirian language teacher respects the language and culture of his/her students and never suppresses the use of students’ native language as a tool for communication, learning, and empowerment. Appleton Kepa (2000) concludes that:

“Teachers who work toward a humanizing pedagogy place a high value on the student’s universe and emphasize respect and legitimation of the adolescent’s own discourse, which is different but never inferior. The educational project has to be inclusive and recognize the rich diversity of human subjects.” (p. 67)

Print literacy in the child’s first language and cultural literacy in the child’s own culture are the cornerstones on which all education must rest. Caribbean students need

to acquire both informal and academic proficiency in their own language and their own culture before they can become proficient in English as a second language and metropolitan culture. Most Caribbean ESL materials and curricula fail to meet students' needs because they fail to include themes that are culturally relevant to our student population. Proper acknowledgment and valorization of students' first languages and cultures has been shown to have a positive impact on their attitudes toward ESL. When students feel that learning English is not a threat to their culture and identity, they become better second language learners. Changing students' self-perception by validating their own languages and cultures promotes a willingness on their part, not only to learn two languages, but to crave knowledge as the tool for true empowerment.

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SHOULD WE FEAR ENGLISH? A STUDY OF RESISTANCE TOWARDS GLOBALIZATION THROUGH LANGUAGE

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Since the arrival of the English-speaking US colonizers in Puerto Rico in 1898, its citizens have feared, to various degrees, the imposition of English as an official language. This fear has manifested itself among many as a resistance to the notion of Puerto Rico becoming a bilingual country. The notion that being bilingual will somehow lead to a loss of one's culture and identity is not uncommon, although in many areas of the world plurilingualism is the norm, rather than the exception. Over the past several hundred years, there have been instances where the imposition of English has led to a loss of preexisting languages and cultures. In this article, we consider Hawai'i, Jamaica, and Grenada, three island territories where this has happened, in order to better understand what has happened in the past and what may happen in the future in Puerto Rico. Through analysis of the histories of these islands a clearer idea of what is at stake when English is imposed emerges. All around the world the effects of the growing influence of English are being felt. The key question is: should people fear the loss of their culture and their language as a result of the adoption of English as an official language in Puerto Rico?

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With the current wave of globalization, the world seems to be growing smaller and smaller every day. Whether it be through music, religion, customs, or language, less dominant cultures are being influenced by other, more dominant cultures that try to impose their unitary vision on the world everywhere (Rodrik, 1997). Many people see the spread of English as a positive factor in a process that will eventually result in the establishment of a less divided and less unequal world (Pei, 1968). That being said, this is not a view shared by all. Some consider this process to be occurring too fast and have expressed their concern that too much is being sacrificed as it unfolds (Bond & King, 1985). Thus, the globalization of culture and language is often met with popular resistance, which is expressed in various ways. To better understand some of these forms of resistance, this article will focus on how the peoples of various island territories have reacted to the imposition of English.

Five key concepts of globalization include internationalization, liberalization, deterritorialization, universalization, and westernization (Oduwale, 2012; Beck, 2000).

Of these five concepts, we will be focusing on westernization throughout this article. What is meant by westernization is a process by which a standardized form of Western European and North American culture is spreading throughout the world, leading to the destruction of smaller local cultures (Ricento, 2006). One aspect of westernization is the rapid increase in the use of Global English, a term used to refer to English as a world language spoken by a growing number of people, including those who use English as a native language, those who use English as a Second Language, and those who use English as an Additional Language (Mar-Molinero & Stevenson, 2006).

Currently, several thousand languages are spoken worldwide, each one shaped by and in turn shaping the culture of the people who speak it. In this way each ethno-linguistic group leaves an indelible imprint on their language, just as their language leaves an indelible imprint on them. Therefore, if a part of culture and identity is to be found in language then, if a language ceases to be spoken, important mechanisms of the culture and identity that correspond to that language also cease to operate. Add to this the fact that our language is largely responsible for how we interpret the world (Whorf, 1940). If we stop using one language and begin to use another, significant aspects of our view of the world are modified to conform with the world view corresponding to the newly adopted language. If this new language emerged in a part of the world that is dissimilar to ours, then the world view that it imposes might not be appropriate to our geography and history, and therefore this new world view may be unfit to represent our interests or to fulfill our needs.

In order to gain some understanding of how resistance to English has manifested itself on each, the island territories that we focus on in this study are considered primarily in terms of the size of their population, the languages that were traditionally spoken on them, and their history of contact with English (Ethnologue, 2014). Just as each island is different, so too are the methods of resistance to English that are to be found on each. In Hawai'i, efforts are focused on the restoration of the ancestral language spoken there, as a way to resuscitate and preserve Hawai'ian culture. In Jamaica, the focus is on appropriating many features of English and converting these features into expressions of a typically and historically Jamaican culture and worldview. In Grenada, English is valued and respected, but 'kept in its place' in terms of the daily life of the people on the island. As far as Puerto Rico is concerned, we can say that up until the present Puerto Rico's resistance to English has been of a more straightforward nature, with most people rejecting the influence of North American language and culture in favor of those which predominated before the advent of US colonialism on the island.

Found northwest off the Pacific coast of the United States, Hawai'i consists of a chain of islands, 8 to be precise, with an approximate population of 1.4 million. Hawai'i's official language is English. A minority of the islands' population speak the native Hawaiian language 'Ōlelu Hawai'i, also known as Hawai'ian. In Hawai'i, an English-

lexifier Creole which emerged from contact among immigrants and indigenous Hawaiians is also spoken. This language is called Hawaiian Creole English. The history of contact with English begins in earnest with the arrival of the Americans in Hawai'i during the first half of the nineteenth century, but in reality the first encounters with English began with the arrival of the British explorer James Cook in the eighteenth century. Cook's expeditions cost him his life and resulted in no appreciable influence of English on the islands. This all changed in the 1820s, when American missionaries came to island to spread their faith. This would mark the beginning of the downfall of the Hawai'ian language.

The next decades saw the arrival of many immigrants to the islands. Their arrival in such large numbers increased the standing of their languages, English being the most prominent, and saw the Hawai'ian language fall in disfavor. This reached a critical juncture in 1885 when the Hawai'ian education system switched from Hawai'ian to English as the language of instruction and of initial literacy. Due to the strict enforcement of English as the language of education, the amount of native Hawai'ian speakers kept shrinking, reaching a climax in the 20th century, when at one point there were less than 1,000 native speakers of Hawai'ian and many feared that the language would die out.

But there is still hope for the Hawai'ian language in the 21st century. Hawai'ians have begun restoration efforts to resuscitate the Hawai'ian language by establishing schools with Hawai'ian language immersion programs. Thanks to these programs by the year 2000 there were approximately 2000 native speakers of the Hawai'ian language and by the year 2010 there were close to 25,000 native speakers.

Located south of Cuba and west of Haiti in the Caribbean Sea, the island of Jamaica is home to approximately 2.9 million people. Most of them speak an English-lexifier Creole language known as Jamaican Creole, Jamaican Patwa, or simply Jamaican. Also spoken in Jamaica, though not as frequently, is Jamaican Standard English, which is the official language of Jamaica. That being said, Jamaican Standard English is used mostly by the upper classes, in official settings, and in the education system. Elsewhere, most people use Jamaican Creole in their everyday communication.

Jamaica's colonial history began with invasion by the Spanish in the 1500s, who named the island Santiago. The island was conquered by the English in 1655, from which time Jamaica would remain their colony until 1962, when the island achieved its independence from the British. While that moment marked the end of the British rule over Jamaica, their influence can still be felt, including the retention of Standard English as the official language and as the language of instruction and initial literacy in the classroom. That being said, Jamaicans regularly appropriate English words into their English-lexifier Creole, where those words function according to African influenced grammatical rules and patterns, rather than the rules of Standard English. In

their use of Standard English itself, Jamaicans have transformed it into a new Caribbeanized variety of English. These phenomena can also be seen as the result of resistance on the part of Jamaicans to the imposition of English.

Constituted by a group of islands, Grenada can be found northeast of Venezuela and northwest of Trinidad and Tobago. It has a population of almost 110,000 who speak English, Grenadian Creole English and Grenadian Creole French. Of those three languages, English is the official language but it is also the least frequently spoken. Most Grenadians use Grenadian Creole English in their day to day life, while Grenadian Creole French is nowadays only used in some rural areas.

For Grenadians, significant contact with English began in 1763, when Grenada became a British colony after the Seven Years' War. For the next few years, until the failed French revolt of 1796, Grenada would switch hands between the French and the British, but in the end the British prevailed. Grenada thereafter remained a British colony until independence was finally achieved in 1974, as the result of a process that had begun in the 1950s. Soon after, in 1976, a People's Revolutionary Government was established, which drew fierce opposition from the United States who, in 1983, responded by mounting an invasion of Grenada and toppling the government.

Culturally and linguistically, Grenadians have resisted British and US colonialism by retaining their French- and English-lexifier Creole languages in spite of the imposition of English as the official language and the language of instruction and initial literacy in the education system.

One of the smallest islands in the Greater Antilles, Puerto Rico, is located east of the Dominican Republic in the Caribbean Sea. Puerto Rico has approximately 3.7 million inhabitants. Claimed by the Spanish in 1493, Puerto Rico remained one of their colonies until US colonization in 1898. It is at this point that Puerto Rico began to be influenced by English in a significant way. Puerto Rico has been a colony of the United States ever since it was ceded to them after their victory in the Spanish-American War.

In 1902, the US colonial government imposed English as the official language of government and education on an island where everyone spoke Spanish and very few people spoke English. This was met with firm and sustained resistance from the inhabitants of the island who insisted on using Spanish instead of English. After nearly five decades of successful resistance, the colonial government was ultimately compelled to admit defeat in the education sector by restoring Spanish as the language of instruction and initial literacy in education on the island in 1948.

At present, both Spanish and English are official languages in Puerto Rico. In reality, however, Spanish alone is used in all spheres of life by the overwhelming majority of Puerto Ricans, including work, education, and government. English on the other hand, is largely restricted in its use to the elite class, and to certain sectors such as tourism

and some governmental offices and agencies where bilingualism is required by law. Thus, at a glance it would seem that Puerto Ricans have successfully resisted the influence of English thus far. But globalization is a continuous and ever accelerating process and English is exerting more and more influence over Puerto Rican Spanish. The situation in Puerto Rico today seems to be in a state of flux, with the younger generations showing more openness to English than their parents. These younger people, who have been exposed in a major way to English as a second language through the media, see no reason to fear English. As can be seen from the examples of other island territories such as Hawai'i, Jamaica, and Grenada, there are various ways to resist the spread of English and the tide of globalization and westernization. That being said, we cannot deny that because of globalization, the influence of English is still present and growing even in the countries that resist the spread of English. What Puerto Rico could learn from Hawai'i, Jamaica, and Grenada is that influences from the languages and cultures of others are not necessarily detrimental to our own language and culture, as long as we do not allow ourselves to be controlled by these influences, but instead remain in control over them.

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**TRANSGRESSING BOUNDARIES IN TRAVEL
WRITING ABOUT THE CARIBBEAN**

AN EDITOR'S VIEW OF EDWARD BLISS EMERSON'S TRANS-NATIONAL JOURNAL: DANISH WEST INDIES, PUERTO RICO AND NEW ENGLAND, 1831-1834¹

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At the Islands in Between conference in Grenada in 2011, our research group presented its initial plans for investigating Edward Emerson's texts about the Caribbean (see articles by Géigel, Mayo-Santana, Rabionet, Ramírez de Arellano, Rigau-Pérez, and Simounet, 2012). Edward Emerson produced abundant documentation and personal commentary on the societies of the Danish Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and his native New England, as well as reflections on his own survival, moral purpose, and economic independence. Our project consists in the digital publication of an annotated edition of his Caribbean journal and letters, never before published in their entirety (Emerson, 2013), and eight essays that analyze different topics in Edward's writings (as this article goes to press, they have appeared in *The Qualitative Report*, www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/index.html, see also Rigau-Pérez et al., 2014). The authors hope to stimulate further exploration of Emerson's texts and of the many themes that they bring to light. Above all, it is our aim that these essays will enhance the reading of Emerson's journal, while contributing to the social and historical understanding of the Caribbean.

In this article, I will touch on the transnational context for Edward's writings, presenting what I consider to be his special contributions to the historical record for the Danish Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. I will also comment on the text of the journal, which I closely examined during my work as transcriber, annotator, and editor.

In December 1830, Edward Emerson, a younger brother of the not yet famous New England writer Ralph Waldo Emerson, left his family and practice as an attorney in New York for a new life in the Caribbean. Although only 25 years old, he had been

¹ Edward B. Emerson's Caribbean journal and letters can be accessed online at bibliotecadigital.uprrp.edu/cdm/ref/collection/librosraros/id/1701. Unless otherwise specified, his letters from that period can be found in that text. Permissions to quote from Edward Emerson's journal and letters have been granted by the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association and Houghton Library, Harvard University, and the Massachusetts Historical Society, and these are gratefully acknowledged.

advised by his physician to move quickly to a warmer climate. In St. Croix, Edward gained weight and strength, but after three months he settled in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where he became employed at the import-export firm of Sidney Mason, the United States consul on the island. Edward returned briefly to his family in Boston in July of 1832, in apparent recovery, but by November resumed his post in San Juan. Despite his declining health, he maintained his accustomed activities until a “violent cold” brought his life to an end on October 1st, 1834 (see article by Rabionet in this volume). Edward kept a journal for the first eighteen months of his residence in the Caribbean, and some of his later letters have survived. The journal is now in the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association deposit, Houghton Library, at Harvard University [Ms Am 1280.235 (349)]; the letters are at Houghton Library and the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston. These materials contain not only terse records of daily activities, but also extensive descriptions of landscape, civic and religious practices, business and social customs, food, flora, music and sports. Brief excerpts from the Puerto Rico portion of the journal appeared in print in 1959 (Gatell) and 1991 (Matos Rodríguez), but Emerson’s reflections on life in St. Croix remain unquoted. A third location mentioned in the texts is the implicit point of reference for his perspective – New England in the period of President Andrew Jackson’s populist democracy.

Edward’s three abodes, the United States, the Danish West Indies, and Puerto Rico, were undergoing transformation through the operation of similar forces: political transition, immigration, new technologies and markets, and reliance on slavery. Health concerns also connected the three countries. Tuberculosis and cholera, diseases that thrived in the urban environments of Europe, spread to the New World as its cities grew and travelers covered longer distances in less time.

The journal presents a transnational perspective, not so much because the author moves from country to country, but because it reveals Emerson’s reflections about several countries at once. In addition, Edward’s longing for family and native culture demonstrates, in reverse, the experience of so many people of the Caribbean who have moved back and forth between their homeland and the United States.

As potential readers of Edward’s journal, your first question may be: “what does it add to what we already know?” Eye-witness accounts from the past are always interesting; especially if, as is the case with those of Edward Emerson, they are unfiltered by the distance of memory or the demands of publication. Many such documents, though, add little to what is known about a period. Emerson’s texts add new information on two specific topics – his life, and daily life in the three societies in where he lived (those of New England, St. Croix, and Puerto Rico). These two subjects, in turn, are part of three great themes of wide appeal: the life and circumstances of Ralph Waldo Emerson; the Jacksonian era, a social and political transition in the United States that presaged the Civil War; and life in the Caribbean “sugar islands” before the abolition of slavery.

In considering what is new in Edward Emerson's texts, it is necessary to state their limitations. He provides the criticism of a foreign observer, whose progressive views might coincide with those of a modern author. Nevertheless, many of his opinions are based on racial, geographic, and cultural prejudices (see the articles in this volume by Mayo-Santana and Simounet). Separately, Edward's comments seem appropriate, but they do not add up to a systematic or coherent analysis of society. Therefore, his accounts are more informative than his opinions. In search of a systematic analysis, the reader will note glaring absences. A large part of Edward's writings has been lost. Besides, in his belief that deep thought and preoccupation would affect his health, he may have avoided the most conflictive subjects. Therefore, the absence of a topic in his writings cannot be directly attributed to a lack of interest.

For the Danish islands and Puerto Rico, Emerson's texts provide abundant descriptions of their agricultural and commercial development, the nature of race relations (see the article in this volume by Ramírez de Arellano), the social world of planters and visiting invalids, and the character of visitors and many residents.

The most extensive original contribution of Edward's texts may be the description of environment and landscape (what he calls "weather", "climate", "scenery", "prospect"), which he praised and enjoyed as an aesthetic and sensuous pleasure, and as a source of health and life. He includes some commentary of ecologic interest, as when he notes that clearing the grounds causes a decrease in rains and therefore makes roads more practicable (22 April 1831).

Edward lived in Puerto Rico in a period of belated enlightened despotism (Gutiérrez del Arroyo, 1995), in which local residents could only exercise agency in "the three Bs" – balls (dancing), bottles (drinking) and betting (card games), while they saw their island's fields transformed into slave-owning "haciendas" devoted to export agriculture (Brau, 1966: 241). The trade in agricultural commodities is adumbrated in its routines, logistical problems and international networks, but Edward's is a view from below, that of a nearly indigent clerk (Luskey, 2010). His texts reveal an important and dissonant aspect of an era of celebration and passivity: the violence of everyday life. Almost monthly, from June, 1831 to January, 1832, Edward mentions some violent episode he has witnessed, heard about, or even suffered, as when his lodgings were entered and his clothes stolen. In the journal, violent behavior finds its opposite in ostentatious religious manifestations. Edward is interested in ritual as a reflection of theological dogma, but also as evidence of the limitations of religious belief, and what he perceives as a lack of devotion and moral feeling among clerics and laity alike. For Emerson, violence, outward religiosity, and the absence of an individual moral compass are the result of ignorance.

I would now like to comment on specific characteristics of the journal, which I noticed as transcriber and annotator. The journal is a testimony of constant self-examination

by a young man who has lost his geographic, social, and intellectual bearings. The loss of geographic orientation is evident from the start. The first pages resemble a captain's log, with sightings of land, and measurements of latitude and longitude after the winds blew his ship off course. On land, Edward proceeds to explore western St. Croix and later the area around San Juan in Puerto Rico, where he collects information from acquaintances about their visits to the interior: the smell of flax in coffee estates, the lack of "society" in Aguadilla and Mayaguez. About his final months, we only know that he settled in San Juan and paid visits to acquaintances' *haciendas*. Finally, in spite of his family's wishes, his remains did not leave Puerto Rico.

The journal and the letters suggest that in social interactions, Edward was a likeable fellow. The rapid assistance he received from acquaintances such as Mason, and their sustained support, seem objective evidence of his pleasant company. It is also clear from the journal that he made friends slowly, such as was the case with Winthrop Cunningham. He seems to have rarely socialized with Puerto Ricans, and never grew satisfied with Puerto Rican society.

Edward's loss of intellectual bearings is perhaps the most persistent problem recorded in the journal and letters. Health matters are avoided after his stay in St. Croix, while financial problems are confronted directly. Exile from New England and physical debility derailed his career as a lawyer. He found commerce "disgusting" but his writings show no yearning for the law and he claimed to love the academic life (letter to CCE, 27 July 1833). It is difficult to identify Edward Emerson's intellectual objectives. Even the family doubted his long-term projects (see for example, the letter from Ralph Waldo, Boston, 22 December 1833, to Edward: "Pray rein in that sanguine genius of yours that risks & projects so magnificently" in Rusk, 1966, 1, p. 403).

As evidence of the power of Edward's intellect, I would like to offer his command of languages and his writing style. The journal and letters include expressions in six languages: mostly English, some Spanish, a little French, and phrases in Italian, Latin and Greek. Even more admirable is his range of vocabulary in English. As an editor, I often needed to look up particular passages. Using a search engine, the fragment in question usually came up at the first or second try, because Edward seldom repeated words and word combinations. Almost every phrase is unique.

In the Caribbean, Edward's intellect was exercised in many directions, as he labored to understand different cultures, learn a new trade, keep up with developments in his country, and plan for the future. I wish to highlight two of his principal interests, as evidenced in the journal – to master the Spanish language, and to discern the purpose of his life.

The first professor of (French and) Spanish literature in the United States was George Ticknor, at Harvard University from 1819 to 1835 (Ward, 1978: 568). Edward, who attended Harvard from 1820 to 1824, had some knowledge of Spanish before he arrived in Puerto Rico. A few days after arrival he reported reading Walter Scott's

Ivanhoe in Spanish. He may have brought a Spanish grammar with exercises, and two months later asked his brother William for *Don Quixote*. Two weeks later he was already reading the book, so soon that he probably obtained it in San Juan. At the same time, he plodded through language exercises and translated from the Spanish Commercial Code. Slips of the pen mark his progress. After five months of study (April to September 1831), he began to date his letters from Puerto (not Porto) Rico, and by 19 November he was beginning to think in Spanish (coffee prices go “from 8 a 11¢”, not 8 to 11). After comments on the first part of *Don Quijote*, his letters include reviews of another Spanish classic (Cadalso’s *Cartas marruecas*), local publications (Abbad’s *Historia de Puerto Rico* and Córdova’s *Memorias geográficas*) and theatrical performances. He might have excelled as a professor of literature.

Edward’s search for intellectual engagement addressed a part of the larger mystery he sought to decipher: the purpose of his life. Always in poverty and in poor health, he demanded the utmost exertions of his mind and body to surpass all other students, earn money for his family, and attain a significant and morally transcendent position among those of his generation. He was driven, perhaps predominantly, by a sense of duty: to follow God’s will and to excel and succeed for the family’s sake. When, in 1828, in apparent health, he “ceased to resist GOD and nature”, and “surrendered” to humor his body and rest his mind, he felt “wiser, and healthier and happier than ever” (Edward’s letter of 19 May 1828, Boston, to his brother William in New York; Massachusetts Historical Society Ms N-251, item 105). As a result, he went mad. Somehow he regained his sanity and tried again to succeed, but only wore out his body. He then decided to break free from the family and its loving concerns for him, which he disliked although he loved them deeply. He sailed to the Caribbean, with little probability of health or fortune.

In the journal, concern for sanity is never mentioned, but it stirs beneath the surface of the text. There are frequent images of flight, such as winds, kites, and long rides on horseback. Emerson’s daily jottings frequently start with an assurance of stability, “Nothing remarkable”, as if to assert his control over circumstances or emotions. This is often followed by “but” or “save”. The most striking instance, in a letter to William of 11-16 February 1832, says: “nothing remarkable here but the execution of a noted pirate”. The journal also shows interest in figures of questionable sanity or anomalous intelligence – hermit Low in St. Croix, Don Quijote, and the homeless slave and self-proclaimed freeman Cojole in St. Thomas. The three characters are presented as eccentrics, but not mad. There are reasons for their oddity, or *razón de su sinrazón*, to paraphrase Cervantes.

In contrast, it is Emerson’s reader’s sanity that is questioned, once and very indirectly, in a succession of mirror images. Edward’s entry on 16 August 1831 states: “Don Quijote was a generous fellow after all about the treasure trove which he gave to Sancho.” Edward doesn’t mention that, from the “treasure trove”, Don Quijote kept a

“small memorandum book” (*librillo de memoria*). The reader who knows that episode (Part I, Chapters 23-24) realizes that Edward (the intellectual with a history of insanity) reads that Don Quijote (the madman who teaches ethical behavior) reads the journal of Cardenio (the poet driven mad by jealousy). Is it possible that in this chain of scholars, the only sane link will be Emerson's reader?

We know little of Edward's life in 1833 and 1834 – no journal and few letters survive. Undoubtedly, the fire at Waldo's home consumed much of the correspondence. Perhaps Edward continued to formulate projects and strive for more satisfying and better paying employment. The surviving papers suggest that his last years unfolded as a drawn-out version of the finale of that book he so enjoyed – *Don Quijote*: the certainty of death banished all illusions and brought serenity to the brave, ambitious man who tried to follow what the books had taught him.

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NARRATIVE ANTICIPATION OF AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM IN EDWARD BLISS EMERSON'S CARIBBEAN JOURNAL¹

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A major theme in Edward Bliss Emerson's Caribbean Journal is the notion of "the perfect man". In his journal he writes, "Men do not strive here as in New England after the perfect man. It is present pastime or gainful industry or chance which they follow as their stars" (Emerson, P.R., July 3, 1831). Clearly, his phrase pits a superior New England spiritual aspiration against a tropical indolence. Because it is expressed in the journal of a New England intellectual that antedates American territorial expansion in the Caribbean, this moral notion of human perfectibility could be an exemplar of American exceptionalism, a belief that eventually impinged upon transcendentalism (Gura: xv). American exceptionalism has been defined as follows: "America and Americans are special, exceptional, because they are charged with saving the world from itself and, at the same time, America and Americans must sustain a high level of spiritual, political and moral commitment to this exceptional destiny" (Madsen: 2). This notion of US exceptionalism has been also associated to the ideology of manifest destiny that was used "to justify the annexation of the Hispanic south-west and the continuous subjugation of native Americans" (Madsen: 70).

Puritans, unitarians, and transcendentalists believed in, respectively: the need to develop "a pure and uncorrupted church" (Madsen: 3); self-culture and a constant striving towards perfection (Packer); and the removal of obstructions to spiritual development (Grodzins). Edward's notion of the perfect man seems to be deeply engrained in his puritan and unitarian heritage, with some hints of transcendentalism and American exceptionalism.

Edward judges Puerto Rican society and its people with disdain:

"It is very possible that much more intellectual and moral entertainment might be

¹ Edward B. Emerson's Caribbean journal and letters can be accessed online at <http://bibliotecadigital.uprrp.edu/cdm/ref/collection/librosraros/id/1701>. Unless otherwise specified, his letters from that period can be found in that text. Permissions to quote from Edward Emerson's journal and letters have been granted by the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association and Houghton Library, Harvard University, and the Massachusetts Historical Society, and these are gratefully acknowledged.

furnished to the thousands of ignorant people to be found here, in both upper & lower classes of society; & some attention to this subject is extremely desirable... & I am willing to see it remedied sooner the better.” (Emerson, P.R., June 26, 1831)

The desire for remediation can hardly offset his contempt; rather, one might call it ironic.

On October 30, 1831, in a letter to his step grandfather Ezra, Edwards describes Puerto Rico as follows: “this island like a docile child follows the mother country, & rests in the bosom of the Catholic Church”, not acknowledging the oppressive character of the Spanish rule (Bosco & Myerson: 27). Only in a few instances does he casually bring out some of the repressive measures enacted by the government.

These negative evaluations are accentuated when they are contrasted with New England life: “Boston still the land of steady habits, the city of the sensible, the intelligent” (Emerson, P.R., Aug. 18, 1831); “you must not expect no echo from P.R. to such intelligence” (Emerson, Letter EBE, P.R., to CCE, Oct. 29, 1833, on Commencement day at Harvard). Edward refers proudly to the United States as a military nation, praising its discipline and power. In a letter to his brother William, in Spanish, he mentions the visit of a warship to Puerto Rico and asserts that such visits evoke respect because they show that the United States has a strong armada and thus is a powerful country (Emerson, Letter EBE, P.R., to WE, N.Y., March 7-12, 1832).

There can be no confusion regarding the prejudice, contemptuous attitude and sense of arrogance toward the people of the Caribbean reflected in the journal and letters. In summary, these are encapsulated in such notions as: the promotion of indolence by the tropical climate, the excessive levels of apathy or ignorance, the depiction of Puerto Rico as a docile child, the idea that the personal and social character of the people is tied to their dependence on gambling and diversions, the portrayal of Caribbean society as a puppet show of a few thousand ignorant and sensual men, the vision of the Caribbean as a daubed and miniature caricature of life, the childlike character in the outward and intellectual features of the people, and the contrast between Boston, the land of steady habits, the city of the sensible and of the intelligent and the ignorance which he sees as widely prevalent in Puerto Rico. Even though some of his observations are based on the harsh realities of life in a backward colony in the nineteenth-century Caribbean, Edward does not attribute these behaviors to the social structures of domination and colonialism but rather to the character and manners of the people and their culture.

The majority of Edward's expressions of prejudice and contempt may be attributed to intellectual and moral arrogance typical of an educated New England man of his times. For example, Bosco & Myerson (2006), say about Edward's letters from Alexandria and Worcester, where he “sought refuge for his health”, that “they each exhibit Edward's ability to create and sustain an engaging epistolary narrative based on his surprise that not all communities in America impose New England habits on their

citizens, even those that are less than a day's journey from Boston, the New Englander's center of the universe" (p. 54). Thus, Edward's words and attitudes give expression to ideological features which have much in common with ideologies of American exceptionalism (e.g., the development of personal and social perfection and a high level of moral and spiritual commitment to this aspiration) and manifest destiny (e.g., the perfection of American democratic institutions).

Edward's notion of human perfectibility, present both in unitarianism and transcendentalism, has an inherent potential for nurturing these types of political constructions. Nineteenth-century intellectuals, like the transcendentalists, anticipated the idea of the perfection of American democratic institutions. For many in this ideological tradition, the conception of a divine destiny and striving for perfection, both as a nation and as individuals, was contradicted by the 'peculiar institution' of slavery; therefore, this obstruction to spiritual development had to be eradicated. Thus, the study of Edward Emerson's writings reveals some of the ideological currents that eventually fostered the emergence of American exceptionalism and manifest destiny. Edward's sense of superiority and elitism, and his tendency toward harsh social and cultural criticism were not only common features in the writings of the New England intellectual elite of the early 19th century, they can also be seen as precursors to more general ideological trends that have persisted up until the present day in the U.S.

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EDWARD BLISS EMERSON: THE BLAZING STAR OF A COMPLEX CONSTELLATION¹

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Edward Bliss Emerson, a younger brother of Ralph Waldo Emerson and a promising scholar in his own right, traveled to the West Indies at the age of 26 hoping to alleviate his pulmonary afflictions. He arrived in St. Croix and spent three months there before moving to Puerto Rico, where he lived for the last three years of his life. While in the islands, from January 1831 to July 1832, he logged his daily activities in a pocket notebook or journal. The firsthand account of his years in the islands, with illness and death hovering over his activities, is a counterintuitive starting point to understand his life and elusive quests. Nevertheless, it provides a window into his inner self, revealing his psyche and evoking his New England upbringing. The journal can be read as the record of the musings of a young man battling to improve his physical, spiritual and intellectual selves. The entries in the journal are those of a young man eager to live the moment, holding other aspirations at bay in the hope of recovering his health.

Edward's quest for health was elusive. He did not recover in the tropics. On October 1st, 1834, at the age of 29 he succumbed to consumption. Throughout his short life, Edward experienced intense moments of tension between his undertakings and his frailties. According to those who knew him, his accomplishments and brilliance were as prominent as his mental and physical weakness (Bosco & Myerson, 2006; Cabot, 1895; Firkins, 1915; Holmes, 1885; and the family letters). His older brother, Ralph Waldo, mourned Edward's death in the poem *In memoriam*, and called him "brother of the blazing star", "champion of the right", "born for success", but succinctly described the paradox in one verse: "All, all was given, and only health denied" (Emerson, 1909: 192). Although the journal reveals Edward's interests and some features of his

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¹ A shorter version of this essay was read in the 16th Annual Conference "The Islands in Between": Language, Literature and Culture of the Eastern Caribbean, Aruba Nov 8, 2013 as part of the panel, "Edward Bliss Emerson's Journal in the Caribbean, 1831-1834: a new source for the transnational history of health, commerce, and hegemonic and subaltern discourses." Parts of this essay have been published in the *The Qualitative Report*, 19, Week 15 (April 14, 2014) issue.

character, it falls short in portraying how he excelled as a young man of his time and education. Edward's childhood, his years at Harvard, and his brief stints as teacher and lawyer all reveal a character full of zeal, contradictions, and self-discipline. Throughout his life Edward adapted to new circumstances and places. In each, he renewed his quests for health, education, soul searching, and adventures.

This biographical essay enhances our understanding and enjoyment of Edward's journal. A wide range of sources were consulted, including letters to him, from him, and about him, starting with those written when he was only 11 years old in boarding school; notes about previous travels, including trips to Europe; his scholarly work and writings while at Harvard, including his orations, class notes and thesis; unpublished manuscripts about the family; official documents, such as his birth entry in the City of Concord records and the licenses to practice law in Massachusetts and New York, and books and articles about the Emerson brothers. The examination of these documents using qualitative techniques such as hermeneutical, narrative, and content and context analysis, furthered captured the circumstances and intensity of a life cut short.

The early years

Edward was born on April 17, 1805, the fifth child of eight born to Reverend William Emerson and Ruth Haskins. He and six of his siblings were born in the parish house of the First Unitarian Church of Boston, of which his father was the minister (Snider, 1921). Edward was baptized on May 19, 1805. His mother took him "calm and undisturbed" to the altar where he was blessed by his father. On the occasion of his baptism, Mrs. Emerson wrote in her diary:

I went to meeting and then dedicated our child in the house of God. He was baptized by his father Edward Bliss. Accept the offering we then made into thee O Lord and may the child live and grow up before thee and may thou the Lord God of His fathers bless him. (R. Haskins, diary 19 May 1805; MH: 1805; MH bMS AM 1280.235 (398))

Three of Edward's siblings, John, Mary Caroline and Phoebe, died at very young ages. Another, Robert Bulkeley had developmental problems which prevented his benefiting from the rich education that the other brothers experienced (Beyer, 2000; Emerson, 1890). William, Ralph Waldo, Edward and Charles developed a close fraternal relationship characterized by the advantages as well as the "burden of having been born an Emerson, with social, political, and ecclesiastical roots extending back to the first century of New England settlement" (Bosco & Myerson: viii).

The Emerson's ancestors included eminent clergymen, but there was also a "succession of superior mothers", loyal wives responsible for developing their children's moral character and religious devotion (Holmes, 1885). The Emerson family was one of a selected number of Boston families referred to as the "Academic Races", dating to colonial times (Firkins, 1915; Holmes, 1885). For Edward and his

brothers, Harvard College was “the gate through which many of their ancestors had gone to the storehouses of godly knowledge” (Emerson, 1890: 7). Edward’s father, the Reverend William Emerson was born in Concord, Massachusetts. He went to Harvard at 16 years of age, “prematurely but not precociously prepared” (Emerson, 1949: 488). His first appointment as minister was in 1792 in a church in Harvard, Massachusetts. There, he met Ruth Haskins of Boston, whom he married in 1796. Three years later, he became the pastor of the First Church in Boston, a position he held until his death from consumption in 1811, at the age of 42. Edward was only six when his father died. Ruth Emerson, left with six children between the ages of 2½ months and 10 years, struggled to support the family after her husband’s untimely death. She had few savings, and no pension or retirement allowances to fall back on. But she relied on school teaching for some income, and made “many a sacrifice to preserve the freedom for her sons to think, to study, and to live in the realm of high intellectual achievement” (Emerson, 1949: 490). The family received support from the church, relatives and friends, and she was allowed to stay in the parish house for some time.

Once Edward’s father passed away, his sister, Mary Moody Emerson, emerged as a leading figure in the lives of the Emerson brothers. She shared with Ruth the tasks of raising and educating the five boys. With stern love, they shaped many of Edward’s scholarly ambitions and religious quests. The late Reverend William was considered a liberal pastor (Cayton, 1989) and his wife probably shared his views, but Aunt Mary, as the boys called her, was stricter than the mother in setting high moral standards. On occasion, she criticized her sister-in-law for allowing for “mirth and frivolity” (Cabot, 1895: 38), but she took great pride in her nephews’ accomplishments, which she believed resulted from firm religious devotion and discipline. The closest male figure in Edward’s life was the Reverend Ezra Ripley, second husband of his paternal grandmother. He was the only grandfather the Emerson brothers knew and he maintained close ties with them as a trusted force and spiritual advisor. He also, at times, provided financial support and shelter (Woodberry, 1907). The Ripleys lived in Concord in a house called the “Old Manse” which later belonged to Ralph Waldo.

The Emerson household was not unlike other New England homes that valued scholastic accomplishments and moral pursuits even while facing financial and physical adversity (Woodberry, 1907). For Mrs. Emerson, “provision for her sons meant more than mere food, raiment, and shelter. Their souls first, their minds next, their bodies last: this was the order in which their claims presented themselves to the brave mother mind” (Emerson, 1890: 8). A descendant of the Emersons also stressed Ruth Emerson’s priorities: “If a precious book were needed for school or college studies, the coal oil for the hall lamp could be given up. Better a dark hall than a starved mind” (Emerson, 1949: 490). Stories were used to divert thoughts of hunger, and other hardships experienced by the Emerson brothers provided opportunities for

fraternal bonding in unique ways. One winter Ralph Waldo and Edward wore the same coat to school on alternating days, one taking “lecture notes for the other not clad to meet a northeast snowstorm” (Emerson, 1949: 191; Firkins, 1915; Snider, 1921). The brothers engaged in a pattern of the older ones supporting the younger ones, a practice that they maintained well into adulthood (Haskins, 1886).

From an early age all the Emerson boys were expected to follow the long-established pathway to guarantee a seat at Harvard. At age 3, Edward entered a dame school, most likely in the neighborhood where he grew up, near the “parsonage” of Summer Street in Boston (E.E.M, 1903). Young Edward and his brothers engaged in little play with the neighboring boys. When not at a school of some sort, they were expected to spend most of their time reading and writing and helping with chores around the house, including taking the cow to pasture (Sanborn, 1897). Edward attended the Boston Public Latin School. Boston Latin’s primary goal was to prepare young men for admission to Harvard. The school earned the reputation of creating among its students the intellectual, moral, religious, and civic culture that distinguished Boston and guaranteed its place in the birth of the nation (Jenks, 1886). William, Ralph Waldo, and Charles also studied at Boston Latin, securing their admission to Harvard College. (letter of 24 January 1816 EBE Boston to William Emerson (WE) Waltham; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (250)).

Boarding at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts

At the age of 11, Edward interrupted his studies at Boston Latin, where he was first in his class, because he was offered the opportunity to enter the prestigious Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. Of the four brothers capable of scholarly pursuits, Edward was the only one who studied at Andover. At the time, Phillips Academy was considered a very orthodox school which contrasted with the liberal legacy of the late Reverend William Emerson (Cayton, 1989). Nevertheless, the investment in an expensive boarding school underlines the value placed on education among the Emersons, and the promising future that they saw in Edward.

During his two years at Andover, Edward, who was among the youngest in his class, studied relentlessly. He also had to work to help support himself and could not go home during vacation, although he longed to be with the family. Other sacrifices included wearing torn clothes, not having enough wood for fire or money for school supplies, and having to board far from the school (letter of 19 October 1816 EBE Andover to RHE Boston; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (224)). In spite of these inconveniences and discomforts, he took advantage of all the scholarly opportunities that Phillips Academy offered. Edward constantly received encouraging correspondence and parcels from his mother, aunt and brothers. In his responses he

tried to reassure them about his well-being; but his letters also reveal a deep sense of longing and homesickness, especially during the first year.

Even at this early age, Edward's letters anticipate the nature of the relationship that he would later develop with each of his correspondents. Aunt Mary's letters always provided spiritual guidance and reminded him of his religious duty. She was also intent on influencing him and his brothers to enter the ministry. (For example, her letter of 10 January 1818; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (749)). In contrast, his mother's letters were affectionate and caring. Writing back, he reciprocated her affection, revealing a high level of appreciation, respect, and unconditional obedience to her wishes (see his letter of 1 November 1816; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (225)).

William's letters gave Edward advice on what to study to obtain a "respectable rank as a scholar" upon his entrance to Harvard. Because Edward could not go home for vacations, William suggested that he devote his leisure time to reading history and composition (letter of 28 December 1816 WE Boston to EBE Andover; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (2948)). Charles's letters reported on the home front; they corresponded in a more casual and candid way, not trying to impress each other. With Ralph Waldo, Edward was more sentimental and intellectual; they shared passages of their readings and poems. Edward regarded Waldo with admiration and saw him as a "very fine scholar." Indeed, Edward constantly measured himself against Ralph Waldo, whom he believed was on the way to becoming a pastor. In contrast, Edward felt that he did not know his path. In a letter written in verse, Edward noted:

You [Ralph Waldo] seem for Hope an advocate to stand,
That points the sailor to his native land,
That leads the Christian up the hill of God,
And gives him courage, on the heavenly road
That dying martyrs at the stake sustains
And give relief to all great woes and pains
Your cause is good, your arguments are true
And with pleasure your rhyming power view.

But in what cause shall I my pen employ?
Whether a subject that brings pain, or joy?
Whether the cares that now embitter life?
The joys of friendship or the pangs of strife?
No! I've no time on threadbare themes to waste
But fill my sheet with "sentiment and taste".

(letter of 1 October 1817 EBE Andover to RWE Boston; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (184))

In addition to coping with the harsh academic discipline of the Phillips Academy and the lack of essential comforts, Edward struggled with frequent illnesses. These were a source of concern to his mother and aunt. Their letters to Edward consistently provide advice on healthful habits, reminding him to eat properly, stay warm, and go to bed early. Even Charles, who was still at home pursuing studies at Boston Latin, reminded Edward to eat properly (letter of 2 November 1816 Charles Chauncy Emerson (CCE) Boston to EBE Andover; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (2)). In a humorous “adieu” in one of the letters, Aunt Mary reminded Edward that “Dr Moody [herself] is ever interested in the health and welfare of the Bliss Patient [Edward]” (letter of 9 November 1816; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (748)). By his second year in Andover, Edward seemed to have settled down and matured. He enjoyed the academic challenges and took pleasure in long walks. In January 1818, he wrote to his mother: “If Andover was only home I should live happy enough. I am very satisfied except when I look around for Mother and Brothers; and though I can see everything else to render me contented and happy, yet I cannot see them” (letter of January 12 1818; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (229)).

Harvard delayed

Edward left Andover in 1818, at the age of 13. He had already been admitted to Harvard and was looking forward to following William, who had graduated that year, and joining Ralph Waldo, who was then enrolled in the College. Family resources were strained, however, and Edward had to postpone the fulfillment of his aspiration in order to earn enough money to pursue his studies. Edward came to terms with the delay, but confessed to William that “all the scholars that entered [Harvard] from Andover seemed so pleased with their new situation that at the time I almost wished I had entered this year, but I think that the next year I shall be glad I did not” (letter of 22 September 1818 EBE Andover to WE Boston; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (254)).

For two years, he worked as an under-teacher in Waltham at the school of his uncle, the Reverend Samuel Ripley, and his young wife Sarah. He thus followed the track of his brothers William and Waldo, who also taught in order to earn money for their college tuition (Thayer, 1897). He devoted time as well to perfecting and improving his composition skills and mathematics with the goal in mind of becoming a “first scholar” upon entrance to Harvard. His scholastic brilliance was immediately noticed by his benefactors and by the boys under his tutelage. He felt “tolerably well pleased” and busy in his situation as teacher, “occupied constantly from 6 in the morning till 8 o'clock at night.” For entertainment, he attended dancing school twice a week (letter of 13 Nov 1818 EBE Andover to RHE Boston; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (240)). During those two years, Edward was not free from physical distress. He suffered colds that kept him away from the boys for weeks at a time. Sarah Ripley, who admired the young Emersons, felt that she had nothing more to desire in them save health (Goodwin, 1998).

Edward also had to spend five months, from January to May 1819, with relatives in Alexandria, Virginia, to enjoy what was considered a more suitable climate for his afflictions. During this sojourn, Edward was exposed to a very different environment from the one he had experienced in New England. He went to multiple parties; learned to observe people and their clothes; and even visualized himself departing for southern lands. Curiously, he mentions the possibility of traveling to the Caribbean: “I hope a chance [for a voyage] may offer soon to Havana or some southern port...” (letter of 23 March 1820 EBE Alexandria to RWE Boston; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (191)). He would have that chance eleven years later.

The Harvard College years

Edward finally entered Harvard College in 1820 and shared a room at Hollis Hall (Hollis 9) with his brother Waldo, who was then a senior. At the time, Harvard provided an atmosphere conducive to liberal free-thinking. The intellectually adventurous and stimulating environment attributed to the presidency of John T. Kirkland by contemporaries and historians was seen as appropriate for the development of young gentlemen (Bailyn et al., 1986). Edward’s college years were once again accompanied by financial constraints. He worked as a teacher during vacations in order to supplement his expenses. He also received scholarships and benefited from the largesse of family friends. Kirkland was one of his benefactors, as he had been a college classmate of Edward’s father, had continued to be his close confidant during their early years as Unitarian ministers, and after William Emerson’s death had remained a family friend (Sacks, 2003). Edward also received support from the Pen Legacy, a charity fund administered by the First Church, where his father had been the minister (Bosco & Myerson, 2006). As on previous occasions, financial hardships did not distract Edward from the Harvard experience. Edward excelled in the public examinations held for each subject, and in the public exhibitions held for composition, elocution, and mathematical sciences, conducted three times a year. He wrote on topics such as the pursuit of happiness, education, modernity and antiquity, and Asian cultures. His writings reflected an understanding of the classics, command of the English language, and essay and poetry writing. He also mastered the rhetorical arts, oration and declamation.

Edward was fully aware of the future significance of being first in his class at Harvard, and would not settle for being second-best. He shared his competitive and ambitious spirit with his younger brother Charles: “I imagine the difference (which springs thence) between obscurity & fame, between sitting in a little office from morn till night, without a single client, & thundering away, the lord of the forum, or the leader of the council; Yes, Charley, those few feet, which separate in school & in College the 1st from the 4th, nay even that inch of space, which divides the 1st from the 2d, will widen inconceivably” (letter of 28 January 1824; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (170)).

Edward held prominent positions in all the Harvard clubs in which he enrolled. From 1822 to 1824 he was the President and Poet of the Hasty Pudding Club, founded in 1795 to encourage the feelings of friendship and patriotism among members of the junior and senior classes (Hasty Pudding Club, 1884; Longfellow, 1875). Edward was also the 3rd Commandant of the Harvard Washington Corps, a voluntary military organization for upperclassmen. The Corps surpassed other groups in Boston in the precision of its military movements and display of discipline. The Corps engaged in rigorous drilling three to four times a week, from 1:00 to 2:00 PM and after “commons” at night. Once a year they had a parade that brought a sense of dignity to Harvard Square. They also held several galas during the year and observed full-dress parade days and drills at the Exhibitions at the end of each academic term (Lonthrop, 1875). There is no record of any of Edward’s brothers participating in the Corps. This might explain why Edward was described as having “a military carriage ... confidence and executive ability...” (Emerson, 1890, p. 51). In contrast with his participation in prestigious clubs and societies, Edward was also a member of the Medical Faculty Club (also referred to as the Med. Fac.). This shady group, with secretive reputation, active between 1818 and 1834, was labeled as a “merry-making association” or fraternity. Its members met in Hollis Hall to deliver mock medical lectures, perform mock experiments and confer mock degrees, among other pranks. One of the few public displays indicating membership in this club was evident at graduation, when students in the Med. Fac. wore a black rosette with a skull and cross bones (Eliot, 1875; Holmes, 1875).

Edward is remembered “as the Emerson who achieved the best record of the four brothers at Harvard, where he graduated first in his class and took almost every other academic honor available...” (Bosco & Myerson, 2006: 53). During the exhibition in the second term of the 1824, he presented a highly praised Mathematics chart, “Calculation and projection of a solar eclipse in May, 1836”. The eclipse actually occurred as predicted, but Edward did not live to see it. In 1824 he was awarded (following Ralph Waldo’s steps) the prestigious Bowdoin prize for his oration on “Antiquity, Extent, Cultivation, and Present State of the Empire of China” (letter of 25 July 1824; RWE Memorial Association, 1939, p. 157). Upon graduation he was elected a member of Phi Beta Kappa, a prestigious society that promoted “literature and friendly intercourse among scholars.” His father and his brother Ralph Waldo had also been elected to the same society. And, following Edward, Charles received the same honor (Phi Beta Kappa, 1902).

Edward’s departure from Harvard was marked by events that highlight the prestige, solemnity and dignity of his accomplishments. He graduated in the 1824 Commencement, which has been described as the “most memorable Commencement

exercises which those old walls had ever witnessed...” (Quincy, 1896: 55). General Lafayette was in the United States on the occasion of the American Revolution’s 50th anniversary, and was invited to visit Harvard College. The Commencement seemed the perfect occasion to honor the general who had secured French support for America and had distinguished himself during the War of Independence. The excitement of meeting the aged hero attracted numerous ladies and gentlemen, who assembled at the end of August in the meeting house of the First Parish of Cambridge, following the Commencement tradition of the time. Memorably, Edward shared the stage with the noted guest. As the first scholar of the class, he addressed the audience with an oration on the “Advancement of the Age.” Although Edward was suffering from an oppressive cold, his speech was judged by Josiah Quincy, a later Harvard president “as fine a performance as has ever been given at a Harvard Commencement” (Quincy, 1896: 56; RWE Memorial Association, 1939: 149). Edward dazzled them with an unrivaled feat: a brilliant star in the most complex of constellations!

Career choices: dreams, frailties, and decisions

After all these accomplishments, Edward faced the choice of a career path. His mother, brothers, aunt, and grandfather were all attentive to his decision. William, pursuing theological studies in Europe at the time, expressed his curiosity. Edward was not inclined to follow Aunt Mary’s wish – the ministry. Immediately after graduation, Edward began working as a teacher in Roxbury. He did this with great fervor. After six months, Edward began studying law with Daniel Webster, the renowned orator and politician. Pursuing a law career under the tutelage of Webster was viewed by Edward and his close friends as a privilege. Mr. Webster, who was an acquaintance of the Emersons, accepted Edward on his merits and recommendations (Cooke, 1902). Once again, Edward embarked on what promised to be a brilliant path. But, to his misfortune, he continued to battle against a frail body.

In October 1825, and only ten months after beginning his reading of the law, Edward began to show signs of physical and mental frailty. His mother and brothers attributed his failing health to excessive work. They agreed to support his travel to Europe for a year to fortify his weak constitution, and Ralph Waldo, assuming parental responsibilities despite his own ailments, covered most of the costs. At the time, William had just returned from Europe and was undertaking the study of law, Charles was about to enter Harvard, and Bulkeley needed care; this left Waldo as the only wage earner. In New York, Mrs. Emerson and William saw Edward leave on board the appropriately-named ship, *Hope*, which headed toward Marseilles (letter of 21 October 1825 EBE and WE New York to RWE Chelmsford; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (193)).

Edward’s letters and journals from Europe document his excursions in Belgium, Holland, France, Italy and England. He was continuously marveled and overwhelmed

with the “glory and arts” exhibited by the old cities. He was humbled by the opportunity, writing in his journal as he entered Rome, “I found myself where many wise men had longed in vain to stand, in sight of the Eden City....I confess now for the first time I felt the full humility of ignorance.” He seemed to absorb details of people, places, nature, structures, and customs, as exemplified by the description of his stay at Lafayette’s country estate, his notes about the statues and their inscriptions, and by the visit to the studio of the master sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen. Edward’s European journal, in contrast with that which he kept in the Caribbean Islands, seldom mentioned his health and personal issues (for example, letter of 11 April 1826 EBE Rome to CCE Cambridge; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (171); journal scraps Emerson Family Papers, MH MS Am 1280.235 (327)).

Edward returned from Europe in October 1826 (RWE Memorial Association, 1939). He resumed the study of law in New York and seemed to have the strength to excel again. At the beginning of 1827, Edward had settled into a very demanding routine: “He read law, taught four boys, devoted several hours a day to historical and miscellaneous study, did cataloguing for the Boston Athenaeum, and was ready for other tasks when offered” (Cabot, 1895). That same year he received two invitations from his alma mater that were a tribute to his record of distinction. First, Edward was offered the possibility of a tutorship in Greek and Latin. He declined this invitation because of his commitment and desire to practice the law. The second was an invitation from President Kirkland to deliver the Master’s English Oration at the 1827 Commencement. He delivered an oration on “The Importance of Efforts for the Diffusion of Knowledge” that was considered a “fine specimen of composition and elocution” and reported in the local press and periodicals as brilliant. Ralph Waldo acknowledged to William the enlightened and sublime passages, but adopted a more critical stance than others in the audience. He wrote “it was spoken with so much deliberation that in my poor thought very much of the effect was lost [...] I anticipated a flaming excitement in mine and popular mind, and if the oration which occupied 36 minutes had been delivered in 15, I think it would have answered its purpose” (letter of 31 August 1827 RWE Memorial Association, 1939: 210).

Because Edward lived at Mr. Webster’s household in Boston, the family only had occasional contact with him in the spring of 1828. Isolated, subtle changes in behavior, such as noted by Ralph Waldo in the disappointing quality of the Oration, were difficult to piece together. In May 1828 a rapid decline became obvious. Edward confessed to William:

I read no law – almost no letters. I have ceased to resist GOD & nature; have consented to humor my body & rest my mind; & the consequence is that from the moment of surrender I have been gaining & tho feeble from the struggle of so many years, yet I am wiser, & healthier &

happier than ever (letter of 19 May 1828 EBE Boston to WE New York; MHi Ms N-251 (105)).

However, Edward's "surrender" did not have the salutary effect he expected. On the contrary, on May 25, while staying with his mother at the Old Manse in Concord, he experienced physical and mental collapse: "his frenzy took all forms; sometimes he was very gay [...] Afterward would come on a peevish or angry state & he would throw everything in the room & throw his clothes &c out the window [...] & would roll and twist on the floor with his eyes shut for half an hour" (letter of 3 July 1828 RWE Cambridge to WE New York cited in Bosco & Myerson, 2006: 122). He even became aggressive toward Dr. Ripley, his grandfather.

In his darkest moments, Edward elicited an outpouring of support from family and friends. The people of Concord were very kind; the list of those who generously gave their time for Edward's care underscores the connections and the high esteem in which the Emersons were held among the intellectual elite of New England. Friends and family took turns taking care of him, day and night. As his condition worsened, he required two "watchers" at a time. At the beginning of July it became evident that Edward needed to be institutionalized. After consultation with doctors, family and friends, he was bound with a strap and taken to the McLean Asylum in Charlestown in a hired coach with "the fleetest horse in town" (diary entries 29 June – 2 July 1828 Edward Jarvis's Diary cited in Bosco & Myerson, 2006: 121-122). The McLean Asylum for the Insane was known for its 'moral management' of patients, that is, humane and gentle treatment. No chains or straightjackets were used, and no patient was restrained without being supervised by a physician (Little, 1972).

Edward remained hospitalized for almost five months, from July to December 1828, a time of great emotional and financial stress for the family. Robert Bulkeley was already interned in the same hospital. In addition to witnessing the deterioration and silencing of one of their brightest minds, they were concerned with the cost of the hospitalization. Edward required an individual room (Bosco & Myerson, 2006). He slowly improved, although not without some setbacks. By the end of November it became evident that he could leave the hospital. Ralph Waldo took him to Concord, New Hampshire, for several weeks. Edward was thus present at Waldo's engagement to Ellen Tucker.

Surprisingly, the two years following release from the hospital were very productive for Edward. He resumed his scholarly and professional activities and recaptured the affectionate interactions with close family members. At the beginning of 1829, he moved back to Concord, Massachusetts, and resumed the study of law. He immediately engaged in multiple activities, pleasing his family and friends; all except Aunt Mary, who worried about a relapse (Bosco & Myerson, 2006). Edward

participated in the first winter session of the recently established Concord Lyceum with a lecture on the “Geography of Asia.” According to a witness, “He stood up in the hall over the old Academy, with a large map with a painted outline of Asia upon it, with a wand in his hand, and entranced the attention of the audience” (Alexander, 1919, p. 207; lecture of 25 February 1829 delivered in Concord, MH bMS Am 1280.235 (329)). Edward became one of the church delegates when Ralph Waldo was ordained as a Unitarian minister in March 1829 (Hoeltje, 1940).

Once again Edward demonstrated his resolve to excel and become a lawyer, and obtained licenses to practice in Massachusetts and in New York. By November 1829 he had moved to New York, determined to practice law with William and offer lectures. After a year he was gravely ill, this time from severe pulmonary afflictions, and he had to leave his professional aspirations behind. The doctor insisted that he had to sail south to a warmer climate (Géigel, 2014; Ramírez de Arellano, 2014b). Edward decided to sail to the Caribbean, against the advice of his brothers who believed it more prudent to travel to Boston or to Florida. They were as concerned with his health as with their ability to finance his travels and needs. His mother traveled to New York to persuade Edward against the Caribbean, but got there literally minutes too late.

Life in the tropics

On December 12, 1830, Edward sailed from New York to St. Croix. Upon arrival, on January 5th, he connected with New England acquaintances that were on the island for health and business. Edward resumed the habit of keeping a journal and writing letters to his close family members, as he had in Andover, Alexandria and Europe. He walked and read extensively, while contrasting the way of life in the Danish island to other places he had visited. His observations, not always favorable toward the life and behaviors of the islands’ inhabitants, included his views on religion, government, customs and traditions (Mayo-Santana, 2014; Simounet, 2014). However, he seemed at ease in his new environment and he appeared to “have no intention of leaving the island immediately” (Journal, 17 March 1831).

Edward stayed in St Croix for three months. He struggled with his pulmonary afflictions and resorted to multiple remedial and self-care regimes to alleviate his symptoms. Tropical natural products, including fruits and vegetables, were incorporated into his care routines. He was frequently sick, “prostrated and weak” for days. He constantly reflected on his own fragile condition, especially when he encountered others who came to the tropics as “invalids”. Although attentive to his health, Edward was troubled by his financial situation and by the realization that he had become a burden to family and friends back in New England. Having to continuously ask for monetary support, Edward felt accountable and kept a detailed record of every cent spent (Memorandum book, January-April, 1831; MH bMS Am 1280.235 (333)).

Early in April, 1831, Edward sailed from St. Croix to Puerto Rico. Immediately after landing, he visited the United States consul, Mr. Sidney Mason, a Massachusetts-born businessman who had settled in Puerto Rico, then Spanish territory (Rigau-Pérez, 2014). Mason's reception was generous to an extraordinary degree, whether prompted by their personalities, or a letter of introduction, or because a common acquaintance had suggested the meeting to both parties; the journal and letters give no explanation. With the prospect of a job in Mason's commercial agency, Edward agreed to work for food and lodging and to renegotiate the arrangements after six months. This initial arrangement suited Edward. He embraced it with optimism and the "desire of remaining in a warm climate & of learning Spanish & of getting acquainted with commerce." He was eager to "cease to be heavily burdensome to those at home who [are] laden enough." (letter of 8 May 1831 EBE St John's Puerto Rico to WE New York; MHi Ms N-251 (189)). With time, he acquired more responsibilities and higher pay in Mason's establishment, but not the salary he expected (Journal, August 3 1831). Back in New England, his relatives sent frequent, affectionate, inquiring letters. In an early letter Charles wrote "I hope you still gain hope & health. There are many hearts here, Edward, that beat quick for joy, when they hear your welfare" (letter of 12 March 1831 CCE Boston to EBE St. Croix; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (6)). They were interested to learn his intentions, and were also curious about his surroundings, which they deemed exotic. They encouraged him to write and keep a diary. They commented on the possibility of his return, but Edward gave no indication of an urgent desire to move back.

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During Edward's first winter in Puerto Rico, he enjoyed the company of his brother Charles (December 1831 to April 1832). Charles had developed symptoms of consumption and Edward insisted that he come to warmer climates. The visit renewed Edward's enthusiasm. As anticipated, Edward was able to "talk and walk" with his brother. Their closeness growing up was further deepened by the shared experience in the tropics. Charles, as Edward, observed and commented keenly on customs and traditions. He remarked on slavery, education and religiosity and contrasted them to conditions in New England (Ramírez de Arellano, 2014a). Charles reported in his letter to Dr. Ripley, the step-grandfather, that Puerto Rico was a "place pleasant enough to visit, but not enough to live in." The letter is full of affirmations of his preference to live in the "North" with its images of the 'old mansion', the Sabbath, the Lyceum and a world of "good news & good books" (letter of 15 of January 1832; ALS MH bMS Am 1280.226 (161)). In contrast, Edward's longing for New England took the form of a past and elusive dream, while his life in the tropics dominated his existence at the time.

Edward's stay in the West Indies was interrupted only once. He went back to New England from August to October 1832. He seemed healthy and in good spirits. While in Boston he visited friends and participated in the family gatherings. He never

contemplated staying. He wanted to be back in Puerto Rico for the winter. Edward sailed to the Caribbean for the second time on October 6th 1832, on what was called a “beautiful brig”, the *Agnes* (letter 9 October 1832 CCE Boston to WE New York; MHi Ms N-251 (265)). He wrote a poem as the Boston harbor faded in the distance, giving the “Last Farewell” to brothers, mother, previous way of living, and to the land where he grew up. With his usual sense of patriotism he promised to pray for his land from the foreign “palmy isle,”

To dim New England's shore,
My heart shall beat not when
I pant for thee no more.
In yon green palmy isle,
Beneath the tropic ray,
I murmur never while
For thee and thine I pray;
Far away, far away.

(E. B. Emerson 1832, “The last farewell”, in *The dial*, July 1840).

On his way to Puerto Rico, he stopped in St. Thomas, where he continued to keep his journal. For three days Edward engaged in a busy routine, indicative of his familiarity and high level of comfort with the West Indies environment. He sold goods that he had brought from New England, boarded and ate at a local place of lodging, fortuitously met Mr. Mason, went with a former classmate for a walk in the mountains, and arranged for the transfer of his parcels to the *Niña Bonita* (Journal, 29-31 October 1832). He arrived in Puerto Rico on November 2nd, and after two days of quarantine he landed in San Juan (Journal, 2 November 1832). There is no indication that he kept a journal after arriving in Puerto Rico, but he resumed his correspondence with his brothers and mother. Edward continued to study Spanish and became proficient in it, not only for daily life and business, but to read the literary classics and modern books. He also enjoyed the local fairs, music and drama at the theater, and visits to the outskirts of San Juan. He settled again in Mr. Mason’s commercial enterprises, increasingly becoming a close and trusted friend. By 1833, when Mason had to travel, Edward was left in charge of consular affairs. He renegotiated the terms of his salary, but was still not completely satisfied (Memorandum book, 10 May 1833; MH bMS Am 1280.235 (333)). He shared with his brothers that his current situation made him “more than half willing to free [himself] from West Indies engagements.” However, Edward realized that he was not strong enough to pursue further adventures elsewhere or to face the cold weather of New England. He concluded, “To say that I have talents superior to my station I am not prepared. To say that I feel myself exactly in the niche ordained for me, I am less so” (letter 27 July 1833 EBE Puerto Rico to CCE NP; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (173)).

Through correspondence, Edward stayed informed of the political developments of New England and the intimate affairs of his family and friends. On more than one occasion, the brothers, especially Ralph Waldo, indicated their desire for him to be back. By the spring of 1834, Ralph Waldo proposed the possibility of a retreat in a cottage in the Berkshires, in western Massachusetts. Edward did not completely dismiss the offer but hinted that he “may at least come a welcome pilgrim visitor from time to time, - and repose & repent & learn & unlearn as need may be” in Ralph Waldo’s “philosophic & religious shades” (letter 7 July 1834 EBE Puerto Rico to RWE Boston; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (223)). Edward had been severely sick since the beginning of 1834 and he must have thought of his impending death. His letters became less frequent and, in an indirect way, he made his family aware of the severity of his pain and discomfort. His energy was fading and he described himself as “less fat, less robust, less comely than other men;” however he tried not to imagine the extent or probable duration of his infirmities (letter 3 June 1834 EBE Puerto Rico to RWE Boston; MH bMS Am 1280.226 (221)).

A star in a constellation afar

In August 1834 Edward became ill after exposure to a rainstorm, a “wetting which increased his cough.” By September 27, he was prostrate in his chambers. His close friend and doctor, Francis Armstrong, attended him until his death in the early hours of the 1st of October. Edward died surrounded by Mr. Mason and his family. Perhaps to allow for a dignified funeral and burial, Mr. Mason arranged that Edward receive the Roman Catholic last rites (Rigau-Pérez, 2014).

A procession of friends took the body from the cathedral to the cemetery of Santa Magdalena, between the city walls and the Atlantic Ocean (Bosco & Myerson, 2006). Many came to mourn Edward. Mr. Mason wrote to the family: “I am happy to say that the city of Porto Rico never has shown to a stranger the respect that has been shown to my deceased friend” (letter 8 October 1834, cited by Bosco & Myerson, 2006 p. 143). Edward had become a star in a constellation afar. In New England, the tidings about Edward’s passing provoked great sorrow among the family. His friends poured heartfelt expressions of grief into eulogies that captured the zeal, tensions, and brilliance of his life, and manifested the profound feelings that he elicited in others. The Emersons sent a marble tablet to cover the tomb in San Juan until his ashes could be moved to Massachusetts. At some point, the tablet was returned to the family, but there is no documentation of the final resting place for Edward’s remains. The tombstone is still placed in the Emerson lot in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in Concord (Bosco & Myerson, 2006). Edward was a star among a complex constellation of brothers, patriots, and philosophers and a blazing star that left an unusual trail in the tropics.

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EDWARD B. EMERSON AND SLAVERY

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Edward Bliss Emerson often writes about topics that pique his curiosity because they are novel or puzzling. Few subjects are as foreign and exotic to him as slavery. Other than during a stay in Virginia, Edward had not witnessed the institution of slavery. He was therefore intrigued by the prevailing system in both St. Croix and Puerto Rico. His journal, however, provides more visual and aural vignettes than comments on slavery as an institution. Nevertheless, it reflects a time when both the Danish Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico were intent on defusing insurrection and avoiding the violent upheaval that had taken place in Saint Domingue (now Haiti).

Shortly after his arrival in St. Croix, Emerson comments on the fact that the blacks appear “happy and well-clad” while also noting that the slaves in the house where he was lodging were “excellent servants but ill at peace when by themselves” (Journal, 3 January 1831). A few days later, Edward states that he feels “no shudder at what of domestic government” he has seen (Journal, 7 January 1831).

In 1831 St. Croix was led by Peter Von Scholten, who was Governor-General of the Danish West Indies. Von Scholten was neither an advocate of slavery nor an abolitionist, but rather an “ameliorist” who accepted the prevailing system but tried to thwart any attempts at revolt by making it more humane. Because slaves outnumbered whites 22 to 1 in St. Croix (Flinter, 1976: 51), Von Scholten feared that any conflict would ultimately favor the blacks. Troops were kept ready, Emerson states, “in the event of tidings conveyed from neighboring islands where a successful rising would be an example” that could spread (Journal, 26 February 1831). Von Scholten instituted measures to allow slaves some measure of private ownership and provide education to their children. The governor also improved the status of free blacks, who had been previously denied citizenship, required to carry a “freedom-letter” to show they were not slaves, and had been systematically excluded from most jobs (Paiewonsky, 1976). Emerson notes that “the free blacks have been admitted to the governor’s levees of late” and suggests that such concessions sought to secure the goodwill of this population as a precaution against insurrection (Journal, 18 March 1831).

But Emerson focuses primarily on what he sees and hears. A creature of his time, class and place, Edward tends to describe slaves as a population “whose attributes were found in working, singing and dancing” (Lester, 2005: 29). Emerson repeatedly

describes the slaves' talk as "chatter," and "singsong," a characterization most likely indicating the cadences of their speech and his inability to understand their words.¹

In Puerto Rico, Emerson faced more complex racial dynamics. By 1831, the island had been home to significant numbers of people of African descent for more than three centuries, and the population reflected the results of racial intermarriage and non-sanctioned mixed unions (Díaz Soler, 1994: 123). These trends shifted the racial composition of the island's population, with blacks and those of mixed race accounting for a major and rising proportion of the island's inhabitants.

At the time of Edward's stay in Puerto Rico, the island's economy was expanding quickly. The land devoted to sugarcane increased threefold between 1823 and 1833 (pp. 422-423). As the demand for labor expanded beyond that which could be provided by slaves, landowners hired free laborers. Free wage-earners and slaves thus worked side by side, accelerating the process of acculturation among the imported population and promoting the mixture of races (p. 487). In 1830 the island's inhabitants numbered approximately 324,000 of which 50.1 percent were white, 39.3 percent were free blacks or persons of mixed race, and 10.6 percent were slaves (Vásquez Calzada, 1988: 8).

Like Denmark, Spain recognized that it was in its own self-interest to improve the lot of the slaves in Puerto Rico and Cuba if these islands were to avoid the upheavals that had occurred elsewhere (Cubano Iguina, n.d.: 3). In Puerto Rico, new laws to regulate and improve the condition of the slaves were introduced by Governor Miguel de la Torre, whose policies were summarized in the glib maxim that "A people who is amused does not conspire" (Figueroa, 1969: 88). Legislation enacted during de la Torre's regime imposed responsibilities on all slaveholders. These included an obligation to care for their slaves: feeding and clothing them, housing them, providing them with health care, and rearing their children (Cubano Iguina, n.d.: 3). The laws also established limits on punishments and prescribed the number and length of work days. They also included mechanisms to encourage slaves to work towards purchasing their freedom, while restricting slaveholders from unilaterally granting freedom to minors and those incapacitated by age or illness (Díaz Soler, 1994: 489-490).

¹ Historians of the time wrote that, by the mid 18th century, slaves in St. Thomas spoke at least 26 different languages. An important *lingua franca* spoken there was Negerhollands, the now extinct Dutch lexifier Creole, which included words from a variety of languages: Dutch, German, French, Spanish and Portuguese, in addition to words of African origin. The latter referred primarily to fruits and vegetables, and animals (Paiewonsky, 1989: 100-104). What Emerson considered 'singsong' most likely reflected traces of the tonal systems found in the slaves' original languages. Referring to the slaves' adaptation of English, Julius Lester writes: "The slaves were in the process of trying to fashion the English language to their tongues. The African languages are musical, and one word can have many meanings depending on the intonation it is given. Thus it was difficult for them to be satisfied with the rather flat intonations of English, and they made their own kind of English, one that was more musical, more pleasant to the ear" (2005: 85).

As in St. Croix, Edward's descriptions of the slave population in Puerto Rico center primarily on what he deems to be the culture of the slaves. In San Juan, Emerson gives particular attention to the music and dancing of the blacks. He describes the drums, rattles, and calabashes, as well as some of the dance movements and singing. Referring to the slaves, Emerson says that "laboriously as they do perform they seem indefatigable in their diversions" (Journal, 26 June 1831).

When Edward addresses the institutional aspects of slavery, it is the master-slave relationship that concerns him. He considers the relationship detrimental to both and suggests that it is the slaves, by virtue of their labor, who have the upper hand. Referring to the situation in the Virgin Islands, he comments that slavery produced in the masters

"a laziness and dependence while it transfers to the [slaves] [...] that influence and sway which [...] belongs to industry and skill" (Journal, 10 March 1831). And he later writes that "perhaps it is the law of nature that he who works [...] shall by the very gravity of his character possess an influence & hold a station superior to that of the less industrious whom birth & fortune may have made their apparent masters..." (Journal, 29 October 1832).

The diarist, however, offers no prescription on how to deal with slavery. Just as Emerson is silent concerning Puerto Rico's colonial situation, he is decidedly guarded on the subject of slavery. Why this silence on a topic which affected so many aspects of Puerto Rican life at that time?

We can only speculate, because Emerson offers few clues in his writings. But one reason is that he does not distinguish between race and labor status. He thus tends to equate being black with being a slave, although, at least in Puerto Rico, free blacks accounted for almost two-fifths of the population at the time of Emerson's sojourn on the island. Another explanation may be that Emerson's employer, Sidney Mason, had a financial stake in at least two plantations that depended on slave labor (Baralt, 1992: 6). Edward may therefore have felt reluctant to criticize his boss, on whom he depended for his livelihood and companionship. Finally, he may have been muzzled by two contemporaneous witnesses to whom he was close: his brother Charles and George Flinter. Each of these articulated their unambiguous though contradictory views of slavery as an institution in their writings, and Edward was aware of their views.

When Charles Emerson visited his brother in Puerto Rico in 1831-32, he wrote letters expressing his opinions about the slave system. Even when slaves were treated humanely, he felt uneasy about watching them work. He bemoaned the fact that they "work without the consciousness of liberty & property, which makes toil honorable and sweet" and concluded that "to tolerate slavery is like nothing so much as sewing

up the body politic in a sack with a living viper” (Charles C. Emerson to Ezra Ripley, 15-17 January 1832, in Bosco & Myerson, 2006: 163).

Charles’s views contrasted with those of George Flinter, whom Edward befriended in Puerto Rico. Flinter, an Irishman who had served for 21 years as a British military officer in the Caribbean, spent 3 years (1829-1832) in Puerto Rico, overlapping with Emerson on the island. During his stay, Flinter penned two books on Puerto Rico (1832 and 1834). In these he held that slavery in Puerto Rico was benign, and that the bitterness of slavery was “very much mitigated by the humanity of the Spanish laws” (Flinter, 1834: 233-5). Indeed, he described the Spanish slave code as one that “breathes mildness and humanity; ...affords protection to the slave; and infuses the balm of hope and consolation into his bosom” (Flinter, 1834: 238).

These diverse accounts of the practice of slavery in Puerto Rico highlight the lack of consensus on the nature of the problem and hence on its solution. Similar discrepancies would inform much of the political discussion on the issue until 1873, when the Spanish Cortes finally abolished slavery in Puerto Rico. In time, the sounds and sights that Edward found picturesque would lose their immediate association with slavery and become part of a rich West Indian culture. Other aspects of the institution, however, including racial distinctions and a disdain for manual labor, have remained embedded in the islands’ social and economic structure, leaving traces that are felt to this day.

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¹ Historians of the time wrote that, by the mid 18th century, slaves in St. Thomas spoke at least 26 different languages. An important *lingua franca* spoken there was Negerhollands, the now extinct Dutch lexifier Creole, which included words from a variety of languages: Dutch, German, French, Spanish and Portuguese, in addition to words of African origin. The latter referred primarily to fruits and vegetables, and animals (Paiewonsky, 1989: 100-104). What Emerson considered 'singsong' most likely reflected traces of the tonal systems found in the slaves' original languages. Referring to the slaves' adaptation of English, Julius Lester writes: "The slaves were in the process of trying to fashion the English language to their tongues. The African languages are musical, and one word can have many meanings depending on the intonation it is given. Thus it was difficult for them to be satisfied with the rather flat intonations of English, and they made their own kind of English, one that was more musical, more pleasant to the ear" (2005: 85).

As in St. Croix, Edward's descriptions of the slave population in Puerto Rico center primarily on what he deems to be the culture of the slaves. In San Juan, Emerson gives particular attention to the music and dancing of the blacks. He describes the drums, rattles, and calabashes, as well as some of the dance movements and singing. Referring to the slaves, Emerson says that "laboriously as they do perform they seem indefatigable in their diversions" (Journal, 26 June 1831).

When Edward addresses the institutional aspects of slavery, it is the master-slave relationship that concerns him. He considers the relationship detrimental to both and suggests that it is the slaves, by virtue of their labor, who have the upper hand. Referring to the situation in the Virgin Islands, he comments that slavery produced in the masters

"a laziness and dependence while it transfers to the [slaves] [...] that influence and sway which [...] belongs to industry and skill" (Journal, 10 March 1831). And he later writes that "perhaps it is the law of nature that he who works [...] shall by the very gravity of his character possess an influence & hold a station superior to that of the less industrious whom birth & fortune may have made their apparent masters..." (Journal, 29 October 1832).

The diarist, however, offers no prescription on how to deal with slavery. Just as Emerson is silent concerning Puerto Rico's colonial situation, he is decidedly guarded on the subject of slavery. Why this silence on a topic which affected so many aspects of Puerto Rican life at that time?

We can only speculate, because Emerson offers few clues in his writings. But one reason is that he does not distinguish between race and labor status. He thus tends to equate being black with being a slave, although, at least in Puerto Rico, free blacks accounted for almost two-fifths of the population at the time of Emerson's sojourn on the island. Another explanation may be that Emerson's employer, Sidney Mason, had a financial stake in at least two plantations that depended on slave labor (Baralt, 1992: 6). Edward may therefore have felt reluctant to criticize his boss, on whom he depended for his livelihood and companionship. Finally, he may have been muzzled by two contemporaneous witnesses to whom he was close: his brother Charles and George Flinter. Each of these articulated their unambiguous though contradictory views of slavery as an institution in their writings, and Edward was aware of their views.

When Charles Emerson visited his brother in Puerto Rico in 1831-32, he wrote letters expressing his opinions about the slave system. Even when slaves were treated humanely, he felt uneasy about watching them work. He bemoaned the fact that they "work without the consciousness of liberty & property, which makes toil honorable and sweet" and concluded that "to tolerate slavery is like nothing so much as sewing

up the body politic in a sack with a living viper” (Charles C. Emerson to Ezra Ripley, 15-17 January 1832, in Bosco & Myerson, 2006: 163).

Charles’s views contrasted with those of George Flinter, whom Edward befriended in Puerto Rico. Flinter, an Irishman who had served for 21 years as a British military officer in the Caribbean, spent 3 years (1829-1832) in Puerto Rico, overlapping with Emerson on the island. During his stay, Flinter penned two books on Puerto Rico (1832 and 1834). In these he held that slavery in Puerto Rico was benign, and that the bitterness of slavery was “very much mitigated by the humanity of the Spanish laws” (Flinter, 1834: 233-5). Indeed, he described the Spanish slave code as one that “breathes mildness and humanity; ...affords protection to the slave; and infuses the balm of hope and consolation into his bosom” (Flinter, 1834: 238).

These diverse accounts of the practice of slavery in Puerto Rico highlight the lack of consensus on the nature of the problem and hence on its solution. Similar discrepancies would inform much of the political discussion on the issue until 1873, when the Spanish Cortes finally abolished slavery in Puerto Rico. In time, the sounds and sights that Edward found picturesque would lose their immediate association with slavery and become part of a rich West Indian culture. Other aspects of the institution, however, including racial distinctions and a disdain for manual labor, have remained embedded in the islands’ social and economic structure, leaving traces that are felt to this day.

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THE ANALYSIS OF THE RHETORIC OF *OTHERING* IN E.B. EMERSON'S CARIBBEAN JOURNAL OF 1831-1832: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

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Edward Bliss Emerson's journal of his 1831-1832 visit to the Caribbean islands of Saint Croix, St. Thomas, and Puerto Rico constitutes an important sample of the literary genre known as nineteenth century travel literature (Riggins, 1997: 16). According to Frawley (2004), it is considered the personal repository of his experience away from home in his quest for good health. It also constitutes an excellent example of the literature known as *invalidism*, a term that refers both to a condition of disability and to the literature focused on the study of cultural and social responses to the concept of incapacity (2004). In her book on *Invalidism and identity in nineteenth-century Britain*, Frawley posits that this kind of literature became very popular in Victorian England, for it counted on followers beyond "fellow sufferers" because it "satisfied cultural needs different from those of narrative adopting the private confessional stance" (p. 116).

Although there is no indication that Emerson wrote his journal with the intention of publishing it, it is an important contribution to the scholarly study of invalidism and the travel literature that is associated with it. While acknowledging the many perspectives that can be utilized to view Emerson's journal, the aim of this study in particular is to present the results of a close reading of Emerson's words in order to extract from the language used in his writing a clearer view on his descriptions of the experiences outside of his native New England. It is thus also an attempt to unveil or uncover the mental processes that in a mostly unconscious manner gave birth to the ideas that he utilized to make these descriptions, and, through them, his own construction and representation of the people, places and events that he observed (often through the lens provided to him by the local expatriate elites) in the colonial Caribbean.

According to recognized scholars in the study of culture such as Bhabha (1994: 64-84), this aspect of the representation of *others*, of those that belong to cultures, groups or particular affiliations that are different from ours and for which we create a mental template, structure or category, is the result of an unconscious dimension of thinking.

Under Western hegemony, this unconscious framework is utilized to classify, make interpretations and evaluate others and the activities in which they engage (Lustig & Koester, 2013). As to the term *others*, it is part of the common terminology used in anthropology, sociology, cultural studies and discourse analysis. It is used to refer to “all people the Self perceives as mildly or radically different” (Riggins, 1997: 3). In addition to use of the term *othering*, scholars who pursue this line of scholarship also utilize the words *otherness* and *alterity* to describe the result of this cognitive process.

Western anthropology, as a discipline historically constituted to understand others, coined the term “ethnocentrism” to explain such attitudes regarding those different from “us”. Anthropologists tell us that we “think, feel, perceive, and perform from a certain perspective that we have acquired in the process of becoming human...” (Grimson et al., 2011: 9, translated from Spanish by this author). As a result of this, we cannot understand immediately those views that are different from ours without engaging in a process of deep reflection (p. 9). Emerson’s descriptions of Caribbean island places, people, and events therefore must be viewed under the rubric of the ethnocentrism that permeates Western ways of thinking. Ethnocentrism elevates the values of the society to which we belong to the category of universality; thus this social construct becomes the only frame of reference in our observation of others (Todorov, 1991, as cited in Grimson et al., p. 10). This is precisely, then, how Emerson’s descriptions are to be seen and understood: within the scope of his New England upbringing and his European-oriented education.

We would like to give saliency here to the notion that, while recognizing the importance of historical scholarship on the basis of written documentation, scholars on *alterity* contend that such work is tainted not only by the experiential background of the historians themselves but also by the authors of the documents which are the basis of the consequent description, analysis and interpretation, and that this is a reality from which it is impossible to completely escape.

Methodology

For my purposes, the theoretical and methodological approaches of discourse analysis in general (DA) and of critical discourse analysis in particular (CDA) (Van Dijk, 2009), provide the most appropriate perspectives through which to analyze Emerson’s journal (Riggins, 1997: 2). The qualitative aspects of DA and CDA ensure that findings are not merely numbers and statistics, but that the subtleties of the phenomenon undergoing study are clearly seen. The approach of discourse studies employs the qualitative method of analyzing written texts through close readings of them and is based on the belief of anthropologist and linguist Dell Hymes (1962) that language is first and foremost a socially situated cultural form. This posture recognizes and understands that much of linguistic form cannot be separated from how and why it

is used. In relation to this understanding, Saville-Troike (2003) believes that this view and each of its subsequent applications “...stress the need to look at the larger sociopolitical contexts [...], claiming that those contexts may determine features of [...] use in ways that are not evident from a focus on language alone...” (p. 253).

More specifically, CDA (Wodak & Meyer, 2009; van Dijk, 2009), as a methodological approach, is based on the belief that the relation between words and truth is problematic. Any text, written or oral, is seen as a selection and an interpretation of events. Therefore, the representations that are made of events are characterized by a possibility of different and ambiguous meanings that entail some fact and some fiction (Riggins, 1997). No matter how committed some writers are to the accuracy and truthfulness of the ideas they put into writing, all of us are “unwittingly trapped in a world of biased perceptions and ‘stories,’ all of which both exceed and shortchange ‘reality’” (p. 2).

In 1995 Fairclough, one of the original scholars working with CDA in the 1990s, together with van Dijk and Wodak, referred to discourse as “the language used in representing a given social practice from a particular point of view” (1995: 56). This language then does not reflect ‘objectively true’ reality because it is based on a different reality, constructed and shaped according to the personal interests of the writers (Riggins, 1997: 2) and to the socio-cultural values that the writers learned in their own process of socialization and enculturation. CDA is also involved in the relationship between language, power, and privilege, for it adds a dimension that explains and “problematizes aspects of communication that might otherwise escape attention” (Saville-Troike, 2003: 255). It is of utmost importance at this point to make a clarification concerning this approach. CDA is a “socially committed activity with an acknowledged political, ideological, and ethical stance” (Kress, 1991, in Saville-Troike: 254).

Some linguistic structures and discursive strategies, together with other stylistic devices of language use, provide the framework for identifying the language items used in the construction of the writer’s own realities. The language components included here are in the majority lexical items or words – their selection, use, meanings and emotional charge, pronouns (*we* vs. *they*), possessive modifiers (*our* vs. *their*) and language structures associated with the passive voice, modal verbs (use of modal auxiliaries such as *may*, *must*) and the use of adverbials such as *certainly*, *unfortunately*, *obviously*. Discursive strategies refer to ways in which language is used or put together in order to create an idea that is not necessarily the one intended by its dictionary or denotative meaning. Examples of these include the use of absolute negatives or positives such as *nil* and *superb*, stereotypes, figures of speech such as metaphors and similes, repetitions for emphasis, expressions characterized by vagueness and ambiguity, and the reliance on both presupposed and absent information. The former is information that is merely implied. The latter is information

that is neither provided nor implied. It is these two types of information that prove to be the most elusive and thus difficult to extract for analysis (Fairclough, 1995). As to stylistic devices, they are those aspects of language use that are characteristic of the particular style of the writer. They may also entail using language whose register is associated either with formal or informal language, that is, with the use of simple or more complex words, expressions and sentences.

Presentation of findings and analysis of the data

The main objective of this project is to identify the linguistic, discursive and stylistic aspects of Emerson's words, which reflect the writer's construction of his own reality based on this *other* context, the new situation in which he found himself in the Caribbean. These aspects are presented and discussed utilizing the three categories proposed in the title to this study: the good, the bad and the ugly, as he described them in each of the three islands visited. The findings presented here are a sample of an ongoing investigation of Emerson's fascinating work. Taking into account Frawley's (2004) discussion of invalidism in the nineteenth century, it becomes clear that there are certain recurrent themes in Emerson's discourse, including: climate, landscape, food, as well as African descended Caribbean people, Puerto Ricans, and their language, music and personal qualities. The recurrence of these themes is reflected in the presentation of the findings below.

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It is relevant to add at this juncture that the presentation of findings herein is based on a framework of binary opposites, as the title of this essay suggests. Thus the good and the bad are polar opposites which are bonded into a dialectic (Gikandi, 2011) that is then extended to the notion of ugliness, which is merely an increase in degree of what is already bad. This study identifies these stances of apparent polarity in some of the comments that Emerson provides about his experiences, including: motion vs. inertia, overeating vs. undernourishment, fine vs. miserable weather, blistering sun vs. shining star, rude vs. happy music, feelings of loneliness away from his spiritual surroundings vs. feelings of independence in terms of his religious beliefs, happiness vs. ignorance, etc.

“The good”

In order to understand what he perceived as the positive aspects of his new Caribbean environs, it is important to bear in mind the reasons for which Emerson came to the West Indies. As mentioned earlier, Frawley (2004) comments on the importance of warm climates, such as that of the the Caribbean, that characterized the published and unpublished journals of those afflicted with incapacity in their search for health. According to her, highly embellished descriptions of the scenery, of the beauty of nature and of the balmy climate and its remedial effects are to be found throughout

these works. Emerson's text is no exception. The examples of positive comments that appear below are relevant to each of the islands that he visited.

St. Croix

In the examples below, note the use of the adverb *kindly* to personify the climate and the totality of power with which nature is bestowed to provide remedy; the choice of a heaven-like adjective such as *glorious* to describe the ocean and the participial verbs in adjectival form *untossed* and *unterrified* to create a posture of ease and security. Finally the climate is crowned with a Biblical reference, that of Paradise itself.

...the climate grows kindly and perhaps [Emerson's underlining] he gets well by some of the many remedies which nature here hold [sic] to every sense. (4 January 1831)

I walked to the shore and looked at again on the broad ocean which is truly a glorious sight to one who views it in security from an isle like this, untossed and unterrified. (6 January 1831)

Well has Edw[ards] called this the climate of Paradise. (23 January 1831)

In the examples that follow, the description involves the local food, especially the tropical fruit of which he spoke highly. This is obviously connected to its nutritious and remedial value. Emerson goes to great lengths when writing about the delicious and plentiful variety of fruit, a topic that fascinated him.

This [the soursop] is very agreeable if taken in small quantity early in the morning and is said to be recommended to invalids, especially the febrile. (6 January 1831)

Despite some inconveniences concerning his perception of the local population – to be discussed below – Emerson found St. Croix to “abound in politeness” and the black population to be “tranquil” and “civil.”

St. Thomas

Although Emerson was in St. Thomas twice, first in 1831 and then again in 1832, his first visit was very brief, only one day, on board the ship that would bring him to Puerto Rico. Emerson described the scenery as follows:

A fine morning shows this beautiful place to great advantage. Its peculiar situation & threefold division on Eng. French m & Government hills is [sic] picturesque. (5 April 1831)

His description of this port in 1832 confirms his initial aesthetic pleasure with the views.

St. Johns (San Juan, Puerto Rico)

When describing the historical aspects of the city of San Juan, which he referred to as St. Johns, Emerson's style is one of formality, careful choice of words that project beauty and elegance, and of metaphoric language; this represents his best written discourse.

Imagine yourself then a well-fortified city, -with lofty walls encircling its entire extent. Supporting ramparts from which, at due intervals, jut forth round sentry boxes, and huge cannons peep through the embrasure, -so strong by art, that the first glance assures the visitor of security against hostile attempts... (1832)

...conceive this city to be bounded on the north, on the east, & on the west by the sea & on the south by an arm of the same which after forming a commodious & graceful port passes on eastward and joins the sea again... (1832)

So rich & peaceful is the scenery from the southern side that one is almost tempted to suppose as his eye glances first on the walls and then on the opposite country, that some stout pilgrims tired with the tumult of European traffic & contention, wisely fixed on this spot their home & altar, resolved to defend themselves as in a newfound Paradise & seek nothing but how best to enjoy the garden so happily discovered. (1832)

The scenery and climate of nature's gift to the island was also praised through the use of embellishment in the choice of nouns, adjectives and verbs, the use of absolute positives (*no better climate*), metaphors and an elegant prose.

I walked on the ramparts & thought the Elysian fields could enjoy no better climate & scarcely a finer prospect than that wh[ich] lay to the South and Southwest across the bay. Those evergreen hills now darkened now irradiated as the clouds rise and fall between them & the Spectator, or between them and the King of the day, are a beautiful resting place for the eye, their clothing of bushes and trees is ornamental and attitudes or arrangement quite picturesque. (23 May 1831)

"The bad" and "the ugly"

Two themes about which Emerson had a tendency to construct negative images of the Caribbean were foreign to him and the environment in which he was socialized and enculturated: large numbers of African descended people vs. a small population of European descended people, as was the case in both St. Croix and St. Thomas and, in the case of Puerto Rico, a society mainly made up of descendants of Spanish, African, and Indigenous descended peoples as well as a mixture of all, whose culture was

characterized by major differences from that of Emerson's New England. This notion of difference coincides with the concept of ethnocentrism as put forth by anthropologists who place it at the heart of the construction of otherness. Ethnocentrism is an ideology of domination whereby the patterns of one's own culture are held to be superior to those of others (Lustig & Koester, 2013: 136), thus promoting a rejection of that which is 'not like us' or 'beneath us.' Emerson's comments that fall under this rubric, many of them harsh, reflect such attitudes. To some degree, Emerson's attitudes toward people of African, Indigenous, and Southern European descent can be traced to the virulent condemnation of Spanish colonialism in general and miscegenation in particular by the English, Dutch and French from the 17th century onward with the purpose of justifying their theft of Spanish-claimed land and treasure (Roberts 2008). Ethnocentrism and othering are also very typical of the North American and European 'expatriate' communities which constituted Emerson's social networks in the colonial Caribbean. In fact, similar attitudes typify most neo-colonial expatriate communities today.

St. Croix

Emerson commented on slavery, but he mainly repeated what he heard from the European elite members of the Crucian community. He did, however, frequently comment on the language and language practices of the African descended community. Notice in the examples given below the use of the word 'dialect' to demean their linguistic systems. This word, which he uses to refer to a "broken form or non-standard form of a language," is now used in the discipline of linguistics with a more neutral meaning to refer to the actual speech varieties through which all linguistic systems manifest themselves. Thus, American English is a dialect or variety of English and so are Received Pronunciation in England, Singapore English, and South African English, to name a few. Colombian Spanish, Castilian Spanish, Puerto Rican Spanish and Mexican Spanish are also varieties of the language called Spanish. Theoretically, there is no value judgement attached to this usage of the word 'dialect.' Emerson knew that he was not a philologist, but that did not prevent him from making negative comments about the ways of speaking of the African descended. In a famous study on language attitudes, Wallace Lambert et al. (1960) discovered that in North American society, negative attitudes towards others' ways of speaking tend to take root early in adolescence; these are manifestations of negative attitudes towards others as people, for it is easier and socially more acceptable to discriminate openly against a people's language than against the people themselves.

Notice in the second quote below, Emerson makes use of the progressive form of the verb 'chattering' used as a noun modified by the adjective 'voluble' to disparage the spoken language of African descended people as a constant exchange of unimportant ideas, implying an emptiness of meaning in their communicative acts. The third

example is one that highlights a voluntary lack of intelligibility on their part, which Emerson interprets as an indication of obstinacy or defiance. From a linguistic perspective, this example focuses on the fact that the creole language spoken widely on the island at the time consisted of a repertoire of stylistic varieties, some of which could be perceived as quite close to, and others very distant from Standard varieties of English. This particular passage should be of interest to those creolists who focus on the agency of the enslaved and who argue that acts of identity and resistance are important factors in the emergence and use of creole languages in the Afro-Atlantic.

Dialect of negro servants a complete Eng[lish] patois with a droll voluble singsong manner. (5 January 1831)

Note voluble chattering of negroes precisely like that of lower orders in Marseilles or Italy. (22 January, 1831)

...Mrs. D. bought some ban-bush at house of a free old negro woman whose talk was as far from English as any other, except when she strove to be intelligible, & this is not uncommonly the case here. (2 March, 1831)

St. Thomas

Although the brevity of his first stay provides little data, Emerson compares the island to Italian cities in the constant talk about unimportant things coming from the mouths of the African descended.

It reminded me of the Italian cities by constant chatter of negroes, which is as unintelligible as a strange tongue. (5 April 1831)

St. Johns (San Juan, Puerto Rico)

Negative comments regarding San Juan abound in Emerson's writings. Perhaps this is due to his extended stay in Puerto Rico, which provided him with the opportunity to get to know the island better than the Danish West Indies, or to the pronounced differences between San Juan, a Spanish colonial city and the more English influenced Danish islands, where the elites identified completely with the European hegemon and any form of genetic, linguistic, or cultural mixing between European, African, and Indigenous descended peoples was demonized and criminalized. In the quotes below, notice the choice of words to describe what he saw: the use of absolute negatives (*no books, image void of beauty*), the comments full of sarcasm (third example), the portrayal of society as being ignorant and having no literature, the poking of fun at the military, the description of the music as rude, and the sweeping statements about the lack of interest among the men to strive for perfection in comparison with the men in New England. The citations below epitomize how ethnocentrism, when maintained at

an unconscious level, creates the perfect model for the creation of *alterity* or otherness.

...ill odors rushing from the doors & courtyards. (7 April 1832)

...no bookstores, but several variety shops, & chocolate * grocery stores. (17 April 1832)

...13 servants about the house do the work which a third of the number might as well or better perform. (7 April, 1832)

...no literature. (8 April, 1832)

Troops in white: not exhibiting the discipline of West Point. (8 April, 1832)

Song & music rude enough but *muy alegre* strikes the ear... (13 April, 1832)

After breakfast walked, read, visited one of the churches large & vaulted but without the splendor & art of Italy & France. Image void of beauty must derive all value from the association & company. (17 April 1832)

Others of the negroes had rattles made of calabash & called in English 'shake shake' a name excellently descriptive of the music...a boisterous singing & violent jumping joined to the clatter... (5 June 1832)

In the following commentary, Emerson's strongly disdainful attitudes toward San Juan are conveyed through the use of repetitive absolute negatives (no lectures, no sermons, etc.), absent information and grandiose style:

It is very possible that much more intellectual and moral entertainment might be furnished to the thousands of ignorant people to be found here, in both upper & lower classes of society; & some attention to this subject is extremely desirable. It is a pity that no other amusements, than games of hazard or even of skill & bodily dexterity & no other comforts that those of repose & common conversation should be offered to thinking men. No lectures, no sermons, no reading rooms, no public libraries, even the theatre not yet completed...this is an excess of apathy or ignorance, as the value of the intellectual faculties & the need of cultivation... (26 June 1832)

Emerson's condescending comments about the music produced by 'bands of negroes' reflect his opinions concerning the supposed lack of intelligence of non-European

descended peoples:

Walked tonight, saw a band of negroes dancing to drum & shake shake & congo upon the ramparts, singing a simple tune with I should think not more than three different notes, & perhaps no meaning- & moving backwards & forward from within a circle with a step as uniform as the song, & such as it needs no Monsieur to teach... (26 June 1832)

This is followed by a direct comparison with New England:

Men do not strive here as in N.E. after *the perfect man*. It is present *pastime* or *gainful* industry or chance which they follow as their stars. (3 July 1832)

The lines that follow contain an interesting assessment by Emerson of a colony where the people managed to resist colonial hegemony much more effectively than his *perfect men* in New England, despite their lack of formal independence from Spain.

I say not that there is no internal piety or virtuous effort or sacrifice here, but if such fruits do abound, the leaves & the blossoms are so scanty & the produce so disposed of as to make the vineyard very unlike the pictures of a 2d Eden that see form under the instructions of northern divines....Still I fear there must be much crime & impurity—mingled with the ignorance of the people about me. I am told of priests who have been beastly drunkards, & great cockfighters. I see much gambling. I hear of bribery as the great advocate in lawsuits; of duelling [sic] ...I hear hardly a book named; I see the people go to mass but they seem to have little respect for their clergy...I think [they] render their religion nearly stationary if not retrograde in respect to its influence in stimulating the mind towards imitation of divine perfections... (7 August 1832)

These are strong negative comments coming from a man who is highly religious and well educated, but who cannot escape his unconscious and unquestioning allegiance to Western hegemony. We are aware that history has described the population of Puerto Rico in the 1830s as engaging in much debauchery, as Emerson also observes; however, we ask from the perspective of critical analysis: was there any possible connection between this type of behavior in the people of the island and the political events that were taking place at the time? Did these events have a bearing upon the unrestrained activity of the city dwellers as described in Emerson's journal?

In his *History of Puerto Rico*, Brau (1966: 241) describes this period under the Spanish governorship of Miguel de la Torre as one of great material advancement but one which receives negative grades as a result of the direction his leadership imposed on the traditional customs of the island. In order to restrain the possibility of any separatist movement from Spain, de la Torre adopted social measures focused on allowing the people to have "a good time" so that they would not have time to think

about engaging in conspiracies against Spain. Thus cock fighting and gambling were promoted as were other popular “vices,” to the point that this governorship was referred to as the government of the three Bs: *baile, botella y baraja* (dancing, drinking and gambling). Therefore, Emerson was exposed to a capital city whose dwellers engaged in a range of socially destructive behaviors deliberately promoted by the colonial power and generalized his observations to the Puerto Rican population as a whole.

Although Emerson’s Caribbean Journal of 1831-1832 constitutes an important document for study under the rubric of travel literature and the literature on invalidism, this article focused on a close reading of the writer’s words in his descriptions of people, places and events in St. Thomas, St. Croix and Puerto Rico. The objective was to present linguistic evidence from the work itself about how Emerson’s words provided a blueprint to his own construction of others. This representation followed the cognitive processes of his inner unconscious and ethnocentric mind, the product of particular enculturation and socialization processes. This typically Western mindset is one that easily falls prey to highly negative perception and characterization in its encounters with others and unfortunately, it is still a very powerful force (Lustig & Koester, 2013).

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the Caribbean was viewed as a seat of corruption and evil, in terms of language, morality, and health (Roberts, 2008), but during the 19th century the region came to be seen as an ideal place to find health. These contrasting views serve to underscore the importance of the study of the interplay of binary oppositions in the portrayal of the Caribbean in the work of E.B. Emerson.

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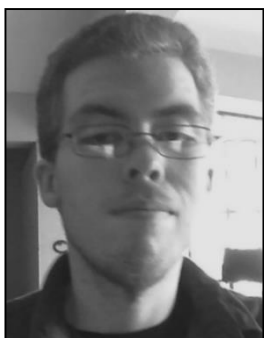
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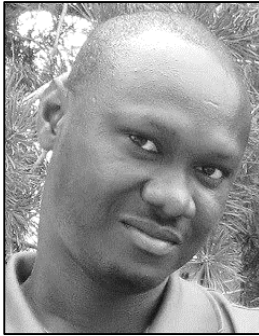


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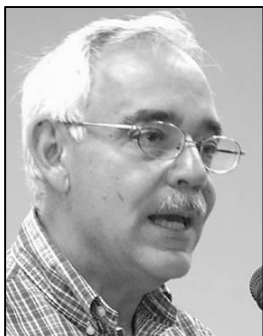
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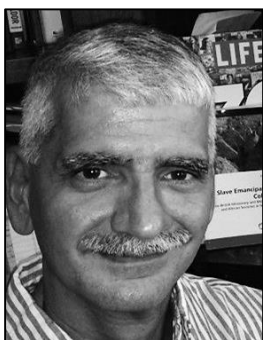
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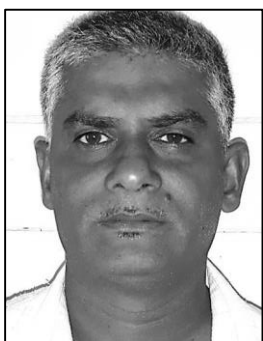
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