

This volume, *Breaking Down Binaries: Tidal Shifts in the study of the languages, literatures and cultures of the Greater Caribbean and beyond*, is a collection of peer reviewed articles that present a critical perspective on the languages, literatures, and cultures of the Greater Caribbean. The book is part of a two-volume set published annually since 2009, which provides a platform for recent writing from and about the Greater Caribbean in general in one volume and about the Dutch Caribbean in particular in the other. The contributing authors include a wide range of voices old and new from the Caribbean and beyond.

Breaking Down Binaries

Breaking Down Binaries

Tidal Shifts in the study of the languages, literatures and cultures of the Greater Caribbean and beyond

Edited by
Nicholas Faraclas
Ronald Severing
Christa Weijer
Elisabeth Echteld
Wim Rutgers
Sally Delgado



Faraclas | Severing | Weijer
Echteld | Rutgers | Delgado

ISBN 978-99904-4-061-4



Breaking Down Binaries:
Tidal Shifts in the study
of the languages, literatures and cultures of
the Greater Caribbean and beyond

Breaking Down Binaries:

Tidal Shifts in the study of the languages, literatures and cultures of the Greater Caribbean and beyond

Volume 2

Edited by

Prof. Dr. Nicholas Faraclas

Prof. Dr. Ronald Severing

Drs. Christa Weijer

Dr. Elisabeth Echteld

Prof. Dr. Wim Rutgers

Dr. Sally Delgado



**UNIVERSITY
OF CURAÇAO**
DR. MOISES DA COSTA GOMEZ



Curaçao/Puerto Rico 2018

Breaking Down Binaries: Tidal Shifts in the study of the languages, literatures and cultures of
the Greater Caribbean and beyond
Volume 2

Edited by Nicholas Faraclas, Ronald Severing, Christa Weijer, Elisabeth Echteld, Wim Rutgers and
Sally Delgado

ISBN 978-99904-4-061-4

© 2018 University of Curaçao (Universidat di Kòrsou)

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, photo print, microfilm, or any other
means, without written permission from the publisher.

University of Curaçao (Universidat di Kòrsou)

Jan Noorduynweg 111, Willemstad, Curaçao, www.uoc.cw

University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras (Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras, UPR)
San Juan, 00925, Puerto Rico, www.uprrp.edu

Cover: Painting of Wilson Garcia, *Kariño*. Oil, on linen. Collection: Dulcie and Frits Goedgedrag,
Aruba. See more at: <http://www.wilsongarcia.nl/> and <http://www.galleryalmablou.com/>

CONTENTS

TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF LITERATURE AND POLITICS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

1 Kamau Brathwaite's "stone" for Mikey Smith Michael Sharp	13
2 Mythbusting maritime fiction Sally J. Delgado	19
3 Colonization, culture and pan-Africanism in the poems of Kofi Awoonor Alfred Kwami Teni	35
4 The Rastafarian: from pariah to hero in Jamaican literary discourse from the 1950s to the 1980s Aart G. Broek	39
5 An ecocritical reading of Niyi Osundare's poetry Charity Aboagye	49

TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF MUSIC, DANCE, ART AND FILM IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

6 Blood clot, ras cloth and bun bow cloth: Lovindeer takes on female bodily taboos in Jamaica Anna Kasafi Perkins	63
7 Afro-Caribbean dance and cultural connections in the Spanish Eastern and Western Caribbean Ann Albuyeh	79
8 Elizabeth Magali Robles y la acción como condición Lydia Platón	95
9 Toward a gendered understanding of Calypso music Meagan Sylvester	107

10 Contrasting film techniques in Maria Govan's Rain and Ernesto Daranas' Conducta Nicole Díaz Morell	113

TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

11 The visual and verbal representations of Mami Wata billboards in Ghana Frances S. Rivera Cornier	123
12 Culturation and language in Guyana Alim Hossein	141
13 A study of the negative in Grenadian French lexifier Creole Marguerite-Joan Joseph	151
14 A sociolinguistic study of language variation in the English spoken in Ghana: a case study of the schwa vowel Charles Djorbua	159

TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF IDENTITY AND CULTURE IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

15 La raza: the search for identity Wilfredo A. Geigel and Alma Simounet-Geigel	169
16 La identidad lingüística puertorriqueña en los billboards de San Juan y Carolina Gabriel E. Suárez	179
17 Humor and optimism following the 2017 hurricane disasters in Dominica and Puerto Rico Ilsa López-Vallés	191
18 A critical analysis of public discourse after hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico Alexandra N. Mihailovic Court and Luis A. Sanchez Galan	197

TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF EDUCATION IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

19 Lecturers' perceptions of the efficacy of the integration of communicative strategies and instructional technologies in foreign language instruction Janice Jules	207
20 Spelling acquisition at the University of Guyana: an error analysis Penelope Montfort	219
21 On being incarcerated in Puerto Rico: employing an autobiographical pedagogy Cynthia Pittmann	231
22 A preliminary account of a transformative pedagogical model: using historical fiction in the Caribbean Jeffrey O'Field and Patrick Oneill López Negrón	237

TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

23 The language of sugar cane and rum in Martinique Hélène Zamor	245
24 Barbados and its "colony" South Carolina: historical, cultural, and linguistic connections Brenda L. Domínguez Rosado	251
25 The linguistic and social history of food vocabulary in Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creoles Iris Hewitt-Bradshaw	261
26 Ghana 'pona' yam: a potential product for geographical indication status Gervase Kuuwaabong	273

TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF SOCIETY AND HISTORY IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

27 Reconstructing Saint Lucian boyhood: a transnational approach Janice Cools	291

28 Views of the descendants of the enslaved in Martinique on the question of reparations Roseline Armange	301
29 The Danish West Indies: paternalism and poverty Elizabeth Rezende	315
30 The Caribbean in world history: Caribbean impacts on global struggles for freedom Bernard Bierlich	325

TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF LITERATURE IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND

31 The anachronisms of exile: counter-narrative, memory, time and remembrance in George Lamming's <i>In the castle of my skin</i> Raúl Javier Vázquez Vélez	339
32 The importance of ghosts in Edgar Mittelholtzer's <i>My bones and my flute</i> and Wilson Harris' <i>Palace of the peacock</i> Maritza V. Cardona Ortiz	349
33 The colonial gaze and the sex scenes in Amma Darko's <i>Beyond the horizon</i> Kofi Darkoh-Ankrah	357
34 Lenguaje y figura: estudio de personajes inusuales en el libro <i>Mundo cruel</i> del escritor puertorriqueño Luis Negrón Anissa M. Ortega Díaz and Jomayra Pimentel Rodríguez	365
35 Canefields, golden mongooses, and faceless men: trauma theory and <i>The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao</i> Klaas Bant	373

ABOUT THE EDITORS	385
ABOUT THE AUTHORS	386
ABOUT THE PAINTER	394

Acknowledgements

The two publications: *Dissolving Disciplines: Tidal Shifts in the study of the languages, literatures and cultures of the Dutch Caribbean and beyond* together with *Breaking Down Binaries: Tidal Shifts in the study of the languages, literatures and cultures of the Greater Caribbean and beyond*, contain a collection of articles that present a critical perspective on the languages, literatures, and cultures of the Greater Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora. The contributing authors include a wide range of voices old and new from the Caribbean and beyond.

This book forms part of a two volume set, with this volume focusing on the Greater Caribbean in general, and the second volume focusing on the ABC-islands (Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao) and other parts of the (former) Dutch Caribbean, in particular. 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.

This publication received generous support from the University of Curaçao.

The Editors

**TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY
OF LITERATURE AND POLITICS IN
THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND**

KAMAU BRATHWAITE'S "STONE" FOR MIKEY SMITH

MICHAEL SHARP

UNIVERSIDAD DE PUERTO RICO, RÍO PIEDRAS

In his dedication to *History of the voice* (1984), the Barbadian poet Kamau Brathwaite writes "For/ MICHAEL SMITH, poet/ Stoned to death on Stony Hill/ Kingston, Jamaica/ 17 August 1983" (Brathwaite, 1994, 46). While an *assassination* was downplayed by the authorities, *The Daily Gleaner* reported that the Dub poet was "hit on the head by a stone thrown by one of three men who had attacked him"¹ after he was heard heckling a member of the ruling Jamaica Labour Party. Smith's death, like the killing of the Marxist historian and political activist Walter Rodney in Georgetown, Guyana in 1980, left many in shock with Smith's poem "Me cyaan believe it" echoing around the Caribbean and elsewhere.

Regarded by many as a pop star, 'Mikey' Smith (1954-1983) had performed in Jamaica with Bob Marley, Peter Tosh, and Mighty Sparrow (Slinger Francisco). His popular brand of combat poetry, highlighted by social protest and political agitation, stemmed from the Caribbean performative experience that spoke "the same riddims, the same voice-spreads, syllable clusters, blue notes, ostinato, syncopation, and pauses . . . accompanied by a decorative S90 *noise* which after a time becomes part of the sound-structure and meaning of the poem."²

¹ Brathwaite notes that "Rumours persist that his killing was a flash of that same political violence which his work so eloquently decried" (1997: 48). *The Daily Gleaner's* full report is as follows: "One of the country's leading 'dub' poets (those who recite poetry to reggae rhythm), Michael Smith, 29, of Golden Spring, St. Andrew, was killed on Wednesday morning, August 17, in the neighbouring area of Stony Hill. The police reported that Smith was on the Stony Hill Road near the old St. Jude's Church when he was set upon by the men. Struck on the head, he fell to the ground. He was taken to the clinic at Stony Hill by a passing motorist and then to the Kingston Public Hospital but by that time he had died. His attackers fled before the arrival of the police. He was to leave the island next month for engagements in the United Kingdom, where he had performed before Friday." August 19, 1983.

² Brathwaite elaborates: "Noise is that decorative energy that invests the nation performance. Unnecessary but without which not enough Whistles, grater, scraper, shak-shak, shekesheke, wood block, gong gong, the cheng-cheng of the steel band, the buzz of the banjo or cymbal, the grrill of the guitar, vibrato of the voice, sax, sound-system, the long roll of the drum until it becomes thunder, Coltrane's sheets of sound, Pharoah Sanders' honks and cries, onomatopoeia, congregational kinesis" (1997: 46). The Suzuki S90 was a popular 'sand' bike in Jamaica.

At the time of his death, Smith was revered by audiences both in the Caribbean and Europe. Linton Kwesi Johnson, the London-based Dub poet, praised Smith's talent and the skill with which his poetry articulated the verbal colors of Jamaican Creole. Johnson regarded Smith as a kindred spirit whose anti-authoritarian protests had been honed on Kingston's mean streets and which reverberated in the slums of Georgetown and the dilapidated rentals of London's East End. By grounding with his brothers³, Smith created a poetic discourse that spoke intimately to "de oppress and de dispossess" wherever they were (Smith, 1989: 13).

Vernacular poetry for Smith meant hope, and he believed that it built awareness for the "famished underclass" (Fanon, 2004: 87) in the slums and shanty towns of the Caribbean and elsewhere. The Jamaican poet Mervyn Morris, who edited Smith's posthumous collection of poems entitled *It a come* (1989), remembers that his writing came from keen observation and quotes the poet in an interview given to the organizers of the Mikey Smith Raw Works Festival in Toronto in 2014: "It seem to me that what happen is that I observe a whole heap, so I will stand up at a bus stop and spend all two hours, no because me a wait pon bus or so, but because me waan hear what them a seh" (Morris, 2014: 4). Listening to Smith perform his poetry, Morris recalls that one could "hardly fail to notice his firm sense of structure and of rhyming patterning. The rhetoric of preachers and politicians, the cries of pedlars; allusions to proverbs, nursery rhymes, children's games, the Bible, Rasta talk, reggae" all pulled together or set against each other in "well-articulated structures" (Ibid.).

Smith's iconic "Mi cyaan believe it" with its insistence that "life is a stiff fight" (Smith, 1989: 15) reverberated in the dingles⁴ of Kingston and the high rent slums of Brixton. His use of *nation language*⁵ to encourage self-worth and hope in the face of what the Guyanese poet Martin Carter called "the hurt of things" (Carter, 2006: 33) earned Smith the soubriquet of 'the people's poet' as he urged folk to resist the 'downpresser' and "Stan up like "Tacky" and "Bogle"⁶ and "free up de system . . . to a new rhythm" and "tek liberty", warning in "Tell me" that "If we doan kick up a fuss dem a go reduce us to atmospheric dust . . . Yuh disrepec we anger." In "Dem Naw Destroy I", Smith cautions that "Dem treat we like waste./ We boun fi come out/ dis

³ Adapted from the title of Walter Rodney's *The groundings with my brothers* (1969).

⁴ Jamaican slang for a slum or shanty town.

⁵ In *History of the voice*, Kamau Brathwaite writes: "Nation Language . . . is the *submerged* area of that dialect which is much more closely allied to the African aspect of experience in the Caribbean. It may be in English: but often it is in an English which is like a howl, or a shout or a machine-gun or the wind or a wave. It is also like the blues. And sometimes it is English and African at the same time."

⁶ Tacky was the leader of a slave rebellion in Jamaica in 1760. Paul Bogle is Jamaica's national hero. He was the leader of the Morant Bay uprising in the name of justice for all Jamaicans in 1865.

state of powerlessness/ for know a new day did dawn/ When Somoza⁷ did gawn!” (Smith, 1989: 18; 38; 40-41, 46; 48; 61).

Kamau Brathwaite’s unconventional elegy on the death of Smith was published in *Middle passages* in 1993⁸ and confirms that the tragic consequence of his murder robbed the wretched and the poor of an accessible voice. Speaking a language of optimism through action, Smith encouraged people to act-up in the name of justice and break free from the shackles of poverty and the stocks of discrimination. Brathwaite joins with Smith who had written in “I Still De Ya”, that brothers (and sisters) “use to talk nuff bout Garvey”, that they had “walk wid Rodney” and “chat bout Marley”, but that the “big strong straptin black man” who could effect revolution in the Caribbean was “still down a penitentiary/ a run battery”. In “Stone”, Brathwaite assumes the silenced voice as part of his own naming as a poet and accepts the burden by continuing to speak, as if in a double-voice, a new Dub poem of the murdered Mikey Smith.

Brathwaite’s own poetry from the publication of *The arrivants* in 1973⁹ through the *Barabajan Poems* in 1994 traces the making of both the poet and the poetic voice that eventually leads him to an epiphany, an “**alteration of consciousness**” (Brathwaite, 1993: 170), in his uncle Bob’ob’s workshop that has become “a Zion meeting house”, an Afro-Caribbean place of worship in Barbados. This *moment*, in which the poet turns “being Bajan into *something other something else* – and nearer nearer better known than we had ever known before. **So mething** forgotten yes and far & far & further on & **father** (yes) & making new and making you”, signifies Brathwaite’s poetic annunciation. As if to a slow clap-clap of hands, Brathwaite’s given name changes from Edward to **K/Ka/Kam/Kama/Kamau** - (Brathwaite, 1993: 166; 170; 189) and the crossing into and beyond words is complete as the poet calls up “the worksong fieldhollers” of the “rebel hammerm[e]n” (and women) of the New World¹⁰ to help shoulder not only the burden of the poet but also to silence the “dark wail” of the “SUBMERGED” and un-submerge the still enslaved from the dead pool of neo-colonialism and its concomitant history of horrors (Brathwaite, 1993: 166; 179; 189; 184).

Brathwaite’s “Stone” speaks the language of the silenced poet by silencing him further into a quiet that is as cacophonous as it is profound as both poets are raised Lazarus-like as one from the dead. As the stone is rolled away from the entrance to Lazarus’

⁷ Anastasio Somoza Debayle (1925-1980), a Nicaraguan dictator, was assassinated in exile in Asunción, Paraguay.

⁸ The poem was republished in *Elegguas* (2010).

⁹ *The arrivants* is a trilogy comprising *Rights of passage* (1967), *Masks* (1968), and *Islands* (1969).

¹⁰ Brathwaite lists Bob Marley, Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight & The Pips, Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, Bessie Smith, David Rudder, John Coltrane, Elvin Jones . . . Howling Wolf and Michael Jackson.

What follows is an unearthly silence, a storm before the calm. The “i” of the poem speaks as one voice reinforcing the other. This is a reverie in which the double-voice of the poet “become that sound”, and slips “into water” and “into root” and “into flower . . . rippin upwards/ into shoot.” Despite “every politician tongue in town was lash”, children are imagined “running down the hill run right on through the splash/ of pouis that my breathe. ing make when it was howl & red & bubble.” As in the raising of Lazarus, the rising up of two voices-as-one gives existence to a “man did nevva have no face. as if man did never in this/ place.”

As “Stone” becomes “the stone that kills me”, the force with which it is thrown in this poetic rebirthing allows the poet – Brathwaite and Smith – to voice, as in an oracle, that “The word becomes a pebble stone or bomb and dub makes sense (or nonsense) of politics demanding of it life not death, community not aardvark, new world to make new words and we to overstand how modern ancient is. Like in this nation-language poem that doesn’t even have to use a verb of nation . . .” (Brathwaite, 1994: 50).

17

REFERENCES

- Allen Williams, Emily (Ed.) (2004). *The critical response to Kamau Brathwaite*. Westport: Praeger.
- Brathwaite, Kamau (1984). *History of the voice*. London/Port of Spain: New Beacon Books.
- Brathwaite, Kamau (1993). *Middle passages*. New York: New Directions.
- Brathwaite, Kamau (1993). *Barabajan poems*. Kingston/New York: Savacou North.
- Carlyle, Thomas (1937, [1833]). *Sartor resartus*. Indianapolis/New York: The Odyssey Press.
- Carter, Martin; Gemma Robinson (Ed.) (2006). *University of hunger: collected poems & selected prose*. Tarsset: Bloodaxe Books.
- Fanon, Frantz (2004, [1961]). *The wretched of the earth*. (Trans. Richard Philcox). New York: Grove Press.
- Mikey Smith Raw Works Festival. Retrieved April 2018 from [http://mikeysmith festival.files.wordpress.com./2014](http://mikeysmithfestival.files.wordpress.com./2014)
- Report on death of Michael Smith (1983). *The Daily Gleaner*, August, 19. Kingston, Jamaica.
- Rodney, Walter (1968). *The groundings with my brothers*. London: Bogle-L'Ouverture.
- Smith, Michael; Mervyn Morris (Ed.) (1989). *It a come*. San Francisco: City Lights Books.

MYTHBUSTING MARITIME FICTION

SALLY J. DELGADO

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, CAYEY

Introduction

The most memorable and popular fictional portrayals of mariners in the age of sail abound with rum-swigging swashbucklers, maps to buried treasure, and shipwrecked survivors facing cannibal attack. Sailors are portrayed as young and dangerous men who seduced or paid women in every port, spewed profanity at any given opportunity, and drank to excess on a regular basis. They lived fast and died young whether they were naval men clashing in colonial conflicts, merchants fending off pirate attack, or buccaneers and mercenaries beset upon by indigenous peoples' raids around the developing and poorly defended trading zones of the New World. They were the brethren of the sea with common backgrounds, manners of speech, and patriotic sentiments that they fought to defend against foreign enemies or renegade crews. Such romanticized fantasies about early colonial sailors have kept most people from considering the more authentic and complex realities of who these mariners were and what their lives were really like. Furthermore, the fact that most sea-going people were illiterate and left no surviving records of their lives at sea coupled with the fact that official naval and mercantile records documented only what a minority of people considered to be important means that most of the details about these people's lives will forever be lost at sea. Yet there are traces that remain discoverable.

This article draws upon the echoes of sailors' voices as they were captured by clerks in courtroom proceedings, scrawled in handwritten letters, and documented in daily logs. It also draws upon plausible moments in contemporary plays and published journals that reflect (and often exaggerate or romanticize) the realities of life at sea. Using this data alongside maritime scholarship, this article aims to challenge some of the myths about sailors from the concept of the expendable, promiscuous rabble infesting taverns and infecting prostitutes to the notion of a quick-witted, resourceful ante-hero stealing and burying treasure to outwit the authorities. Instead, it reflects of the probable realities of life at sea and recognizes the agency of a diverse population in the foundation of regional languages, the settlement of early colonial territories, and the construction of some of the earliest postcolonial ideologies.

This article explores how maritime economies, systems of social order, formation of kinship groups, and language practices influenced the emergence of new Caribbean and

American identities. It prompts the reader to recover some of the buried truths in our cultural repository of maritime stereotypes and identify representations that bear the marks of historical authenticity. It also prompts authors to generate new tendencies in historical fiction that reflect some realities of life at sea and explore the maritime heritage of post-colonial identities. The paper is organized around some of the most popular myths of maritime fiction, starting with one of the most popular misconceptions about common practice among pirate crews.

Myth 1: Pirates buried treasure

One of the most memorable myths in modern fiction stems directly from Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883). The tall tale was originally serialized in a children's magazine between 1881-1882 and appealed to its young readers through the presentation of a familiar bildungsroman plotline involving the 13-year-old Jim Hawkins as he unwittingly involves himself with a band of ruthless pirates in a hunt for buried treasure. Stevenson published the original series under the pseudonym Captain George North, presumably to lend credibility to the maritime yarn. Since its original publication the story caught the public imagination and has been a staple of popular culture ever since, generating prequels, sequels, spin-offs and intertextual references that have reinforced the central motif of maps marked with an X leading the way to buried treasure.

20 The story has been popularized in an abundance of films, radio broadcasts, television programs, stage productions and video games, and as recently as 2010, Google published a logo on its homepage featuring a chest of glittering treasure on a background of a scroll-map showing the points of the compass to mark Stevenson's 160th birthday (Albanesius, 2010). This profusion of reproductions has fixed in the cultural conscious the notion of following a map to buried treasure, yet maritime historian David Cordingly explains that it is "an entirely fictional device" owing mostly to the frontpiece of Stevenson's book (Cordingly, 1995: 7). Furthermore – and unlike the novel's more credible reference to seamen's jargon, parrots, peg-legs, black schooners and tropical islands – the idea that pirates buried treasure in deserted regions has very little factual basis.

Only a handful of credible references to maritime thieves burying stolen goods exist in the records, half of which remain unsubstantiated. The first on record happened at the end of the sixteenth century. In 1573, English privateer Francis Drake raided a mule train near the San Francisco River in Panama and took an estimated 30 tons of gold and silver from the Spanish. The raiders were unable to carry off all the treasure and so they buried around half of it inland. The other half was buried at the beach where the group of bandits had expected to rendezvous with their ship. Yet, according to historical records, men were left to guard the site and Drake recovered the treasure soon afterwards to split it with the maroons who helped him mount the attack (Tucker, 2013: 50).

More than a century later in 1699, the notorious Captain William Kidd buried significant quantities of gold and jewels on Gardiners Island off the coast of New York but was arrested and hanged soon afterwards and his buried treasure was recovered by the authorities (Adams, 2007). Although a series of fantastic rumors of more hidden treasure circulated, fueled by the captain's own claims that "nobody could find it but himself" (cited in Bonner 1944: 195), there is no factual evidence that Kidd buried any other goods. Yet this has not stopped what Bonner describes as "one of the longest-lived treasure hunts in the world... [because] The element of mystery involved has also proved to be a prime feeder of the popular imagination" (1944: 196).

A host of similarly unsubstantiated, but also similarly appealing stories of buried treasure have inspired wonder and treasure-hunting expeditions ever since, e.g., the rumors of gold, silver and jewels stolen and buried by Captain William Thompson on Costa Rica's Cocos Island around 1820 (PBS.org 2002). Perhaps it is no surprise that by 1881 Stevenson had used the popular motif of folk lore in mainstream fiction and thus perpetuated its prominence in the popular imagination.

The myth of buried pirate treasure is a trope of what Cordingly (1995) calls the romance of life among the pirates. The realities of dangerously unstable colonial economies, expectations of imminent and fierce retaliation from enemy nations, and the short life expectancy of crewmen meant that pirates were much more likely to spend their money than attempt to save it. Furthermore, pirate crews functioned on a relatively equitable system of monetary reparation that was stipulated in quasi-legal articles. This system meant that any efforts on the captain's part to hoard captured goods would have been met with immediate rebellion and a consequent loss of command. So, the idea of burying treasure was not only contrary to the personal interests of captain and crew, it also put the unity of the crew in jeopardy and risked lives by encouraging counter-attack or mutinous rebellion.

Myth 2: Lawless pirates were enemies of colonial progress

The renegade sailor-turned-pirate in literature has been represented, at worst, as an anarchic and potentially deranged character who embodies violent, riotous and lawless behaviors that challenge colonial stability. At best, this character has been represented as an easygoing opportunist with a characteristic disrespect for authority. According to Watson's study of the sailor in Early Modern English fiction and drama, negative or conflicting representations of lawless sailors in Elizabethan drama were common (1966: 89-92). The oldest enduring examples of these representations can be found in Shakespeare's body of work, for example, the bloodthirsty gang of nameless pirates in *Henry VI, part 2* and the swearing boatswain in *The tempest* who silences and dismisses the high courtiers he is charged to convey.

Representations of mutinous sailors and their challenges to authority and colonial order echo through literature and still resonate with modern audiences. From the mid-1950's

up until the late twentieth century, the many movie interpretations of the 1789 mutiny aboard the Royal Navy vessel *The Bounty* provided an enduring cultural reference, and the role of the “Dread Pirate Roberts” in Rob Reiner’s iconic *The princess bride* still appeals to modern audiences. More recently, the loveable rogues of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* series, and the anarchic and profligate pirates of *Black sails* (2004-2017) have engaged a younger audience with the literary concept of the lawless sailors in perpetual conflict with colonial stability.

Historical records attest to the violent, riotous and lawless behaviors of real-life pirates, for example, Edward Teach (Blackbeard) and Bartholomew Roberts (the most likely origin of Reiner’s “Dread Pirate Roberts”). However, it is worth noting that determining the authenticity of historical data on such figures is exceptionally difficult owing to the record-keeping habits of the transient community in which there were high levels of illiteracy and any written record might provide evidence that could condemn individuals to death if tried for piracy.

As a result, much of what we know about such historical pirates derive from problematic sources such as secondhand reports, witness statements, or histories compiled under pseudonyms, for example Johnson’s hugely influential *A general history of the robberies & murders of the most notorious pirates*, first published in 1724 presenting “a vivid and bloodthirsty account of a dozen English and Welsh pirates” (Cordingly’s introduction to the 2002 edition: vii). Yet, it may be that many of the gruesome details in this “history” are fictional, particularly given that the actual author is reputed to have been the master-storyteller Daniel Defoe. Yet they have nonetheless inspired generations of bloodthirsty pirate characters in prose, poetry, and drama. And even if the violence was real, there is no real evidence that its purpose was to break down colonial stability. In fact, the pirate’s role in establishing and maintaining new societies may have ironically given them a bad name in fictional representations.

The earliest negative representations of lawless sailors in classical literature most probably derive from the presence of sailors in the Mediterranean with the power to maintain or close supply routes and therefore determine the rise or fall of Greek and Roman city-states (Watson, 1966: 66). Centuries later, the same would be true of Atlantic sailors and the survival of colonial settlements in the New World. Many early colonial settlements had underfunded, sporadically regulated, and incompetently managed economies that gave rise to a proliferation of independent maritime networks that operated within “illegal” frameworks of debt, credit, factorage and barter – and became the foundation of emerging autonomous economies. The lawless acts of violence among these networks that became sensationalized in pirate fiction may have been a performative and economically strategic part of the prevailing norms of negotiation in most sectors of colonial society at the time.

Peter Leeson’s work on the economics of pirate organizations (2007; 2008) indicate that mariners used violence as a form of intimidation to achieve their goals in negotiation

rather than an objective in its own right; if they could instill enough fear in their potential trading partners to achieve the upper hand, then a suggestion of violence was all that would be necessary to achieve maximal profit with a minimum expenditure in conflict (in terms of effort and lives lost). Indeed, pleading that trade was forced was a common excuse that local town officials could claim if their complicity in contraband trade was identified, particularly if the “pirates” (i.e. trading partners) had made some public show of force. Bicheno explains how such acts gave Portuguese towns an alibi in consensual negotiations with English traders in the early Atlantic colonial period that explained “not only evading the Spanish royal tax but also saving the greater loss of time and wastage involved in sailing against wind and current to Saville” (2012: 78).

Thus, if most local officials and traders were willing accomplices, as Bicheno suggests, then the shows of violence that seem to define a modern concept of piracy were performative stages of trade negotiations in the context of these early colonial economies. Given this historical perspective, it is fair to suggest that the lawless violence and anti-establishment characteristics many sailors (and particularly pirates) are endowed with in literature may, in fact, have derived from their agency to control the likely success of nation-states to take, maintain, and expand colonial economies, and therefore their associated settlements, that operated a distance from their ideological epicenter.

Myth 3: Sailors suffered solitary lives

The solitary lives and journeys of men aboard ships have been a common theme of literature for centuries. Since Homer’s epic poem *The Odyssey*, audiences have been encouraged to think of the sailing man as a solitary wanderer dependent upon the fortunes he might encounter in foreign ports. Eighteenth century fiction imposed a damaging physical solitude on sailors in seminal works like Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Coleridge’s “The rime of the ancye[n]t marinere” (1798). Nineteenth century fiction explored the psychological effects of mental isolation in equally significant works such as Melville’s *Moby Dick* (1851) and Conrad’s *Heart of darkness* (1899). Consequently, it is no surprise that by the twentieth century authors such as Hemingway use both physical and psychological solitude as a driving theme in works such as *The old man and the sea* (1952), and twenty-first century movies such as *Castaway* (2000) and the 2012 adaptation of Yan Martel’s *Life of Pi* (2001) explore the psychological effects of how people who are not sailors would endure forced isolation at sea. The icon of the solitary sailor permeates centuries of fiction and has a marked impact on cultural perceptions of life at sea.

Yet, despite the many representations of sailor’s loneliness, overcrowding, and particularly the unsanitary conditions caused by lack of personal space, was a more common problem for the real-life mariners in the age of sail¹. Transatlantic vessels of the early

¹ Of course, the overcrowding and unsanitary conditions suffered by crewmen was a mere reflection of the horrors experienced by the human “cargo” they may have been transporting.

colonial period had large crews to meet the primary needs of navigation, defense, and cargo management. Based on first-hand accounts from the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century curated in the UK's National Archives and Merseyside Maritime Museum holdings, there was an average of 115 men per 21-gun (or 239-ton) vessel. In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, larger ships were built with more guns and therefore larger crews were needed to equip them, culminating in the 100-gun warship of Nelson's navy enlisting an average of 837 men (Nelson Navy Nation, 2015). These crews listed on the muster rolls were additionally supplemented by a host of supplementary and peripatetic workers such as personal servants, apprentices, and slaves who were not listed as part of the official crew because they did not receive wages from the Admiralty. Furthermore, it was common practice to over-recruit crew and non-paid workers aboard military and mercenary vessels as a proactive measure to mediate the impact of high crew turnover due to death, injury, disciplinary measures and desertion. Consequently, as Bicheno observes, "overcrowding generated the diseases that were the greatest danger on long voyages" (2012: 78).

Loneliness caused by social isolation was also uncommon. In small vessels, small crew sizes and group synergy was a requisite of the physical work, Walsh comments that "such craft did not permit much physical separation...moreover, because much work was shared, there could be little social distance" (1994: 35). Whaling vessels, described as the "nursery of seamen" (Atlantic Worlds, 2015) similarly contained family-like units of six to seven men, often required to work in silent unison to get the harpooner within a few meters of his prey. Larger vessels created similarly small units of men by mandating "mess" groups with the fundamental purpose of managing meals and food rations. Yet, these groups – which composed around eight to twelve men of different ages, skill sets and years of experience – also facilitated the formation of familial bonds as the men in each mess took turns as cook for the group and were also responsible for each other's wellbeing and conduct (Adkins and Adkins 2008: 75). Officer Samuel Leech describes how mess groups functioned aboard a large ship, "the crew of a man of war is divided into little communities...[that] eat and drink together, and are, as it were, so many families" (Atlantic Worlds, 2015). Leech also attests to the value of these groups for discouraging desertion, as "many... were kept from running away by the strength of their attachment to their shipmates" (cited in Adkins & Adkins, 2008: 68). This observation is borne out by one court testimony of how a captain granted shore leave but only permitted one man per mess ashore at any one time (HCA 1/99: 114). Hence, even if sailors suffered from their separation from their home communities when they went to sea², messes served as a pseudo-family unit aboard ship.

Oftentimes, sailors also served alongside actual family members. Jarvis (2010) gives

² Such separation may have been more extremely felt for those men that were torn from their communities abruptly by the brutal recruitment practices of the press gangs.

various accounts of Bermuda sloops that were manned by kinship groups. Evidence of fathers and sons serving together shows up in ships' muster documents, e.g., "Robert Hartley (1st) and Robert Hartley (2nd)" (HCA 1/99: 3/4, 5), and court testimony accounts for examples of brothers serving alongside each other, e.g., James and Henry Adams who testify in a piracy trial together (HCA 1/14: 166). The wives of mariners also joined their husbands at sea. Brown explains that the wives of common sailors were "smuggled aboard without the knowledge of the officers, [in addition to] ...the wives of warrant officers, such as the gunner, carpenter, and purser [who were permitted aboard]" (Brown 2011: 95). The fact that the East India company forbade their officers from taking their wives to sea in the early voyages of the seventeenth century also attests to the commonality of the practice (Fury, 2015: 16). In sum, sailors may have been accompanied to sea by a variety of family members, particularly in small sailing craft owned and operated by kinship groups, but even in large ships, sailors may have worked alongside fathers, uncles, brothers and wives.

Myth 4: Sailors had adventures in foreign lands

The metaphor of the sea-journey as a voyage of discovery is evident in works already mentioned such as Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* (1883) and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). Not surprisingly, young male main characters with much to learn feature heavily in such genres and have become stock literary characters in sea-stories. Concurrent with the enlightenment and prolific public interest in natural science and geography, the sea-voyage became a symbol of discovery and self-discovery by extension. Even when the sea-journey itself was not the central feature of the metaphor, it was often a literacy device to realistically re-locate the protagonist amongst different lands and cultures from which he (or the reader) may learn.

Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's travels* (1726) is perhaps the most enduring representation of a young "everyman" encountering incredible adventures by way of sea-venturing. Tobias Smollett's *The adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) similarly relates the experiences of a young man on his international sea-journey of discovery. Although both Swift and Smollett's intentions were satirical and meant to reflect on the politics and ideology of English life, both chose to have their main characters leave English shores as part of a ship's crew and their fictions are most remembered for their protagonists' misadventures in fantastic or factual international settings (respectively).

More than a century later, the literary device of the young male protagonist learning through adventures at sea were sustained in works such as Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* (1900) whose title character learns from the people that his sea-faring life brings him into contact with, and Victor Hugo's *Toilers of the sea* (1866) whose hero Gilliatt battles an octopus and finds wealth at the bottom of the sea before finally giving himself to the incoming tide in a final act of submission. Through such works and the popular associ-

ation of sea-voyaging with discovery, the enduring motif of a youngster on a sea-journey of discovery has left a cultural impact that reverberates in modern literature and drama, for example, the child-protagonist's self-discovery in Michael Ondaatje's novel *The cat's table* (2012) and the teenage-protagonist's coming-of-age in James Cameron's blockbuster *Titanic* (1997).

Whilst it was undoubtedly true that adventure called some common seamen, commanding officers and commissioned servicemen to the sea, particularly given the patriotic songs designed to increase voluntary recruitment in times of war, more pragmatic considerations motivated most of the crew. Privileged second and third sons among the landed gentry not eligible to inherit titles often sought commissions and favor from family members to help them advance in the navy as a reputable alternative to inheriting their family's lands and title (Brown 2011: 53).

On the other hand, many working class sailors enlisted to escape poverty. Admiralty court records capture the reasons of some such crewmen: one volunteer explains, "not having any thing to Eat ...I consented to goo" (HCA 1/98: 44) and another volunteer joined a group of would-be recruits that "desired the master to give them some victuals [food]" (HCA 1/53: 67). Bicheno explains how only abject misery drove working class sailors to volunteer as crew in Queen Elizabeth's ships doing work that was hard and considered menial. He explains that although, in theory, sailors serving in the Royal Navy in 1588 were paid 7s.6d. per month, in practice the only certain payment sailors could expect was a hammock to sleep in and something to eat, a better alternative than sleeping in the streets and possible starvation (p. 182). For the men who preferred doss-houses and taking their chances on the streets, press gangs targeted them via methods involving some degree of coercion, manipulation, or outright force. Repeated testimonies in court records between 1620 and 1750 refer to the profusion and violence of impressment in addition to the corruption of the press gangs who seized men from their families indiscriminately, exhorted money from those who could pay, and beat the ones who could not. Poor sailors had no choice but to accept the situation. It was just another hard fact of their life that these crewmen, like sailor David Creagh, were "kept in the Service by force and violence" (HCA 1/13: 108).

Even if young men joined a naval crew with a thirst for international adventure, they were more likely to be confined to the ship rather than interact with exotic cultures, particularly if they were common seamen. Although transatlantic trips could be theoretically made in a few months (Brown, 2011: 107), most commercial voyages took more than a year. This extended voyage time was necessary because of the common practice of stopping in multiple ports on circum-Atlantic journeys rather than travelling to a single destination and back. Multiple stops were necessary not only for authorized trading but also for collecting food provisions, wood and water and enabling enterprising captains to take advantage of international entrepôts of trade which evaded harsh

duties on export and import goods. Additional time was often required to complete repairs, replace lost workers, meet payment obligations, catch favorable winds, await tardy cargos, rendezvous with expected convoys, and enable companion ships to complete preparations. Due to such anticipated events and unforeseen delays, ships stayed in port for an average of 31-34 days according to maritime scholarship (Jarvis, 2010: 134) and corroborated by historical records (Delgado, forthcoming). During this time, common sailors were typically refused shore leave for fear that they would desert. As a result, a typical lower-ranking sailor could expect to spend more than a year without leaving the ship to experience any adventure in foreign lands.

Myth 5: British sailors spoke standard English and pirates said “Yarr”

The assumption that British sailors spoke a homogeneous variety of English marked only by random profanity and nautical idiom perpetuates in fictional representations. This assumption derives predominantly from the necessity of publishing in a standard variety of English and so representing the thoughts and communication of sailors in near-standard forms. Although works such as Melville’s *Moby Dick* (1851) and more recently Amitav Ghosh’s *Sea of poppies* (2008) acknowledge the multi-lingual realities of ships’ crews, there are few books that explore the multi-dialectal variation among the native English-speaking crew. Even when authors have tried to represent the different types of speech aboard ship, there is little variation beyond marking an upper- and a lower-class division in speech patterns. For example, in Henry Dana’s *Two years before the mast* (1840) exchanges between the Harvard-educated first-person protagonist and lower ranking crew predominantly adhere to standard English syntax but mark lower-status speech with oaths, expletives and phonetic spellings³.

Contrary to the text-based origins of assumptions about sailor’s speech, the popular misconception that pirates interjected their discourse with “yarr”, “argh”, “hawr” or some other heavily rhotacized sound appears to have originated on the silver screen. More specifically, it started with Robert Newton’s mid-twentieth century portrayal of Long John Silver and Blackbeard for which he exaggerated the rolled rhotic phonemes of his native Dorset accent. However, Newton (and later Errol Fynn’s) portrayal of the speech of pirates so captured the imagination of the TV generation that the myth endures.

³ For example, the cook in chapter VI tells the protagonist, “I’ve seen too much o’ dem men to want to see ‘em ‘board a ship. If dey can’t have dare own way, they’ll play the d – l with you.” This example stresses variant pronunciation of fricatives and approximates the ellipsis found in rapid natural speech with, but retains standard syntax with only two easily-understandable non-standard lexical items, i.e., “much” instead of “many” modifying the count-noun “men” and “dem” (meaning “them”) rather than the demonstrative determiner “those” for the same noun. Even with these dialectal representations, the syntax is not far removed from standard norms.

Large numbers of sailors on British vessels were likely to have been born in England and can be assumed to have been native English speakers. Most voluntary recruits came from London and coastal regions and the busy port cities of the northeast, southeast and the southwest of England (Earle, 1998: 7). Distinctive dialectal variation would have been common among the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century crews, particularly given that most lower-ranking seamen would have been illiterate and so unaffected by institutional efforts to prescribe grammatical ‘norms’ that were later to become standardized in prescriptive grammars of the eighteenth century.

However, not all British recruits would have been native English speakers. In addition to the many southeastern crewmen who spoke Cornish as a native language, recruits from the other countries around the British Isles would have included men from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, many of whom would have spoken Irish, Scots, and Welsh as a first language. An informative plate in The National Maritime Museum’s exhibition, *Nelson Navy Nation* (2015) proclaims that an average of only 51% of sailors in the British Royal Navy were English over the period of 1688 to 1815 supplemented by foreign recruits, predominantly from around the British Isles: Ireland (19%) Scotland (10%) and Wales (3%). Hence, even with a crew predominantly drawn from the British Isles, there would have been significant dialectal variation and at least some representation of the four other languages spoken there.

Further to the variation to be anticipated among men born in the British Isles, a more complex picture emerges when we consider the heavy recruitment of foreign-born sailors. Multinational crews may have resulted from what Fusaro describes as the common maritime practice of outsourcing crew recruitment, vessel hire, and sometimes entire enterprises dating back to the Eastern Mediterranean trade of the late fifteenth century (2015: 8; 17). Particularly in the merchant service, foreigners were very useful because many were exempt from navy impressment, thus potentially leading to a situation in which British merchant fleets were manned by a majority of non-British sailors during periods of conflict. This trend of employing significant numbers of sailors born outside of the British Isles became such a concern that it motivated one of the clauses in the Navigation Acts of 1651 requiring at least three quarters of the crew in specified inter-colonial trading vessels to be British. However, the meaning of “British” was reinterpreted under the scope of the Commonwealth to include any person born in any territory of the British Empire, typically of European descent but also including peoples of African and Indigenous descent.

Indeed, the very fact that the 1651 Navigation Acts needed to legislate for inter-colonial merchant vessels to maintain a majority of British crew indicates that it was common for such vessels to have a composite foreign majority. Yet even after the Navigation Acts restricted foreign sailors, there are indicators that records may have been falsified to reflect compliance, e.g., “virtually all East Indiamen...sailed with a *suspiciously*

standard crew of 75 British subjects and 24 foreigners.” (Earle, 1998, 202-203, emphasis added). And remember that these 75 crewmen listed as “British” may have come from any nation belonging to the commonwealth and not necessarily from England or any of the four nations of the British Isles. Further to these enlisted crew, naval vessels routinely hired or captured translators, pilots, servants, and non-paid workers from foreign nations. Such recruitment practices created multilingual environments in which a nautical pidgin English or a levelled and simplified coastal dialect of English may have predominated, even among native speakers of English.

Pirate crews were composed of the same type of multi-cultural demographic that merchant ships had and were likely to have been more diverse as they were not subject to compliance with the 1651 Navigation Acts that required a crew to be at least three quarters British. Atlantic historians Linebaugh and Rediker describe the pirate ship as “motley – multinational, multicultural, and multiracial” (2000: 164). In fact, plurilingualism became a marker of guilt and complicity in piratical activity, as illustrated by court records of the late seventeenth century, for example, the testimony of one accused pirate who asked the court, “must I be hanged that I can speake all languages” (CO 5/1411: 56).

Although there may have been a set of sociolects recognized as Pirate English (Delgado, 2013) there is no evidence that any lexeme approximating “Yarr” was a marker of this variety. Yet, it is possible that words common to nautical usage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries sounded similar. The *Seatalk Nautical Dictionary* (2012) lists “yare” as an adjective meaning describing a quick easily manageable boat, “yaw” as a verb describing a boat’s action of diverting off-course to follow ocean currents, and “yawl” as a type of two-masted boat. It is also possible that the Gaelic word “garbh” meaning rough or rugged may have been borrowed and realized in a manner approximating “yarr” or that Old Saxon “har” meaning a mist or fog was used among mariners. It could also have been that “yar” was a marker of affirmation or agreement much the same as “ja” in modern German or “yeah” in modern English. However, there is no evidence to suggest that such words were more common among pirate crews than other maritime communities.

Conclusion

This article has considered only five common myths about mariners in the age of sail that persist in literature and popular ideology. Yet these few misrepresentations have perpetuated stock character portrayals for centuries and make modern representations of authentic maritime figures more challenging. The myths considered in this article combine to form common narratives about how young men cast themselves to sea seeking adventure only to suffer isolation or fall prey to lawless pirates drawling “yarr” and sabotaging the trade routes of budding colonial settlements. They perpetuate the assumptions that the only people on board ships were all men who shared common origins

and modes of speech, and they fuel one of the most popular misconceptions in fictional portrayals, that pirates buried treasure. Ironically, few people seem to be interested in the real buried treasures, the rich and engaging details of people who lived and worked in colonial era maritime communities. Yet these details are not beyond our reach; authentic stories can be pieced together from the fragments of early newspaper clippings, court records, logbooks and letters they left behind like the dots on a cartoon treasure map. If modern authors are brave enough to follow the trails to these buried treasures, they may be able to explore new ground in historical fiction and reflect some realities of life at sea. And if modern readers and audiences are brave enough to challenge the comfortable myths of eighteenth and nineteenth century classics, they may learn to recover some of the partial truths in stereotypical portrayals and accept modern representations that bear the marks of historical authenticity.

REFERENCES

- Adams, Cecil (2007). Did pirates bury their treasure? Did pirates really make maps where 'X marks the spot'? *The Straight Dope*. Retrieved August 2017 from <http://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/2728/did-pirates-bury-their-treasure>
- Adkins, Roy & Lesley Adkins (2008). *Jack Tar: the extraordinary lives of ordinary seamen in Nelson's navy*. London: Abacus.
- Albanesius, Chloe (2010). Google doodle celebrates Robert Louis Stevenson's 160th Birthday. Retrieved July 22, 2017 from <https://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2372653,00.asp>
- Atlantic Worlds (2015). Exhibition, The National Maritime Museum. Visited by the author on November 22, 2015.
- Bicheno, Hugh (2012). *Elizabeth's sea dogs: how the English became the scourge of the seas*. London: Conway.
- Black sails* (2004-2017). (Television series). Created by Jonathan E. Steinberg and Robert Levine. United States: Starz. 4 seasons 38 episodes.
- Bonner, Willard H. (1944). 'Clamors and false stories' the reputation of Captain Kidd. *The New England Quarterly*, 17, 2, 179-208. Retrieved August 2017 from doi:10.2307/361873
- Brown, Kevin (2011). *Poxed & scurried: the story of sickness and health at sea*. Barnsley: Seaforth Publishing.
- Castaway* (2000). Directed by Robert Zemeckis. United States: Dreamworks Pictures. DVD, 143 mins.
- Coleridge, Samuel T. (1798). The rime of the ancye[n]t marinere. In *Lyrical ballads*. Retrieved July 18, 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/9622/9622-h/9622-h.htm#poem1>

- Conrad, Joseph (1899). *Heart of darkness*. Retrieved July 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/526/pg526-images.html>
- Conrad, Joseph (1900). *Lord Jim*. New York: Doubleday.
- Cordingly, David (1995). *Under the black flag: the romance and reality of life among the pirates*. New York: Random House Paperbacks.
- Dana, Henry (1840). *Two years before the mast*. Retrieved July 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/4277/pg4277-images.html>
- Delgado, Sally. J. (2013). Pirate English of the Caribbean and Atlantic trade routes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: linguistic hypotheses based on socio-historical data. *Acta Linguistica Hafniensia: International Journal of Linguistics*, 45, 2, 151-169.
- Delgado, Sally J. (forthcoming). Ship English: characteristic features of sailors' speech in the early colonial Caribbean. Online at <http://langsci-press.org/>: Language Science Press.
- Defoe, Daniel (1719). *Robinson Crusoe* [*The whole life and strange surprising adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, mariner: who lived eight and twenty years all alone in an uninhabited island on the coast of America...*]. London: W. Taylor.
- Earle, Peter (1993). English Sailors 1570-1775. In Paul C. van Royen, Jaap R. Bruijn & Jan Lucassen (Eds.), *'Those emblems of hell'? European sailors and the maritime labour market, 1570-1870* (pp. 75-95). St. John's, Newfoundland: International Maritime Economic History Association.
- Fury, Cheryl (2015). *Rocking the boat: shipboard disturbances in the early voyages of the English East India Company, 1601-1611*. Unpublished manuscript. Copy shared by the author via personal email Aug 2015.
- Fusaro, Maria (2015). Public service and private trade: northern seamen in seventeenth-century Venetian courts of justice. *The International Journal of Maritime History*, 27, 1, 3-25.
- Hemingway, Earnest (1952). *The old man and the sea*. New York: Scribner.
- Homer (n.d.). [est. 8th century BC] *The Odyssey*. Retrieved July 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1727/1727-h/1727-h.htm>
- Hugo, Victor (1866). *Toilers of the sea*. Retrieved March 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/32338/32338-h/32338-h.htm>
- Jarvis, Michael J. (2010). In the eye of all trade: Bermuda, Bermudians, and the maritime Atlantic world, 1680-1783. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Johnson, Captain Charles (2002, [1724]). *A general history of robberies & murders of the most notorious pirates*. Introduction and commentary by David Cordingly. London: Conway Maritime Press.
- Leeson, Peter T. (2007). An-arrgh-chy: the law and economics of pirate organization. *Journal of Political Economy*, 115, 6, 1049-1094.

- Leeson, Peter T. (2008). *Pirational choice: the economics of infamous pirate practices*. Retrieved March 2017 from http://www.peterleeson.com/Pirational_Choice.pdf
- Life of Pi* (2001). Directed by Ang Lee. United States: 20th Century Fox. DVD, 127 mins.
- Linebaugh, Peter & Marcus Rediker (2000). *The many-headed Hydra: slaves, sailors, commoners, and the hidden history of the revolutionary Atlantic*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Melville, Herman (1851). *Moby Dick*. Retrieved March 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2701/2701.txt>
- Nelson Navy Nation (2015). Exhibition, The National Maritime Museum. Visited by the author on November 22, 2015.
- Ondaatje, Michael (2012). *The cat's table*. Canada: Knopf.
- PBS.org (2002). Legends and Lore. Retrieved August 2017 from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/sharks/island/legends2.html>
- Pirates of the Caribbean* (film series) (2003-2017). Directed by Gore Verbinski, Rob Marshall, Joachim Rønning, and Espen Sandberg. United States: The Walt Disney Company, Walt Disney Pictures, Jerry Bruckheimer Films, and Second Mate Productions, *The curse of the black pearl*: (2003); *Dead man's chest*: (2006); *At world's end*: (2007); *On stranger tides*: (2011); and *Dead men tell no tales*: (2017). DVDs, 726 minutes (1–5).
- Seatalk Nautical Dictionary* (2012). Retrieved March 2017 from <http://www.seatalk.info/>
- Shakespeare (1611). *The tempest*. Retrieved June 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/2235/pg2235-images.html>
- Shakespeare (1623). *Henry VI, Part 2*. Retrieved June 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1501/pg1501-images.html>
- Smollett, Tobias (1748). *The adventures of Roderick Random*. Retrieved August 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4085/4085-h/4085-h.htm>
- Stevenson, Robert Louis (1883). *Treasure Island*. Retrieved March 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/120/120-h/120-h.htm>
- Swift, Jonathan (1726). *Gulliver's travels into several remote nations of the world*. Retrieved March 2017 from Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/829/829-h/829-h.htm>
- The Princess Bride* (1987). Directed by Rob Reiner. United States: 20th Century Fox. DVD, 98 Mins.
- Titanic* (1997). Directed by James Cameron. United States: Paramount Pictures and 20th Century Fox. DVD, 195 mins.
- Tucker, Spencer C. (2013). *Almanac of American military history*. Volume 1, 1000-1830. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO.

Walsh, Vince (1994). Recruitment and promotion: the merchant fleet of Salem, Massachusetts, 1670-1765. *Research in Maritime History*, 7, 27-46.

Watson, Harold F. (1966). The sailor in English fiction and drama 1550-1800. New York: AMS Press.

Appendix: Archival Sources

The following codes and abbreviations relating to primary archival sources in England form most of the corpus. The abbreviations used in the main text are here collated with date ranges and descriptions.

The National Archives (TNA), Kew, England

Collection	Batch Identifier	Date Range	Description
CO	5/1411	1696-1700	Council in assembly, trials of pirates, all from Virginia, Journal of the house of Burgeses, Assembled in James City. A Transcript of certain letters orders etc relating to pyrats in these American plantations Anno Dom: 1699
HCA	HCA 1/14	1660-1684	Indictments and subsequent proceedings (New England and Jamaica)
HCA	1/53	1634-1710	Examinations in Criminal Matters
HCA	1/98	1699-1701	Papers relating to Cptn. Samuel Burgess hanged as a pirate
HCA	1/99	1722-1738	Colonial trails (Jamaica, Barbados, Bahama Island, Philadelphia, Bombay, Corso Castle) also the Log Book Pideaux (1732) and The American: Weekly Mercury No.617-618

COLONIZATION, CULTURE AND PAN-AFRICANISM IN THE POEMS OF KOFI AWOONOR

ALFRED KWAMI TENI
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON

In his poetry, Kofi Awoonor expressed his desire for social justice, especially in relation to colonialism and its continued impact on Africa. Prominent among some of his poems that deal with issues of colonialism are: ‘The gone locust’, ‘The weaver bird’, ‘We have found a new land’, ‘The anvil and the hammer’, and ‘The cathedral’. This article makes a preliminary study of some of these poems, in order to invite the reader to explore this fascinating aspect of Awoonor’s work.

“The weaver Bird” presents the story of how the Europeans took advantage of African hospitality to impose unjust conditions on the local people of the West African Coast. The weaver bird is a very noisy species that moves in numbers, they are often associated with peeling off the leaves of trees and also with soiling of the environment with their excrement. The weaver bird symbolizes the Europeans whom Africans welcomed as their visitors and now the visitors are no longer visitors but the owners of the land (house). The poem decries this situation and speaks against it vehemently (2014: 276):

The weaver bird built in our house
And laid its eggs on our only tree.
We did not want to send it away.
We watched the building of the nest
And supervised the egg – laying
And the weaver returned in the guise of the owner
Preaching salvation to us that owned the house.
They say it came from west
Where the storm at sea had felled the gulls
And the fishers dried their nets by lantern light.
Its sermon is the divination of ourselves
And our new horizon limit at its nest
But we cannot join the prayers and answers of the
Communicants.
We look for new homes every day,

For new altars we strive to re-build
The old shrines defiled by the weaver's excrements.

As a prophet of conscience, Awoonor was as strident in his condemnation of both colonial domination as well as of the neo-colonialism that persists through the manipulation of Africa's post-independence rulers, installed for the most part by the agents of the corporations of former metropolises (Kolawole, 1992: 125-132). The relevance of this poem is still felt today where the neo-colonial financial polices of African Countries like Ghana are dictated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Awoonor reserved some of his most biting criticism for the Christian church imposed on West Africa by the European powers in order to prepare its people for their hegemonic rule. In the poem, he unmasked the hypocrisy exhibited by the Europeans when they preach salvation to Africans. Awoonor was indeed prophetic here, as the hypocrisy of the Christian churches in West Africa becomes clearer every day, with US fundamentalist Christians and their African followers now preaching a gospel of greed and hate on almost every street corner of the cities and towns of Ghana and Nigeria. As evident from the poem, Awoonor uses some of his poems to awaken the consciousness of his people so that they become fully aware of the dangers involved in dealing with the Europeans.

In the poems titled, "The gone locust" and "The cathedral", the same views are expressed by the poet when he seeks to create some level of awareness about the dangers posed by the European presence on African soil (1988: 209):

On this dirty parch
a tree once stood
shedding incense on the infant corn:
its boughs stretched across a heaven
brightened by the last fires of a tribe.
They sent surveyors and builders
who cut that tree
planting in its place
a huge senseless cathedral of doom.

These lines summarize how life-seeking African traditions based on love and sharing, symbolized by the tree, have been replaced by death-seeking European Christianity based on hate and greed, symbolized by the dirty parch where the cathedral of doom now stands. Senegalese-Cameroonian expatriate Négritude poet David Diop expresses similar sentiments in his poem "The vultures" (1988: 75):

In those days
When civilization kicked us in the face
When holy water slapped our cringing brows
The vultures built in the shadow of their talons

The bloodstained monument of tutelage.
In those days
There was painful laughter on the metallic hell of the roads
And the monotonous rhythm of the paternoster
Drowned the howling on the plantations...

In his analysis of colonialism and neo-colonialism, Awoonor deployed a key concept formulated by the late Ghanaian leader Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, who was ousted from power by the USA in 1966. Awoonor is in agreement with Nkrumah when he asserts that an understanding of present-day Africa requires an understanding of three religious influences: traditional African, Islamic and Euro-Christian religions (Priebe, 1975: 834-835). Awoonor believed that non-African religions have seriously damaged African spiritualities and this has left African vulnerable to domination.

In the poem “We found a new land” Awoonor decries the results of the mental colonization imposed on Africans by the European missionaries, which has transformed Africans into ‘smart professionals in three pieces sweetening away their humanity in dribblets’. The imposition and internalization of European religion and culture has reached such a critical point that on the increasingly rare occasions where Africans maintain their traditions, they are often roundly condemned and marginalized not only by foreigners, but also by other Africans (Kolawole, 1992: 125-132).

In his poetry, Awoonor extended the reach of his analysis to the entire Afro-Atlantic, using the slave trade as a point of departure. Awoonor bemoaned the devastating impact of the slave trade on its African victims as well as the nefarious impact that it had on the Europeans and Africans who trafficked slaves. In his treatment of the African diaspora, Awoonor relied in part on his own experiences, including his service as Ghana’s ambassador to Brazil and Cuba. In those countries, he came face to face with large populations of African descended people, whom he considered to be his brothers and sisters.

In his poem, “Havana, Cuba: the free territory of the Americas” (2014: 60) he expresses this familial bond:

I walked Havana
searching for the men of my village
I saw them all,
The grey old boy with the toothy grin
The mischievous brat with the ample laughter
The buxom girl-bride singing to her child
A long recalled lullaby of the ancestral home.

In the spiritual realm, the poet is searching for connections and identity. Havana functions as the spiritual or metaphysical locus for his meditation on the Afro-Atlantic. Havana is thus a grotto where he communes with the past in total reverence for his African

ancestors. In the physical realm, he encounters the descendants of former slaves who worked and who still work the sugar plantations of Cuba. After his physical and spiritual Odyssey in the Americas, Awoonor becomes convinced beyond all doubt that the people whom he encountered in his travels were people from his village (Adjei, 2008: 383). In its incisive critique of colonialism and neocolonialism, as well as in its embrace of the peoples of the African diaspora as family, Awoonor's poetry insures him a place in both the anti-imperialist and the Pan-African literary pantheons.

REFERENCES

- Adjei, Mawuli (2008). Trans-Atlantic memories: the Black diaspora in the poetry of Kofi Anyidoho and Kofi Awoonor. In Naana Opoku-Agyemang, Paul E. Lovejoy & David V. Trotman (Eds.), *Africa and trans-Atlantic memories: literary and aesthetic manifestations of diaspora and history* (pp. 383-406). Trenton: African World Press.
- Awoonor, Kofi (1988, [1976]). The cathedral. In Senanu Kojo & Vincent Theo, *A selection of African poetry* (pp. 209). Harlow: Longman.
- Awoonor, Kofi; Kofi Anyidoho (Ed.) (2014). *The promise of hope*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Diop, David (1988, [1976]). The vultures. In Senanu Kojo & Vincent Theo (Eds.), *A selection of African poetry* (pp. 75). Harlow: Longman.
- Kolawole, Mary E. Modupe (2017). Kofi Awoonor as a prophet of conscience. *African Languages and Cultures*, 5, 2, 125-132.
- Priebe, Richard (1975). Review of *The breast of the earth: a survey of the history, culture, and literature of Africa south of the Sahara* by Kofi Awoonor. *Books Abroad*, 49, 4, 834-835.

THE RASTAFARIAN: FROM PARIAH TO HERO IN JAMAICAN LITERARY DISCOURSE FROM THE 1950S TO THE 1980S¹

AART G. BROEK

KLASSE! RESEARCH & CONSULTANCY, LEYDEN, NETHERLANDS

The early days of the Rastafari movement are rooted in Jamaica in the 1930s, where over the following decades, Rastafarians gradually came to be more positively viewed, especially by the non-propertied classes and a growing number of literary figures. With the rapid rise in the popularity of reggae music around 1970 the Rastafari movement would come to be a powerful symbol of the struggle for justice and against exploitation in Jamaica and beyond. The detested and strange Rastaman prior to 1960 thus became the highly esteemed and prominent Rastaman in the 1970s and 1980s. This social process has been nicely documented; Van Dijk (1993) and Chevannes (1994) being two amongst the scholars who write about this change in appeal and status during the 1990s, by which time it had become obvious to all. It will come as no surprise, then, that this transformation from pariah to hero can also be found in Jamaican literature.

In such novels as *Brother man* (1954) by Roger Mais, *The children of Sisyphus* (1964) by Orlando Patterson, *The late emancipation of Jerry Stover* (1968) by Andrew Salkey, *Escape to Last Man Peak* (1975) by Jean D'Costa, *Ikael Torass* (1976) by N.D. Williams, *The harder they come* (1980) by Michael Thelwell, and *We shall not die* (1983) by Clyde Knight, the Rastafari movement and reggae play a central role. These novels provide a widely divergent view of the Rastafarians and the music associated with them, a view that depends on the changing attitudes toward them by outsiders, including the novelists in question.

The 1950s

Roger Mais is the first West Indian author to introduce a Rastaman as an important character in his novel *Brother man*. The title of Mais' novel refers to John Power, called Bra' Man [=Brother] by everyone. His peace-loving and forgiving attitudes, his selfless desire to help others and his preference for the spiritual instead of the material

¹ Based on Broek, 2000: 119-145, with a touch of Broek, 2014 and 2017; translated from the Dutch by Scott Rollins.

make Bra' Man an eccentric person in the eyes of his fellow barrack yard residents. However, Bra' Man inspires so much awe among his neighbors that they come to him, in secret, for help in times of sickness and financial difficulty. Nonetheless, when tragedy hits – in the form of a murder and police raids – the neighborhood directly accuses Bra' Man of being the guilty party. All their pent up hate, horror, ignorance and fear is directed at the Rastaman. He is stoned, a punishment that nearly costs him his life. For three days he lies on the brink of death. No matter how full of hate his environment may be, Bra' Man is portrayed as someone who has the capacity to forgive his assailants after the stoning. In fact, he emerges as the only one to choose the righteous path in the struggle for daily survival: that of understanding, trust and surrender when it comes to his fellow human beings and fellow sufferers of oppression.

The Jesus-like idealization of Bra' Man as a Rastafarian is clear in this story line, even for readers without specific knowledge of this movement. Idealization brings with it inevitable distortions. The most striking aspect of the idealization of the Rastafarians can be attributed not so much the infallible character of Bra' Man, as to the novel's silence regarding two very important aspects of Rastafarian religious creed, namely the belief that Haile Selassie I is the only true and (at the time) living God, and the belief that all African descended people in the diaspora will return to Africa, to Ethiopia, their supposed mother country. Bra' Man is first and foremost a Rastafarian through his actions, personal manner and his Biblically oriented thinking. But even in this, Bra' Man distinguishes himself from what has by now become the stereotypical Rastafarian. That he does not use marihuana does not necessarily have to come as a surprise, but what is remarkable is that 'the herb' in *Brother man* is given strongly negative connotations; the murder at the center of the story and certain acts (fraud, gambling) that are diametrically opposed to the ideals for which Bra' Man stands, are all directly related to the use of marihuana.

The motivation behind this idealization becomes clear against the backdrop of the relationship between Rastafarians and outsiders, such as Roger Mais himself. From its beginnings in the 1930s, prevailing Jamaican public opinion towards the Rastafarian movement had been characterized by loathing, fear, violence, oppression, and ignorance, as summed up by Jamaican sociologist and Rastafarian Semaj 1985: 'The damn Rasta dem, wey de Rasta dem want, we just put dem out in the sea and sink the boat – say dem want to go Africa!' (Semaj, 1985: 9).

The positive images that Mais presents of the Rastafarians in *Brother man* appear to contrast sharply with the accepted views of his day. What comes to the fore from this contrast is on the one hand, criticism of the existing attitudes towards being a Rastafarian, and on the other understanding for the way of life of this marginalized social group. Given the aggressively negative attitudes of his day, it is understandable why Mais withholds from his readers some of the most controversial elements of the

Rastafari movement. Mais thus takes care not to have his Rastaman associated in any manner with marihuana, so as not to undermine the force of his arguments, which were already to some extent hampered by Mais' limited knowledge of Rastafarian doctrine, which at the time was anything but well-understood.

In the 1950s *Brother man* articulated the feelings of a small group who sympathized with the Rastafarians. Research on the movement indicates that the first and very acrimonious phase in the relationship between Rastafarians and outsiders – that of *the damn Rasta dem* – lasts until the 1960s, after which a certain cautious swing of opinion sets in. Alongside the aggressively unpopular attitudes towards Rastafarians that persist and are sustained by governmental authorities, some intellectuals, such as Smith, Augier & Nettleford (1960) and Barrett (1968) exhibit more sympathy, and open up a space for a more well-grounded discussion of the Rastafari movement.

The 1960s

In the 1960s Patterson and Salkey turn their attention to the Rastafari movement in *The children of Sisyphus* and *The late emancipation of Jerry Stover*, respectively. Both novels are representative examples of the attitudes that prevailed among outsiders during that decade: on the one hand, interest, understanding and insight and on the other doubts and criticism.

Patterson depicts the lives of various characters from the Dungle, at the time a rather extensive, open air garbage dump just outside of Kingston, in which the inhabitants built their provisional barracks and huts. They had been forced to do so because the city proper could not process the huge influx of people from the countryside. Patterson portrays these people in their attempt to escape from, in the first words of the novel: the 'worthless, lousy, dirty life' they lead. Among these lives, he focuses on those of young Dinah, of Mary and her daughter Rosetta, and of Brother Solomon and his group of Rastas, all of whom are striving to achieve a better life.

For Brother Solomon and his group a better life means the realization of their wish to go back to the Rastafarian land of origin, Ethiopia. Patterson thus presents us with a decidedly different view of the Rastafarian movement than Mais did. Bra' Man was an eccentric and was despised by his fellow victims of oppression. The Rastafarians in *The children of Sisyphus* constitute a group and in fact only distinguish themselves from their companions in misfortune in the Dungle through the ideal they strive to achieve. In this, the novel closely follows the changing status of Rastafarians in Jamaican society in the 1960s, when support from the lower socioeconomic echelons – particularly the young – grows steadily.

Though the influence of the Rastafari may have grown, Rastafarians are in no way the respected pioneers they would become in the eyes of many in the 1970s (Barrett, 1977; Nettleford, 1970; Owens, 1976). Patterson treats the Rastafari movement with an unusually high level of understanding by providing, in an unassuming way, a

remarkably large amount of information about the ritual use of marihuana and meditation gatherings. In this regard, Patterson articulates some of the sentiments of his time, as he does in his ultimately ironic treatment of certain articles of Rastafarian faith, especially their desire to return to Ethiopia. Patterson depicts the Rastafarians as simple souls who upon hearing the 'news' that a ship bound for the motherland is on its way, want to swim out to meet it and, if necessary, swim all the way to Africa. This news turns out to be nothing but rumors, and the Rastafarians find themselves at the end of the novel in the same miserable situation where they were at the beginning.

Patterson's criticism goes even further. Neither Dinah nor Mary and her daughter Rosetta succeed in escaping the Dungle. Nevertheless, their failure is clearly attributed to external factors beyond their control, such as unemployment, racial discrimination, and abuse of power. The failure of the Rastas, however, is attributed to themselves. Patterson shows understanding for the Rastafarians through his reliable descriptions but he is extremely negative in his ultimate verdict on the movement, ridiculing one of its most important tenets. This attitude of skepticism among the more privileged social groups who do not belong to stratum of the shanty-town dwellers dominates until the end of the 1960s, as demonstrated in Salkey's *The late emancipation of Jerry Stover*.

Salkey's novel depicts the life of Jerry Stover that is characterized by boredom, listlessness, and nonchalance. Jerry is searching for his future, for himself, his values and security in the Rastafari movement. He comes from a middle-class family, has a solid formal education and does not suffer much in the way of material need, in stark contrast with the Rasta group he considers joining, which resides in the Dungle. Despite his many activities on their behalf, such as helping to organize a peaceful demonstration, writing a petition, giving lessons to children and adults, Jerry ultimately does not join the Rastafari movement. At the end of the book Jerry is still a man in search of a goal in life. Vacillating attitudes with regard to Rastafarians in the 1960s are what come to the fore in Salkey's novel, where it initially seems possible to find 'meaning in life' through Rastafarianism, but ultimately it becomes clear that this is not the case. This impossibility is very dramatically and emphatically expressed at the end of the novel, when members of the group of Rastas are buried under a thick layer of stones during an earthquake.

The 1970s

Along with the reggae music associated with it (see Bilby, 1985; Clarke, 1980) the Rastafari movement began its triumphal procession through Jamaican society in the 1970s. In the novels of Jamaican authors Rastafarians and reggae assumed much more favorable depictions than ever before and in poetry and pop songs expressions of praise intended for Rastafarians and their views became massively popular. In this decade there was an enormous spread of the ideas, ideals and particularly the symbols

of the Rastafari movement, such as *dreadlocks*, I-tal food, reggae music, *ganja*, and the red-black-green-yellow color combination of the Ethiopian flag.

Although this certainly did not mean that ‘everybody turned Rasta’, Rastafarian influence dramatically increased among all socio-economic strata of the Afro-Caribbean communities in Jamaica and the rest of the West Indies as well as among West Indians in the diaspora (Cashmore, 1983). As tolerance for and interest in Rastafarianism grew, the movement became a symbol of home-grown and independent development not only in the socio-cultural sphere, but ultimately also in economic and political areas. Even though this did not lead to the transformation of Jamaica into Sion, Rastafarians were no longer demonized, especially after gaining positive acknowledgement by Jamaican Prime Minister Michael Manley (1972-1980) and their virtual canonization by reggae superstar Bob Marley.

With the Rastafari movement as its central theme, N.D. Williams’ novel *Ikael Torass*, was published in 1976. In Andrew Salkey’s 1968 novel, Jerry Stover seeks a foothold and goal in life with the Rastafarians but in the end he fails to do so. A decade later the main character in William’s *Ikael Torass* fares quite differently. At the beginning of the novel Michael is on the verge of leaving his native land of British Guyana in order to go and study at the regional university in Jamaica. Saying farewell and leaving his country was not easy but after some delay Michael nevertheless departs.

Once in Jamaica, he begins his university studies, but the novel is anything but the story of a successful student. On the contrary, *Ikael Torass* is the story of Michael’s growing awareness of the hypocrisy of Jamaican society, university education included. On the one hand, he sees a small elite class of West Indians (including the students) who accept and propagate western, political, economic and cultural hegemony in the region, while on the other hand he sees a considerably larger group of West Indians who live in abject poverty and who do their utmost merely to survive. Rastafarians belong to this group, as do the majority of those who sympathize with them.

At a certain moment Michael comes into contact with one of them. He has joined a student demonstration, without actually knowing exactly what is being demonstrated against. He has lost all sympathy with the students and university; he is filled with disgust and looks for a way out. It is precisely at that moment that a Rasta sympathizer lends him a helping hand. Mesmerized by the reggae music coming from a portable radio, Michael is led away by him from the demonstration into the world of the Rastafarians and other marginalized people. This marks the start of an entirely new and extremely beneficial life experience for Michael. He grows increasingly estranged from his middle-class upbringing and ideals. The confrontation with the daily life of the residents in the barrack yards opens his eyes to how the Jamaican elites neglect and oppress them. Michael emerges from this ‘spiritual immersion’ with a new identity and – symbolic of this change – a new name, Ikael Torass.

The 'I' in Haile Selassie I is supposed to be pronounced as the first person 'I'. Rastafarians used this 'I' usually in place of the first syllable of other words, for example I-cient (ancient), I-tal (vital), I-quality (equality), and so Ikael for Michael, in order to underscore his bond with the Rastafaris. Torass is a contraction of 'to your ass', a term of abuse, aimed in this case against Babylon, against Western hegemony. The contrast between Jerry and Ikael is evident, and through Ikael, Williams responds critically to how his predecessors expressed their views towards the Rastafari movement.

The euphoric mood in which Ikael finds himself at the end of the novel notwithstanding, his future remains undiscussed. To what degree the Rastafari movement would actually be able to bring about the desired transformation of Jamaican society was a question first posed with a degree of urgency at the outset of the 1980s, when pro-Western Prime Minister Edward Seaga swept Manley from the political stage. This made the issue 'Can Rasta deliver?' more pressing. At the time Ikael Torass was published there was no doubt that the answer to this question was 'Yes'.

With this novel we are far removed from Mais' *Brother man*. The Rastaman has become a hero, a paragon, a source of inspiration. This image is not only met with in literature for adults, but also in literature for children. Jean D'Costa's *Escape to Last Man Peak* (1975) depicts a group of children fleeing from an epidemic. During their adventurous trek right across Jamaica it is a Rastaman who provides them with food, water and shelter at a crucial moment. For D'Costa('s children) Rasta epitomizes Good.

The 1980s

By the 1980s, there had been an undeniable growth in the number of followers of the Rastafari movement. Of greater appeal than their religious doctrine, however, were the symbols, freedoms (such as the smoking of *ganja*), and reggae music associated with the Rastafarians. These symbols, freedoms, and music began more and more to lead a life of their own at the end of the 1970s, separate from the Rastafari faith. The belief in Rastafari was relegated to the background and was overshadowed by the rasta-style, extolled in the novel *The harder they come* (1980), which was preceded by the movie of the same name. In the meantime, reggae music was surpassed in popularity by that dub poets and the precursors of rap (Habekost, 1993).

The harder they come is the fictionalized biography of Rhygin, a legendary rudeboy and folk hero who lived in and around Kingston at the end of the 1950s. We follow Rhygin's exciting transformation from country boy to city 'ganja dealer and reggae star'. In the end Rhygin's rebelliousness causes him to be declared an outlaw by the authorities, but at the same time to be declared a beloved hero by the people who take his fate to heart. In the novel the song 'The harder they come' makes Rhygin popular,

the song that in Jamaica (and far beyond) was sung into the hit parade by rudeboy Jimmy Cliff. The song is a homage to the rebellious lifestyle and politics depicted in the novel, and an expression of aspects of the ideology that underpins that lifestyle and those politics:

Talk about the pie up in the sky
Waiting for me when I die
But between the day you born and when you die,
Dey never seem to hear you when you cry...

So, as sure as the sun will shine
I'm gonna get my share now... what's mine
And then, the harder dey come
Is the harder dey fall
One an' all.

The response of Western hegemony to this lifestyle and politics is depicted in Clyde Knight's *We shall not die* (1983). A few months before Ronald Reagan, then President of the United States, acted on what he felt was his right and obligation to invade the Caribbean island of Grenada, Clyde Knight's novel *We shall not die* appeared. What exactly Reagan said during the preparations for the invasion is not yet part of the public record. But his words could have been similar to those that Knight has the American president say in his novel, in response to a fictional revolutionary threat to US domination in Jamaica: “‘No Buts! We are going in there. Now, get on that line and tell them we are coming to their aid, whether they like it or not. And you,’ he said to his Defense Secretary, ‘get busy organizing for troops to fly in.’”

In this novel, Knight has a large group of well-organized Jamaicans revolt against the oppressive Jamaican regime at the end of the 1970s. The airport, radio stations and other important buildings are occupied, and a number of American bauxite executives are taken hostage. The Jamaican government does not immediately strike back for fear that ruling class Americans might be killed. The American president has less of a problem with that. What he takes ‘American interests’ to mean are not the five American hostages, but instead US control over the land and labor of the Jamaican people. ‘You expect us to give up millions of dollars’ worth of land and investments just because a bunch of hooligans demand that we do so’, Knight has the American president say.

The American invasion puts a bloody end to a frantic attempt at land reform, a more just division of wealth in Jamaica and efforts to throw off the shackles of poverty. The book ends with the invasion, preceded by an extensive description of the organization that leads the revolt. The invasion may have put down the revolt, but not the

resistance. The dying words Knight has his hero utter are: 'We shall be back, we shall not die.' These are also the closing words of this rather grim novel about a much grimmer reality.

In *We Shall Not Die*, this reality is evoked time and again in just a few lines of reggae lyrics, such as those from the following song 'Soul power' by the Heptones:

Now I will not hide my feelings no more, oh no, oh no,
We want the right to live like free men
But poverty is all we feel
Now I will not hide my feelings no more.

He who is less than just, is less than man
It is only by justice that we can authentically
Measure man's value or his nullity.
People see me acting strange
They may think it's a burning shame,
But they don't seem to realize the pangs of
Hell that I feel.

In Knight's novel it is the lyrics to this reggae song that give the main character just that little nudge necessary to kick start his existing dissatisfaction into action, and he proceeds to set up an extensive resistance group against exploitation and oppression. Although the revolutionaries do not necessarily identify as Rastafarians, they embody the self-confidence and the rejection of social injustice (Babylon) associated with Rastafarians, their lifestyle and their music.

In the second half of the 1980s, however, 'the pangs of hell that I feel' were not actually transformed into organized resistance. In hindsight, this could hardly be expected of the Rastafari movement, which was characterized by a high degree of disorganization and an equal degree of ideological division (Barnett, 2005). Its foundational premises seemed insufficient to support substantial changes in society in general or even at the interpersonal level of relations between the sexes in particular (Lake, 1994). '[The] revolutionary potential of the Rastafari movement,' Van Dijk concluded in his doctoral dissertation, '[appears] practically totally gone.' The answer to the question 'Can Rasta deliver?' is that it may have (had) the potential to, but it did not, at least not by the closing decade of the twentieth century. Knight's *We shall not die* is to some extent emblematic of this impotence: Rastafarianism and reggae may have been inspirational but ultimately did not deliver in practical terms. The final words of Knight's hero, though, suggest, as does Barnett (2012), that not all hope is lost as we enter the new millennium.

REFERENCES

- Barnett, Michael N. (2005). The many faces of Rasta: doctrinal diversity within the Rastafari movement. *Caribbean Quarterly*, 51, 2, 67-78.
- Barnett, Michael (Ed.) 2012. *Rastafari in the new millennium: a Rastafari reader*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Barrett, Leonard E. (1968). *The Rastafarians: a study in messianic cultism*. San Juan: Institute of Caribbean Studies.
- Barrett, Leonard E. (1977). *The Rastafarians: the dreadlocks of Jamaica*. London: Heinemann.
- Bilby, Kenneth M. (1985). The Caribbean as a musical region. In Sidney W. Mintz & Sally Price (Eds.), *Caribbean contours* (pp. 181-218). Baltimore/London: The John Hopkins University Press.
- Broek, Aart G. (2000). *Het zilt van de passaten*. Haarlem: In de Knipscheer.
- Broek, Aart G. (2014). Creative and destructive powers of shame: moulding Caribbean writing and ideology. In Kristian van Haesendonck & Theo d'Haen (Eds.), *Caribbeing: comparing Caribbean literatures and cultures*. (pp. 79-96). Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi.
- Broek, Aart G. (2017). Down with closed systems: the appropriation of the Caribbean as a borderless enclave. In Nicholas Faracles et al. (Eds.), *Archeologies of erasures and silences: recovering othered languages, literatures and cultures in the Dutch Caribbean and beyond* (pp. 243-260). Curaçao/Puerto Rico: UoC/UPR.
- Cashmore, Ernest (1983, [1977]). *Rastaman: the Rastafarian movement in England*. London: Unwin (Counterpoint).
- Chevannes, Barry (1994). *Rastafari: roots and ideology*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Clarke, Sebastian (1980). *Jah Music: the evolution of the popular Jamaican song*. London/Kingston: Heinemann/Sangster's.
- D'Costa, Jean (1975). *Escape to Last Man Peak*. London: Longman (Horizon Series).
- Habekost, Christian (1993). *Verbal riddim: the politics and aesthetics of African-Caribbean dub poetry*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Knight, Clyde (1983). *We shall not die*. London: Longman (Drumbeat).
- Lake, Obiagele (1994). The many voices of Rastafarian women: sexual subordination in the midst of liberation. *New West Indian Guide*, 68, 3/4, 235-257.
- Mais, Roger (1978, [1954]). *Brother man*. London: Longman (Caribbean Writers).
- Nettleford, Rex (1970). *Mirror, mirror: identity, race and protest in Jamaica*. Kingston: Sangster's.
- Owens, Joseph (1976). *Dread: the Rastafarians of Jamaica*. London/Kingston: Heinemann/Sangster's.

- Patterson, Orlando (1986, [1964]). *The children of Sisyphus*. London: Longman (Caribbean Writers).
- Salkey, Andrew (1968). *The late emancipation of Jerry Stover*. London: Longman.
- Semaj, Leahcim T. (1985). Inside Rasta: the future of a religious movement. *Caribbean Review*, 14, 1, 8-11, 37, 38.
- Smith, M.G., Roy Augier & Rex M. Nettleford (1960), *Report on the Rastafari movement in Kingston, Jamaica*. Kingston: University of the West Indies.
- Thelwell, Michael (1980). *The harder they come*. London: Pluto Press.
- Van Dijk, Frank Jan (1993). *Jahmacia: Rastafari and Jamaican society, 1930-1990*. PhD thesis, Utrecht University.
- Williams, N.D. (1976). *Ikael Torass*. Havana: Casa de las Américas.

AN ECOCRITICAL READING OF NIYI OSUNDARE'S POETRY

CHARITY ABOAGYE, KWAME NKRUMAH
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, GHANA

Introduction

This article is an ecocritical study of three poems from Niyi Osundare's collection titled, *The eye of the earth*. The analysis is guided by Heise (2006), and reveals how Osundare communicates with us about how we relate to our ecosystem, which can be defined as "the interacting system made up of all living and nonliving objects in a specific volume of space" (Weathers et al., 2012: 3). Schmitz (2013) in his bid to define what ecology seeks to do, describes ecosystem as "the process by which organisms interact with each other and with the physical and chemical components of the surrounding environment" (p. 7). Jax (2010), quotes the Greater Yellow Stone Coordinating Committee, 1990's definition of ecosystem as "living organisms (biotic) together with their nonliving environment (abiotic) forming an interactive system inhabiting a defined area of interest" (p. 93). From the foregoing definitions of ecosystem, one idea seems to stand out: the interaction between living organisms and nonliving components of their environment. This interaction between these two components of the environment is symbiotic, as both depend on each other for sustainability.

Some human activities, such as deforestation, the use of chemical substances such as DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichlorethane), overgrazing, tile drainage etc. are harmful to the environment and disturb our ecosystem. Those concerned by such threats to the balance of the ecosystem have responded by mounting advocacy and education campaigns. The literary world has contributed to these efforts through works of art such as poetry, prose and drama, in which issues relating to the environment are explored artistically. In this article, we use ecocriticism to examine the work of Niyi Osundare, a prolific Nigerian poet, dramatist and literary critic, who is described as "one of the most prominent within the generation of contemporary Anglophone Nigerian poets that emerged after Wole Soyinka, J.P. Clark-Bekederemo, and Gabriel Okara" (Ogoanah, 2003: 3).

Ecocriticism, also known as environmental criticism, literary environmental studies, literary ecology, literary environmentalism, or green cultural studies (Buell, 2005: 11-12), can be traced back to the late 1980s (Mazel, 2001: 3). In the US, it emerged from "scat-

tered projects and publications involving the connection between literature and the environment in the 1980s [which] led to the founding of ASLE, the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment, during a convention of the Western Literature Association in 1992” (Heise, 2006: 505). In Britain, it might be traced to the work of Jonathan Bates in the early 1990s (Ramazani & Bazregarzadeh, 2013: 1). The roots of ecocriticism, however, go much farther back in time, as Buell points out: “If environmental criticism today is still an emergent discourse, it is one with very ancient roots. In one form or another, the “idea of nature” has been a dominant or at least a residual concern for literary scholars and intellectual historians ever since this field came into being (2005: 2). The most widely acclaimed ecocritics include Laurence Buell, Simon C. Estok, Glen Love, Cheryll Glotfelty and William Reuckert (Oppermann, 2006: 206). Different definitions have been posited for the term ecocriticism. Glotfelty defines it as “the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (1996: xviii); Slaymaker (1999) defines the term as “the study of explicitly environmental texts by way of any scholarly approach or, conversely, the scrutiny of ecological implications and human-nature relations in any literary text, even texts that seem, at first glance, oblivious of the nonhuman world” (p. 1102); and Estok (1999) sees the concept as one that “analyzes the ways in which literature represents the human relation to nature at particular moments of history, what values are assigned to nature and why, and how perceptions of the natural shape literary tropes and genres” (p. 1097). From the above definitions, it can be extrapolated that ecocriticism, by and large, is a theory that seeks to examine the relationship between literature and the environment.

Estok (1999) argues that the scope of ecocritical theory should not be limited to literature:

ecocriticism is not limited to literature: it has for a considerable time been a highly interdisciplinary field with research not only on written texts but also on different media, such as photography and documentary film, and in other disciplines, such as history, art history, anthropology, and philosophy The body of scholarship in these branches of ecocriticism is vast-dauntingly vast, in fact, although many literary critics may not yet be aware of it. No doubt, ecocriticism's first task must be to make at least a part of this rich array of cross-cultural scholarship available to the discipline at large (1999: 1097).

The above stipulates that ecocritical theory is interdisciplinary in its approach and is applicable to different media. In this connection, Hutchings states that: “

One of ecocriticism's basic premises is that literature both reflects and helps to shape human responses to natural environment By studying the representation of the physical world in literary texts and in the social contexts of their production, ecocriticism attempts to account for attitudes and practices that have contributed to modern-day ecological problems, while at the same time investi-

gating alternative modes of thought and behaviour, including sustainable practices that would respect the perceived rights or values associated with non-human creatures and ecological processes. (2007: 1)

Hutchings maintains that Eco criticism is an attempt to establish how issues relating to environmental problems are addressed and the steps taken to solve them.

Heise (2006) proposes series of questions that should guide ecocritical analysis:

- In what ways do highly evolved and self-aware beings relate to nature?
- What roles do language, literature, and art play in this relation? and
- How have modernization and globalization processes transformed it?
- Is it possible to return to more ecologically attuned ways of inhabiting nature? and
- What would be the cultural prerequisites for such a change? (p. 504)

Through these questions, Heise challenges ecocritics to investigate how writers attempt to address issues related to nature through their art.

Though the emergence of ecocriticism is often associated with the West, writing on issues related to nature has always played a role in the African literary space. Olaniyan (2013) affirms this in an ecocritical reading of *ijala* chants. He argues that “African artists have devoted their art towards saving their environment from destructive tendencies even before the official inauguration of ecocriticism” (p. 694). He points out that the nature-focused orature of the Yoruba poet, Foyanmu, “was performed as far back as [early] 1980, while ecocriticism was inaugurated in America in the late 1980s and emerged in Britain in the early 1990s” (p. 694). Similarly, African writers such as Amos Tutuola, in *The palm-wine drinkard* (1957); Gabriel Okara, in *The fisherman’s invocation* (1978) and Tanure Ojaide, in “Labyrinths of the delta” (1986) all centered the issue of the environment in their writings before the advent of ecocriticism in the West.

In this article, three of Osundare’s poems will be considered: “Excursion”, “Our earth will not die” and “Ours is to plough, not to plunder” from his collection: *The eye of the earth* (1986). Doki (2009) in his article, “*The eye of the earth*: Niyi Osundare as a poet of nature”, conducts a similar study on some of the other poems in the collection, but not from an explicitly ecocritical point of view. In the collection, Osundare turns to poetry, “an appendage of his aesthetic oeuvre” (Nwagbara, 2012), aimed at conscientizing Africans on the need to preserve nature through a juxtaposition of the state of the natural environment in times past to its present precarious state.

“Excursion”

In the five-stanza poem “Excursion”, set in a relatively unspoiled environment, Osundare uses the journey motif that characterizes this collection to relate humans to their natural environment, emphasizing the beauty, mutual respect and mutual dependence that characterize this relationship. This beauty is expressed through the depiction

of all of the elements in the ecosystem, including humans, as alive and interacting in such a way that maintains a healthy balance:

Past bush paths tarred by tireless treading
Past rocky outcrops rubbed smooth by stubborn heels
Past dandelions roaring silently at my wandering feet
Past elephant grass fluted tusklessly by the wind. (p. 41)

Osundare in the first two lines describes the “bush paths” and the “rocky outcrops” which have been used, but not abused, by the farmers, hunters and others who have walked there. Because humans have respected this ecosystem, the ground, the rocks, the plants and the wind are alive and in conversation with us as well as with one another. The ascription of animate attributes to these non-human entities shows us that, just like us, they are affected by and respond to any human presence in their environment. The use of the oxymoron, “roaring silently” shows that these responses are subtle and are only audible to those who take the time and effort to acknowledge them.

In the second stanza, the poet continues to make use of both visual and auditory imagery to describe how traditional human cultivation of the land has contributed to its richness and beauty by becoming part of the living whole that constitutes a healthy ecosystem:

Past the depleted copper of harvested cornfields
Past the leafy grove of ripening yams
Past the groundnut’s leguminous lilt
in the orchestra of swinging furrows
Past the bean which has a thousand kids
with antinomy in each eye... (p. 41)

Though the poet in the first stanza and first line of the second stanza describes the effect of human activities on the physical environment, these activities do not, in any way, damage the environment. The cultivated plants described here include the leafy grove created by the climbing stems of the yam plant, which signal that the tubers of yam are ready for harvesting, and the regular rhythmically repeated pattern of a group of trenches created to grow plants such as groundnuts and beans. His description of black-eyed peas, a staple food in Nigeria, as a “thousand kids” with “antinomy in each eye” continue his personification of non-human aspects of the ecosystem, further deepening our understanding and respect for them.

In the third stanza, the poet describes insects as they go about their various activities:

Past the gallant butterfly dallying from flower to flower
Past the bee droning and dreaming in the hammock
of fallowing farms
Past the dung-beetle rolling in its forbidden ball
Past soldier ants bootless in their lengthy columns

The beauty and freedom with which these insects move is a result of the environment in which they find themselves: an environment that has not been destroyed by human activities.

In the fourth stanza, Osundare expands his focus on the sources of life from the land to the water and the light of the sun.

Past the lake lying namelessly in the register
of famous shrubs
Past the duck which brailles liquid letters
on its open face
Past boulders and pebbles which answer the whisper
of calling feet
Past the quivering arrow of noonward sun

The lake is described as “lying namelessly”, that is no human has come to claim it and name it. Instead, it bears the thousands of changing names that the webbed feet of ducks write on its surface. The sun is also depicted as something that makes a mockery of the illusion of control that drives human beings to destroy the world around them.

In the final stanza, Osundare announces the direction of the journey as “homeward” but to a home full of “sunful fragrance” that sounds a lot like the path that he has just described.

Homeward
With a flower in one hand
Homeward
With a sun in the other
Homeward
To a house of sunful fragrance

The poet’s stress on the satisfaction and healing that one derives from engaging with the environment in its natural state suggest that this is a journey that should have no fixed, static destination. Just like the ecosystem, it is alive and ever changing. When we appreciate and respect nature, when we open our ears to listen to its poetic voice, when we open our eyes to read its poetic names, when we open our bodies to its healing powers (Buss, 2015; Watson & Burlingame, 1960: 85), when we keep walking in joy, health and harmony with our surroundings, we are already home.

“Our earth will not die”

“Our earth will not die” is an elegiac poem that mourns the deplorable state of the earth, a result of “humans’ contemptuous (mal) treatment of nature” (Olaniyan, 2013: 696). The first stanza reads:

Lynched
the lakes
Slaughtered

the seas
Mauled
the mountains

But our earth will not die

In his use of verbs, which share a sense of inflicting suffering and pain and in his depiction of lakes, seas and mountains as beings capable of suffering, the poet appeals to the readers' sense of vulnerability to convey the atrocities meted out on the ecosystem. Okuyade (2013) posits that Osundare, through the effect of graphology in the visual arrangement of these lines, illustrates "bifurcation in terms of might and weakness" (209). At the end of the stanza, however, we are reminded that when we make the earth suffer, in the final analysis, we are only inflicting injury and death on ourselves. If we continue to abuse the ecosystem, it is we as a species who will eventually become extinct, while the earth will continue to live on for billions of years to come. Osundare thus sounds a note of both hope and warning: "But our Earth will not die".

In the next stanza, he focuses on contamination of the earth's waters:

Here
there
everywhere
a lake is killed by the arsenic urine
from the bladder of profit factories
a poison stream staggers down the hills
coughing chaos in the sickly sea
the wailing whale, belly up like a frying fish,
crests the chilling swansong of parting waters.

The stanza begins with the words "here", "there" and "everywhere" with each occupying a line to signify the universality of environmental abuse. First, the "lake" is killed by "arsenic urine". Urine connotes waste while poisonous arsenic is "a very dangerous substance, whether on its own or combined with other elements" (Cooper, 2007; 1). These two words brought together are, therefore, a metaphor for toxic waste. The personification of factories through the use of the word "bladder" conveys the idea that these factories are monsters created by ourselves and in our own image. Foyanmu (1980) chants the following lines in relation to the dumping of wastes into our waters: "we treat river water with contempt"/ "We pour refuse inside river"/ "We block river with refuse". The result is death, not only of aquatic life, but of human life as well. Just as the fish floats in cooking oil as it fries, so does the "wailing whale" floats on the surface of the sea with its belly up as it struggles to survive in contaminated seas.

The third stanza poses series of rhetorical questions in an attempt to identify the perpetrators of these wanton acts of destruction:

Who lynched the lakes. Who?
Who slaughtered the seas. Who?

Whoever mauled the mountains. Whoever?

Our earth will not die

These questions are not answered, because the answer is obvious. We and our greed are responsible.

In the subsequent lines Osundare describes the destruction of the forest as a result of the acid rain that results from air polluted with gases such as sulphur dioxide through the burning of fuel by factories, power stations and cars. These polluting gases react with the water in the clouds to produce acid rain. He also mentions other forms of contamination, including that of heavy metals, such as mercury and nuclear waste:

And the rain

The rain falls, acid, on balding forest

Their branches amputated by septic daggers

Of tainted clouds

Weeping Willows drip mercury tears

In the eye of sobbing terrains

A nuclear sun rises like a funeral ball

Reducing man and meadow to dust and dirt

But our earth will not die.

Fishes have died in the waters. Fishes.

Birds have died in the trees. Birds.

Rabbits have died in their burrows. Rabbits.

But the earth will not die

Osundare observes that acid rain strips trees of their leaves and branches. The poem metaphorically compares the destructive nature of acid rain to the corrosive effect of age “balding” and to the effect of a dagger, whose sharp edge causes branches of the trees to be amputated. The reference to the weeping willows is symbolic of grief, sadness and sorrow, but the poet again reminds us that the “Earth will not die” in spite of our obliteration of living organisms in all habitats, including the fish in the water, the birds in the air, and the rabbits on the land.

On an optimistic note, the final stanza assures us that the Earth will survive and regenerate, with us, if we change our ways, or without us, if we don't:

Our earth will see again

eyes washed by a new rain

the westering sun will rise again

resplendent like a new coin.

The wind, unwound, will play its tune

trees twittering, grasses dancing;

hillsides will rock with blooming harvests

the plains bating their eyes of grass and grace.

The sea will drink its heart's content

when a jubilant thunder flings open the skygate
and a new rain tumbles down
in drums of joy.
Our earth will see again
this earth, OUR EARTH. (p. 51)

“Ours is to plough, not to plunder”

The third poem, “Ours is to plough, not to plunder” draws our attention to how we should relate to nature in order to preserve it, and thus preserve our existence on this planet. The poet points out the fact that the earth is not our possession, in the sense of something we own and that we can dispose of in any way we please. Instead, we are the custodians of the earth, and it is our job to take care of it:

The earth is ours to plough and plant
the hoe is her barber
the dibble her dimple
Out with mattocks and matchets
bring calabash, tray and rocking baskets
let the sweat which swells earthroot
relieve heavy heaps of their tuberous burdens.

56 Beginning with the initial lines of the poem, the earth is personified as female, as in the traditional worldviews of some ethnic groups in Ghana and elsewhere in West Africa. Addo (2015), in his analysis of sensual and sensuous imagery in Osundare’s poems, asserts that these lines serve as “a reiteration of the Yoruba cosmological world view of the earth as a goddess” (p. 37). He further claims that “the idea of using the barber suggests the care the earth needs in order to look good” (p. 37). This notion of the earth being female is extended as Osundare describes the fertility of the earth through the bountiful harvest that it yields after cultivation. His description of the harvesting of tuberous plants from the bowels of the earth can be compared to childbirth. This comparison signifies that just as the birthing of a child is a precious gift to the world and marks the continuity of the human race, so is the produce of the earth essential to the sustainability of human life.

In the following stanzas, there is a call for us to work *with* nature instead of *against* nature:

Let the wheatfields raise their breadsome hands
to the ripening sun
Let legumes clothe the naked bosom
of shivering mounds
Let the pawpaw swell and swing
its headward breasts

Let water spring
from earth's unfathomed fountain
Let gold rush
from her deep unseeable mines
hitch up a ladder to the dodging sky
Let's put a sun in every night

Here, Osundare implores us to abandon the death-seeking science and technologies that came with colonialism which work against nature and destroy the earth. Instead, we should revive the traditional life-seeking science and technologies of our ancestors, which respect and work with nature. In the imagery invoked in these lines, it is abundantly clear that, if we work with nature, nature will work with us, and provide all that we need.

In the final stanza, Osundare rephrases his initial observation that our existence on this planet depends on the extent to which we care for our ecosystem and work in harmony with it:

This earth is
Ours to work not to waste
Ours to man not to maim
This earth is ours to plough, not to plunder

57

Conclusion

The poems selected for this study provide interesting answers to Heise's (2006) guide questions for ecocritical analysis:

- In what ways do highly evolved and self-aware beings relate to nature?
- What roles do language, literature, and art play in this relation? and
- How have modernization and globalization processes transformed it?
- Is it possible to return to more ecologically attuned ways of inhabiting nature? and
- What would be the cultural prerequisites for such a change? (p. 504)

In these three poems, Osundare is unequivocal in his vision of how humans, when they behave as highly evolved and self-aware beings, relate to nature. He suggests that all of our ancestors, whether they lived in Africa or elsewhere on the planet, were in fact "highly evolved and self-aware beings" and the proof of this is that they lived with respect for nature and in harmony with their ecosystem. Because they developed science and technology such as traditional agriculture that work with nature instead of against nature, human beings survived and thrived for tens of thousands of years. Osundare's use of sensual and sensuous imagery that treats all non-animate elements of our ecosystem as animate and all non-human elements as human, suggests that one key task of

poets and other artists is to “open up” all of their senses to hear, see, and feel the nourishing and healing messages that nature is sharing with us and to transmit those messages through works of art, and that is precisely what all of our ancestors did in their artistic endeavors.

Over the past few hundred or perhaps few thousand years, merely a blip in our existence on the earth, a few human beings driven by greed and competition in a few parts of the world, have gone astray and developed science and technology that works against nature and plunders the ecosystem, with disastrous results that threaten our very survival. Art, which was once practiced by all, has now become the monopoly of the symbolic elites who control the media and do the bidding of those whose greed is driving us to extinction. Globalization is now making these death-seeking technologies and art forms the dominant ones on the planet.

Instead of invoking some utopian alternative ideal or some technological fix to remedy this situation, however, Osundare urges us to take inspiration in the thousands of traditional sciences, technologies and art forms that have emerged in the thousands of traditional human cultures that still exist, in order to use these life-seeking knowledges, techniques and creative media to re-establish a balance with our ecosystem. But this depends on re-establishing cultures of sharing, love and letting nature take care of us as we take care of it. An important element in this process is letting nature show and tell us what we need to heal ourselves, our societies and our environment. In this respect, Africa has much to teach the rest of the world.

REFERENCES

- Addo, Ernest Nkrumah (2015). Analysis of sensual and sensuous imagery as vehicle the message in Niyi Osundare's nature poems in *The eye of the earth*. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Research*, 3, 1, 28-42.
- Buell, Lawrence (2005). *The future of environmental criticism: environmental crisis and literary imagination*. Malden: Blackwell.
- Buss, David (2015, [1999]). *Evolutionary psychology: the new science of the mind*. London: Routledge.
- Cooper, Chris (2007). *Arsenic*. New York: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark.
- Doki, Godwin Jeff (2009). *The eye of the earth: Niyi Osundare as a poet of nature*. *African Research Review*, 3, 2, 66-77.
- Estok, Simon C. (1999). Forum on literatures of the environment. *PMLA*, 114, 5, 1089-1104.
- Foyanmu, Ogundare (1980). *Omiyale* VoL 7. ORCLP 120 [Audio CD]. Ibadan: Olatunbosun Records Company.
- Glotfelty, Cheryll & Harold Fromm (Eds.) (1996). *The ecocriticism reader: landmarks in literary ecology*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

- Heise, Ursula K. (2006). The hitchhiker's guide to ecocriticism. *PMLA*, 121, 2, 503-516.
- Hutchings, Kevin (2007). Ecocritism in British romantic studies. *Literature Compass*, 4, 1, 172- 202.
- Jax, Kurt (2010). *Ecosystem functioning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mazel, David (Ed.) (2001). *A century of early ecocriticism*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Nwagbara, Uzoechi (2012). Nature in the balance: the commodification of the environment in Niyi Osundare's *The eye of the earth*. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 22, 3, 196-212.
- Ogoanah, N.F. (2003). "I am a humanist": Niyi Osundare on the poetry of Niyi Osundare. *West Africa Review*, 4, 1, 3-6.
- Okara, Gabriel (1978). *The fisherman's invocation*. Ibadan: Heinemann.
- Okuyade, Ogaga (Ed.) (2013). *Eco- critical Literature: Regreening African's landscape*. New York: African Heritage Press.
- Olaniyan, Solomon (2013). An ecocritical reading of *ijala* chant: an example of Ogundare Foyanmu's selected *ijala* chant. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 3, 11, 692-701.
- Oppermann, Serpil (2006). Theorizing ecocriticism: toward a postmodern ecocritical practice. *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, 13, 2, 103-128.
- Osundare, Niyi (2007, [1986]). *The eye of the earth*. Ibadan: HEBN Publishers.
- Ramazani, Abolfazl & Elmira Bazregarzadeh (2014). An ecocritical reading of William Wordsworth's selected poems. *English Language and Literary Studies*, 4, 1, 1-9.
- Schmitz, Oswald J. (2013, [2007]). *Ecology and ecosystem conservation*. Washington: Island Press.
- Slaymaker, Scott (1999). Forum on literatures of the environment. *PMLA*, 114, 5, 1089-1104.
- Tutuola, Amos (1952). *The palm-wine drunkard*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Watson, Donald & Alice W. Burlingame (1960). *Therapy through horticulture*. New York: MacMillan.
- Weathers, Kathleen C., David L. Strayer & Gene E. Likens (2012) *Fundamentals of ecosystem science*. Waltham: Academic Press.

WEBSITES

- <http://eschooltoday.com/ecosystems/what-is-an-ecosystem.html> (Retrieved April 2016).
- <http://www.inforplease.com/encyclopedia/science/waterpollution-industrial-pollution.html> (Retrieved April 2016).

**TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF
MUSIC, DANCE, ART AND FILM IN
THE GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND**

BLOOD CLOT, RAS CLOTH AND BUN BOW CLOTH: LOVINDEER TAKES ON FEMALE BODILY TABOOS IN JAMAICA

ANNA KASAFI PERKINS

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS
ST MICHAEL'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE, JAMAICA

Curse words and menstruation

Many Jamaicans maintain certain culturally derived attitudes towards bodily emissions like menstrual blood and waste matter. Menstrual blood in particular is seen as a powerful pollutant and tool for harm (Sobo, 1993). Menstruation has around it all the elements of a taboo process that should not be spoken about or ought not to be seen, especially the paraphernalia associated with the process – cloths, pads, tampons, menstrual blood, water used to wash female underwear, menstruants. A perhaps extreme example of this is the Bobo Dread, a utopian commune of RastafarI living outside Bull Bay, St Thomas, Jamaica. Among the Bobo, menstruating women are segregated until the end of their defilement (Chevannes, 1994a). In a less extreme fashion, for many “ordinary” Jamaican men, menstruating women are not allowed to cook or serve them food (Sobo, 1997); contact with female undergarments is pointedly avoided. Lest we are led to dismiss such beliefs and practices as if they were no longer an issue in modern Jamaican society, hardly a week goes by without there being a story in the *Sunday Observer* newspaper on disputes between persons over female underwear being hung where men have to pass under them or water that was used to wash female undergarments splashing on a man.¹ The physical violence meted out to female perpetrators often leads to the matter ending up in the Courts. These real life dramas are but an indication of the larger cultural beliefs and practices about the female body and its peculiar contaminating menstrual function.

Almost without exception, curse words in the Jamaican language refer to female genitalia and the peculiar requirements of menstruation, such as the use of a special “klaat” (cloth) to absorb menstrual blood, giving rise to words like: “raas klaat”, “blod klaat”,

¹ See for example, “Drama in Court over five panties”, *Sunday Observer*, Sunday August 31, 2014, p. 32; “Man fights neighbour over hanging panties”, “Man punches cousin over skirt tail dispute”; “War over panty war”.

“pusi klaat” and “bombo klaat”, among others.² Men in particular fear encountering this menstrual klaat since it is considered unclean and harmful to them (Perkins, 2017). Yet, it was almost impossible not to encounter this klaat as the metaphorical menstrual cloth (raas klaat, etc.) is on show regularly in the social interactions of Jamaicans, oftentimes in circumstances that belittle, violate and put “out of order” people in their place (Perkins, 2017). Some dancehall artistes deploy bad words simply for entertainment or shock value.

Yet few Jamaicans have interrogated the origin, meaning and use of their “bad words” and so continue to denigrate/curse the female body as they “put each other in their place” with “tailor-made cloth cut to fit”. This concern with the referents of bad words to the female body takes on even greater import against the background of the Jamaican “philosophy of language”, deeply embedded in its African roots, whereby “language [has] the ability to acquire deeper levels of meaning than the literal, to create and to destroy” (Chevannes, 1994: 226). This is captured in the Rasta trinity, “Word, Sound, Power”. Words have the power to inspire responses – fear, anger, submission. “The word is wind but it has the power to pierce one’s heart and make one respond, or, . . . engulf. . . a slanderer in flames” (Chevannes, 1994: 228). Language structures the way we think and therefore how we perceive reality and so cannot be taken lightly (Chevannes, 2006).

One of the groups for whom language is an important tool of the trade is our performing artistes. Dancehall and reggae artistes function as cultural critics in a fashion that is often overlooked. Jamaican reggae artiste extraordinaire Lloyd Lovindeer, for example, satirically takes on the cultural beliefs that are embedded in such curse words in three of his not-for-airplay parodies, “Ras Cloth”, “Bun Bow Cloth” and “Blood Clot”. The regular reference to klaat (cloth) in Jamaican swear words gives rise to euphemisms like “fabric” and “cloths”: “Pants cloth, shirt cloth, skirt cloth/all kind a cloth over yah so/cotton, crimpiline, gabadene/hice gole an green,³” as Lovindeer demonstrates in “Bun Bow Cloth”. This paper explores Lovindeer’s use of satire, humour and double entendre in these songs in a fashion that can be seen to highlight and critique such cultural practices, which have often served to denigrate female sexuality and bodily functions. Lovindeer stoutly rejects these practices (Lovindeer in interview with author, July 9, 2011). As such, his work can be assessed to be a site of reclamation for the body, especially the female body, against denigration and disdain.

² Another peculiarly Jamaican bad word is “blood seed”. This lesser used though singular phrase seems to be often aimed at men by women (or other men) and not the other way around. One reason may be that the male (seed) has been feminised or defiled by the contact with contaminating female menstrual blood; hence the target is no longer male. This is speculative as no research seems have been done on this particular phrase.

³ Crimpiline, gabadene, hice gold and green refer to types of fabric (polyester fabrics crimplene and garbadine) and fabric displaying the Rasta colours.

Popular music as a cultural vehicle and Lloyd Lovindeer as cultural critic

For us the in Caribbean, music is an important influence in our formative years and has an important impact on the formation of our sexuality (Aparicio, 1997). Popular music is a cultural vehicle for both forming and reforming cultural attitudes and practices. Reggae music and its offspring dancehall music have been powerful sources of representing the female body/the woman in a fashion that often draws local and international critique (Best, 2001). Reggae and dancehall, like other Caribbean music forms including calypso, contain themes that depict women as primarily objects of men's sexual pleasure (Lake, 1994). It is no mistake therefore that an artiste like Lloyd Lovindeer acts as a cultural critic by drawing attention to dimensions of our cultural space that he considers in need of reform/transformation.

Professor emerita of literary studies, Carolyn Cooper describes Lovindeer as a lyrical genius whose work demonstrates "the shaping influence of literacy on a predominantly oral verbal art form" (Cooper, 1995: 138). Lovindeer's key intent is to draw attention to how Jamaicans use words and the importance of context for meaning (Lovindeer in interview with author, July 9, 2011). His writing functions at both connotative and denotative levels. This is no gratuitous deployment of swear words for effect or in order to deliberately offend. Rather it is a strategic parodying of various cultural attitudes that are expressed in taboo words; he gets us to laugh at ourselves while we see the seriousness of the issue at hand. Of course, Lovindeer may also be acting tactically, in a context where the use of bad words in public can lead to arrest. Bad words are seen as disturbing good public order and their use is therefore to be punished in order to restore order. There may be a perverse sense of (dis)order in this process. It is possible therefore to take Lovindeer's songs as texts that can be deconstructed and shown to be implicitly engaged in gynocritique, questioning the very processes of representing woman (Aparicio, 1997).

A word on bad words

"All types of taboo language: obscenities, vulgarisms, curses, expletives, profanities, and so forth are a part of most, if not all, languages" (Mercury, 1995: 29). Robin-Eliece Mercury argues that taboo language has become a "pervasive part of conversational English in the latter half of the 20th century in North America" (1995: 29). No society indiscriminately approves the use of such language, but it has, nonetheless, become an important aspect of contemporary communication. This is certainly the case in Jamaica, where there is a continual argument about the use of "forty shilling words" (so called because of the fines levelled for using them during colonial times), especially in the public space. In 2008, the Minister of Education banned some books from the high school reading list because they contained expletives. Books like Belizean Zee Edgell's *Beka Lamb* fell under this ban. In critiquing this move, Cooper likened this act to the past actions of the same government in the 1960s, when they banned all Black Power

material (even the children's book about a horse, *Black Beauty*, was banned.) (See McLaughlin & Perkins, 2011). Cooper opines that "expletives are fillers that we use in everyday speech and in literature books to keep conversations going. Most of them are quite innocent: words like 'ahm' and 'you know' and 'you see mi'" (Cooper, 2008: no page). Alongside these are the fillers that are oaths: "... solemn appeal[s] to God (or to something sacred) in witness that a statement is true" (Cooper, 2008). Over time, she claimed, people started to take the name of God in vain, swearing in circumstances that did not seem to warrant it. Respectable oaths therefore became the disreputable swear word.

The transformation of the oath into the swear word is, obviously, a process of secularisation: the sacred name of the divine applied to all kinds of ordinary problems. But, I believe, these secular swear words retain some of the original sanction of the oath. That's why we use them. They fulfil a powerful function. They intensify our emotional responses, both anger and pleasure. In certain situations, nothing but a 'mampi' [large size] expletive will do: winning the lottery; or bad dog rushing you on your morning walk. (Cooper, 2008).

Importantly, Cooper argues that in our Jamaican language such fillers become "very bloody, a vivid reference to femstruation" (Cooper, 2008).

Dread respect

Cooper claims that Jamaican men swear in blood: out of dread respect for the reproductive power of women. Elsewhere, she suggested that the moral censure invested in and provoked by Jamaican bad words is an indication of the potency of female sexuality in the culture. "The female aperture, the menstrual blood, the protective cloths, the birthing canal that are alluded to in so many Jamaican bad words acknowledge the dread that the regenerative power of the woman often engenders. It is this embodied knowledge of female authority that is invoked in the act of voicing the damning "bad" word: pussy hole, blood claat [cloth], raas claat, bombo-claat" (Cooper, 2004: 106).

In using the term "femstruation" rather than menstruation, Cooper plays along and with the contemporary cultural practice of many male DJs of not using certain words, including the word or sound 'man'/'mon', lest their "heterosexual credentials" be called into question; such words include Montego Bay (Gal-Tego Bay), Mandeville (Gal-deville), etc. This playfulness with words is very much part of the Jamaican language, which, like other creoles, uses "ridicule, subterfuge, inversion and allusion in communication, and a reliance on intonation, rhythm, contextual definitions of words and non-verbal/paralinguistic features to convey meaning" (Jones 1998 in Slone, 2003: 6). In so doing, they challenge, break down and recast dominant racist and class values. At the same time, they re-inscribe certain kinds of stigma and discrimination, especially against gay men, who are the epitome of the feminised male and therefore not man/male.

Pum Pum Tax

Even Lovindeer, in the one direct reference to menstruation that can be identified in his discography, “Doan Mess Wid My Pum-Pum” [Don’t Mess with My Vagina], does not always challenge and recast the dominant cultural beliefs and practices. He declares,

“Get redi fi di pum pum taks/ekcep at *sertn taim a di muont*/pum pum taks pie op front/bati man hafi pie bak taks” (emphasis mine)

(Get ready for the vagina tax/except at certain “times of the month”/vagina tax is paid upfront/gay men have to pay back taxes).

“Pum pum” is a common term referring to the female genitalia. Lovindeer plays around with the high taxation regime about which many Jamaicans complain by suggesting even the vagina will be taxed shortly. Indeed, by implication, he is also referring to the transactional nature of much sexual activity in the Jamaican social space. At the same time, he takes aim at homosexual men by utilising the taboo practice of engaging in sexual activity during menstruation (“except at a certain time of the month”) in order to re-inscribe a certain hegemonic heterosexist masculinity. “Bati man” is the derogatory Jamaican term for gay men and “hafi pie bak taks” is an allusion to anal sex, another highly stigmatised activity, which is viewed as the hallmark of gay sexual activity. Both government imposed back taxes and anal sex are infradig.

Belittled and reduced vitality

Returning to Cooper’s argument that sees dread respect in the prolific references to the peculiarities of menstruation in Jamaican bad words, this author sees very little of that at play. Indeed, Cooper may be a lone voice, as other scholars have attributed men’s construal of the natural process of menstruation as unclean as rooted in men’s fear and jealousy of women’s capabilities (Lake, 1994). Jamaican Gender specialist Glenda Simms would perhaps agree with the perspective taken by this chapter. In rejecting what she considers to be a culture-specific piece of research that finds that swearing may build cohesiveness in an organisation, Simms is clear, “[t]he use of the expletives, which have emerged out of a history tainted by colonialism, patriarchy, plantation slavery and misogyny, is a body of words which are designed to belittle, humiliate and reduce the vitality of women and girls” (Simms, 2007: no page). Simms argues powerfully that Jamaican women are exposed daily to degrading expletives in all arenas of life, including the board room, school room and church vestry. The use of such words is meant to humiliate and degrade women and to “cut down” men who attempt to take on their betters. No self-respecting man, in her opinion, wants to be described in terms of female body parts hence the power of such words when used by men and women.

Binary bad words

Rastafari sistren scholar Imani Tafari-Ama presents another perspective on the origin and use of “bad words”. She describes English, the language of the colonisers, as innately contradictory because it contains words that sounds the same and are spelt differently; these words usually mean various and sometimes contrary things. (It is the potential for words to have different levels of meaning that Lovindeer exploits in his parodies.) She describes “bad words” as words which exhibit this binary opposition. She calls such words oaths, expletives, swear words, curse words, profanity, obscenity or vulgarity. At the same time, Tafari-Ama acknowledges/points out the tradition of word play inherent in our Jamaican culture that is perhaps given expression best in the utterances of the Rastafari community. Oaths and swear words mean both solemn formal often-sacred declarations and profane or obscene expressions of abuse, contempt, irreverence, depending on context. “In everyday usage, therefore, profanity, obscenity and vulgarity are pent up emotions expressed as words, phrases, acts, or gestures that are held to be indecent, lewd, offensive or repulsive to the senses and/or social tastes. Confusingly, however, both the sacred and the profane are frequently represented by the very same words” (Tafari-Ama, 2006: 367). She therefore appears to take a “both/and” position that nods to both Cooper and Simms.

She claims that much like the English word “fuck”, Jamaican “bad words” have become almost legendary worldwide. (The impact of such Jamaican bad words in music can be seen, for example, in rapper Method Man’s “What the blood clot?” and former Mayor of Toronto Rob Ford’s Jamaican bad word laden tirade). These are, of course, in addition to the English profanities that are also used widely. Among the home grown “bad words” she identifies “raas”, which, though different in meaning from “fuck”, is used in similar multiple ways – verb, adjective, noun. She too notes that “the most popular “bad words” in Jamaica generally relate to the female genitalia and/or the female menstrual cycle and the associated paraphernalia. “Hence, ‘pussy-claat’, ‘blood-claat’ and even ‘bumbo-claat’ all relate to the cloth/rag used as a tampon or pad to restrict or wipe up the vaginal blood of menstruating women” (Tafari-Ama, 2006: 368-369).

The import of the location of cursing and profanity in female bodily functions ought not to be easily dismissed but merits some interrogation. Tafari-Ama follows her discourse on Jamaican bad words by highlighting the philosophy of Rasta Talk, which sees some inherent pathologies being present in Africans being forced to use the language of the oppressors; she identifies a form of social resistance present in the language of ordinary Jamaicans and the Rasta community in particular. Undoubtedly, Lovindeer is engaging in a form of resistance through the use of language in his typical subversive fashion. “Words are indeed sounds that embody social power, sometimes creative and sometimes destructive. Clearly, our first responsibility is to commit to doing our best in transforming destructive discourse into creative cultural expressions, and elevating merely profane words into truly sacred speech” (Tafari-Ama, 2006: 370). Thomas H. Slone

describes Rasta Talk as characterised by much metaphor, homophony, puns, verbal aggression and maledicta (cursing). “Rastafarian maledicta focuses upon religion, politics, sex, food, and hair” (Slone, 2003: 15). All these verbal forms are present in the work of Lloyd Lovindeer, although his maledicta, as will be seen, is deployed satirically.

Historically, Rastas have no problem with the use of bad words, since they saw no words as being bad in and of themselves. Slone argues that *blod klaat* may be used more by Rastafarians than any other group of Jamaicans because of their prohibitions about menstruating women. It is for this reason that he sees these words as being more powerful for Rastas than for any other Jamaican group. He cites Davis and Simon as ranking ‘blood clot’, ‘ras clot’, ‘bumbo clot’ and ‘pussy clot’ as progressively more obscene terms in the Rasta system of curses. [Note the misunderstanding inherent in spelling of clot rather than *klaat* (cloth)]. However, Davis and Simon have provided a ranking that may be unnecessary and certainly incorrect as all the curse words referenced mean the same thing - the menstrual cloth on which is deposited clots of blood.

Blood Clot

Very little appears to miss the power of Lovindeer’s pen – hurricane Gilbert (Wild Gilbert), global warming, (Our Planet’s Aid), the monopoly power provider (Jamaica Public Service) and the health system (No Pussy tes(t)), homosexuals in government (Not in My Cabinet), daggering (Dumplin Shop), Jamaican pride (Walk like a Jamaican), one night stands (For more than one night), sexual practices (You Eat). The three compositions that are at the centre of this exploration are found on Lovindeer’s *Jamaica: Reggae Nation to the World* double CD (2010). All three now have pride of place on Youtube (previously only “Blood Clot” was available on Youtube).

“Blood Clot”⁴ parodies the attempts of foreigners to pronounce the Jamaican curse word and satirises their misunderstanding of its meaning. An example of this can be heard in the aforementioned rapper Method Man’s “What the blood clot”.⁵ Of course, no Jamaican hears blood clot without hearing *blod klaat*. This playful piece references health concerns, particularly thrombosis (blood clots, which can be dangerous by causing strokes, etc.). Lovindeer skilfully intermixes concerns with high cholesterol with blood clots (“fatty fatty clogging up your artery”) to produce a piece that is both humorous and cutting. Lovindeer also references this concern with fat and blood clots in his parody of attitudes to oral sex (“eatings/eat”), “You Eat”, a humorous duet with DJ Lady G. In this song he rejects eating anything that is fat unless it was cooked in a pot; otherwise he will “eat” anything “phat” (“sexy”, as describing a woman).

⁴ Lovindeer released an album, *Jamaica No Blood Clot Problem* in 2012.

⁵ Carolyn Cooper often speaks about Peter Tosh’s experience with his record label when he delivered some choice expletives in an attempt to get monies owed. The story has it that they were unable to make head or tail of his Jamaican words save and except that he had blood clots.

Lady G: Mi yout, yu a go iit or nat [Young man, are you going to eat or not?].]

Lovindeer: Dakta se mi no fi fuul roun di fat [phat] [The doctor says I must not eat fat.]

Lady G: So yu waan fi iit sopn we no fat? [So you want to eat something that is not fat?].]

Lovindeer: If a sopn we yu kuk op ina pat [If it is something that you cook in a pot.]

Lady G: So yu redi fi iit ar nat [So are you ready to eat or not?]

Lovindeer: Too much fat kuda kaaz blod klot [[Eating] too much fat could cause blood clots.]

Lady G: Yu waan sampl di mos-kom-bak? [Would you like to sample something that is sure to make you come back? (that is, of course, sex, a phat vagina, etc.)]

So perhaps blood clots can result from too much phatty eating(s)!

Dem wi tel yu bout yu blod klot

When a Jamaican tells you about “yu blood clot”, they are not diagnosing a medical condition, in spite of Lovindeer’s connotations: “they diagnose your situation and then give you the information free of charge any time of day”. They are in fact telling you “how much string mek you up” (again the metaphor of fabric and the threads woven to make it) – you are being told off properly. Lovindeer portrays Jamaicans as particularly good diagnosticians who are able to tell people about their blood clot problems, even conditions that sufferers thought were “top secret”.

De tel yu bout yu blod klot [They will tell you about your blood clot (blod klaat)]
[Curse]

Taak bout yu blod klot [Talk about your blood clot (blod klaat)] [Gossip]

De fait genst yu blod klot in J-A [they fight against your blood clot (blod klaat) in Jamaica.] [“Badmind” or schadenfreude]

De duon waan no blod klot in J-A [they don’t want any blood clot (blod klaat) in Jamaica] [Rejection]

Interestingly, in this composition, Lovindeer skilfully deploys the term blod klaat on several different levels: curse, gossip, schadenfreude, and rejection. To tell someone about his blod klot/blod klaat is to curse him! To describe someone as a “blod klot/blod klaat” is to say she or he is not a good person at all; in fact, like a literal blood clot, the person may be downright dangerous. Lovindeer plays on the ubiquitous nature of the curse word and the ease with which it is uttered to dehumanise the other, even the unwary foreigner who is unable to understand the menstrual connotation of the feared clot (klaat). He opines on the nature of relationships in Jamaica, which involves a lot of “fighting against”, that is, attempts at keeping each other down; ill will is believed to be ubiquitous (Sobo, 1993). This concern with negative social relations is present in all three of the songs being interrogated. “Merderos blod klot/klaat [murderous blood

clot/cloth]” indirectly throws scorn on those who engage in wanton killings (as blood clots are prone to do) in a society where levels of murder are said to equal those of a nation in a civil war.

Ras cloth (Irie material)

One character that Lovindeer includes frequently in his pieces is the ubiquitous and often-stereotypical Rastaman. He is able to do that as Rasta cultural forms are “fashionably cultural”, as Lovindeer says in the song. Rasta artefacts are therefore easily recognisable and appropriated across Jamaica. This is a powerful example of how “easily outward sociocultural forms are severed from their underlying philosophical moorings as they are appropriated within the domain of popular culture” (Chevannes, 1994: 127). The ubiquity of the Rastaman in his compositions has caused Lovindeer to be critiqued for holding the Rastaman up as an object of ridicule (Cooke, 2010: no page). Of course, the critique clearly makes the point of his poking fun at Rastas and other Jamaicans: perhaps because they take themselves too seriously and often do not see the absurdities in their posturing. “Ras Cloth” tells the tale of Benji (a very non-Rasta name?), a humble Ras, who was very successful in selling cultural artefacts, natural remedies and cloth, especially Ras Cloth, which was his most successful sale: “selling . . . cloths, and mats and nix nax/people come to buy a lot/ital roots and fever grass/hats and belts were selling fast/ but most of all the people love the cloth”.

Ras Cloth, on the surface, is referencing the internationally known Rasta colours: “hice, green and gole” (red, green and gold), colours of the Ethiopian flag that have been appropriated by the Rastafarian movement (“What a way Ras cloth popular/out of the great Motherland Africa. . .”). Indeed, “Ras gone international”. The Rasta flag (“Ites”) also shares two colours with Marcus Garvey’s Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) flag. Similarly, Rasta colours share two colours with the black, green and gold of the Jamaican flag. The importance of the Ites was demonstrated in April 2012 at the Jamaican premiere of “Marley”, the new documentary on the life of reggae icon Bob Marley, at Emancipation Park, Kingston, Jamaica. The organisers laid out a VIP red, green and gold carpet. This angered many Rastafarians present for whom the laying of the colours of the Ethiopian flag as a carpet to be walked on disrespected both Rastafari and, by extension, Marley’s philosophies. Even the addition of other colours did not serve to appease the Rastas and eventually the VIP entrance had to be abandoned.⁶

Lovindeer shows how popular Rasta colours have become internationally. In fact, Chevannes would describe this as the secularization of Rasta, “whereby identifying symbols of the Rastafari are being shorn of their religious and ethical significance and diffused to the non-Rastafari population. The most easily observable is the Rasta tricolour, the red, gold and green” (2005: 15-16). (Dreadlocks have also been treated in a similar

⁶ Cecilia Campbell-Livingston and Richard Johnson, Rastas Livid, *Jamaica Observer* online, Saturday April 21, 2012. http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/Rastas-livid-_11299691

fashion.). Literally and very cleverly, Lovindeer references the Irie fabric and its popularity while keeping in our minds the bad word reference, for example, referring to “colourful material”, which is a Jamaican euphemism for bad words. This secularization and exploitation of both brand Jamaica and Rasta has not gone unremarked.

Wave you rag

Using the motif of rag waving, which is popular in contemporary Soca, Lovindeer alludes to the menstrual cloth that ought not to be displayed publicly. The raas klaat that signifies shame and pollution is transformed into the soca rag that speaks to enjoyment and public displays of female bodiliness.⁷ Chevannes (1999) argues that the socialization of boys into gendered division of labour leads them to resist performing any task which is identified as female. He claims that “among those they find most repulsive is any chore, which brings them into contact with female underwear, washed or unwashed. Both wash rag and underwear are transformed into raas klaats that threaten a man’s masculinity. The transformation of the cloth is clear in Lovindeer’s admonition to the ladies to: “Wiev unu klaat ina di ier/shou unu truu kuolaz enitaim eniwier/wiev unu rag, unu klaat, unu flag [Wave your cloth in the air/show your true colours anytime anywhere/wave your rag, your cloth, your flag]”.

No doubt the power of this “irie” material (menstrual cloth/soca rag/ras cloth) brushes aside the denigration of the female body implied in the socialization of Jamaican boys. This denigrating social practice is on display in popular DJ Elephant Man’s rejection of the babymother’s rag (wash cloth) in his song “Bad Man”:

Chorus: Badman duohn bied wid im biebimaada rag (duohn bied)/.../shotaz kluoz duohn wash wid gial ondawier [Bad man don’t bathe with his child’s mother’s wash cloth/.../young gunmen’s clothes are not washed with a woman’s under garments.]

The wash cloth (rag) touches the intimate parts of the babymother’s body, especially during those polluting times of menstruation. Similarly, her underwear comes into contact with the uncleanness of her menses and so cannot be allowed to touch a real badman’s clothes or towel. The ultimate hypermasculine Jamaican male is found in the person of the “badman” and the “shotta”, both fearless killers. Yet such intrepid men fear the cloth and must be protected/protect themselves from its touch. Cultural theorist and dancehall authority Donna Hope undertakes an analysis of the characteristics of the real badman using Elephant Man’s “Bad Man” (Hope, 2010). She too explores the declaration of not bathing with his baby mother’s rag (line 1 of chorus) or having his clothes washed with her underwear (line 3). Hope identifies fear of the babymother in the refusal to use her wash cloth:

⁷ Female displays during Carnival have been a source of contention within the region also. See Anna Kasafi Perkins (2011).

Here he articulates the masculine fear of feminine contamination, particularly the persona of his intimate, sexual partner and Mother of his children, the Babymother who holds the feared Punaany. This is a reflection of the Delilah complex where female taboos are used to ‘protect’ the male from loss of power that can be occasioned by the betrayal of or weakening by women (Hope, 2010: 62).

Directly relating line three of the chorus with line one, Hope again identifies the taboo with encountering female menstrual waste that is related to the Delilah Complex. Underwear acts as a shield and containment for female bodily discharge, which is contaminating to the male.

Rass Klaat

Capleton, a so-called conscious DJ, who liberally deploys raas klaat in his fire bu[r]n pieces, oftentimes eliding it into Raas-tafarI, turns the word raas klaat on its head in the song “Fire Chant”. He claims “the word “raas” means head and that he has a turban around his head, hence “rass klaat”. The tail becomes the head and Capleton claims for RastafarI the power to “simultaneously neutralise and reenergize so-called bad words” (Cooper, 2004: 195). Cooper is rightly amused at Capleton’s (unknowing) willingness to cover his head with the raas klaat (menstrual cloth), which has covered the woman’s privates. Cooper sees in this [unwitting] act a subversion of the female “low” and making it “high”. Perhaps there is no need for the taboos and the sharp distinctions between the female cloth/es and male cloth/es as the feminine cloth is already in ascendancy. Ironically, Rastas, who are very in tune with the negative connotations of words, seem unaware of the near homology of their adopted Amharic title “Ras” (prince) and raas. Or perhaps they are.

Bun Bow Cloth

“Bun Bow Cloth” (bombo klaat) again cleverly carries forward the cloth theme in order to demonstrate the enterprising nature of an unnamed sidewalk vendor, who, unlike Ras Benji, was not getting much in the way of sales with his plain cloth. He hits upon an idea of painting a red bun on the cloth and then accompanying it by a bow. His rationale is that Jamaicans like “bun” as they give it every day. Again, Lovindeer deploys a double entendre; on the surface, “bun” is simply the cake containing dried fruit and stout that Jamaicans like to eat with cheese, especially at Easter time. At the same time, in popular parlance it refers to cheating in relationships, a familiar occurrence. “Bun” also means to hurt or burn, as in the response someone has to an unkind word or action. Deploying bad words is meant to “bun” the victim. Then there is also the kind of bun, which is part of the fire bun phenomenon, where DJs call upon cleansing fire to “bun” [burn] out all kinds of beliefs and practices, including “bad mind”.

Lovindeer makes a serious but humorously disguised critique of the existence of “bad-mindedness” among Jamaicans. The success of the unnamed vendor leads others to envy him and demand that he move his materials and himself from the vicinity (“yu bun bow cloth” is like “yu blod klot”!). This again is Lovindeer’s challenging of those Jamaicans do not like to see each other prosper so they will make attempts to prevent that from happening. This “crab in a barrel” mentality is one which Lovindeer constantly “takes on” in his music, for example, in the selection “Skinning Teeth” [people who wear false smiles] on the same CD. He also speaks to it in both “Blood Clot” and “Ras Cloth”, as discussed earlier.

This bad mind and grudgefulness, which is believed to be a trait of Jamaicans, shows itself over and over in anthropologist Elisa Sobo’s research. Sobo (1993) describes grudgefulness as the feeling that others who have succeeded do not deserve their success. Grudge-full people therefore employ various mechanisms to keep people from “coming up”. She claims that Jamaicans are preoccupied with ideas about people who are kept from coming up and the mechanisms employed to ensure this. This preoccupation also surfaces in dancehall as is illustrated in Elephant Man’s “Bad Man a Bad Man”, which focuses on “bu(r)ning, trampling and rebuking “bad mind” or Capleton’s “Tour”:

Man a tek di mohni an a go Uobia man/man aal grohj fuul ahn dem no tap envi man/bot dem Laabarait, ahn dem laaba rong.

[A man/person takes this money and goes to an Obeah man/he is grudgeful and continuously envious/but they Labour right and they labour wrong.]

Capleton plays with the idea of working right (labour right) by earning honestly, but rejects labouring wrong through employing an Obeah man to work evil on your behalf. Most Jamaicans would also hear an implied critique of the members of the Jamaica Labour Party (“Labourites”), who are oftentimes mocked as “Labour wrongs”. Belief in the enviousness of Jamaicans runs deep.

Bombo klaat

Bombo klaat (bun bow cloth) is reflected on by other artistes. Peter Tosh, for example, was well known for deploying that word (and others) in his speech and music. In an interview posted on Youtube, Tosh explains the meaning and his use of bombo cloth (bombo klaat). Unlike Lovindeer, Tosh deploys bombo klaat and other bad words openly in his well-known song, “Bumbo Clat”. He uses the terms to openly denounce and curse the shitstim (system) that was oppressing him and others like him. Tosh maintains that bombo klaat is one of Jamaica’s “passwords” with the highest potential culture. It removes the spells of evil. He narrates a personal experience wherein he was being held down by spiritual vampires, unable to move, speak, or feel. The only thing that he could do was to utter [to the evil forces], “Move you bombo klaat”. That was the source of his rescue and healing and he maintains from since then he never stops

using the term. Chevannes sees Tosh reviving by this act an element of Jamaican folklore, which posits that duppies (ghosts) can be driven away by uttering bad words (Chevannes, 2006). Clearly, the duppy haunting Tosh was no other than the shitstim.

Tosh places this experience within the context of his colonial background, wherein he grew up hearing that such words were bad words or obscene language. In his desire to know more about them he investigated them. Tosh believes that the colonial authorities banned such words because of their fearsome spiritual power and, by his uttering them, he has reclaimed the power that was denied him. He reclaims the power of the word (“in the beginning was the word”), which is a key feature of Rastafarian livity. Traditional definitions of spirituality, dignity and decency are undermined in Tosh’s bombo klaat philosophy (Cooper, 1995). Rastas believe in the power of words and so will not utter certain words and have developed their own lexicon to reflect the reality – downpression (oppression), oversight (understand), blingaret (cigarette) (Burton, 1997). This is similar to the DJs refusing to use some words lest their heterosexual credentials be called into question, as was noted previously. Lovindeer, DJs and Rastafarians, with their belief in the power of words, continue the tradition of the “man of words” that Richard Burton (1997) sees at play in the Caribbean .

Toward a conclusion

On his album, *Reggae Nation to the World*, Lloyd Lovindeer, artiste extraordinaire, has included three challenging tracks: “Ras Cloth”, “Bun Bow Cloth” and “Blood Clot”. Each of these tracks plays with and subverts the Jamaican bodily taboos about a peculiar feature of the female body: menstruation. Such taboos are expressed in the various “bad words” deployed by Jamaicans of every gender, class and ethnicity to denigrate and belittle others. The use of the female body to curse so generally may demonstrate that there is a subtle and not so subtle misogyny present in in Jamaican society. This is thrown into stark relief through the taboo against menstruating women, a taboo that is most concentrated in the Rastafarian community, but present across the society.

REFERENCES

- Aparicio, Frances (1997). “Así Son”: salsa music, female narrative and gender (de)construction in Puerto Rico. In Consuelo López Springfield (Ed.), *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean women in the twentieth century* (pp. 259-284). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Best, Curwen (2001). *Roots to popular culture: Barbadian aesthetics: Kamau Brathwaite to hardcore styles*. London: MacMillan Educational.
- Burton, Richard D.E. (1997). *Afro-Creole: power, opposition and play in the Caribbean*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

- Campbell-Livingston, Cecilia & Richard Johnson (2012). Rastas livid, *Jamaica Observer*, Saturday April 21. Retrieved April 2018 from www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/Rastas-livid-_11299691
- Chevannes, Barry (1994). *Rastafari: roots and ideology*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Chevannes, Barry (1994a). The Bobo dread. *OneWorld Magazine*. Retrieved April 2018 from <http://archive.is/nkj6>
- Chevannes, Barry (1997). Introducing the native religions of Jamaica. In Barry Chevannes (Ed.), *Rastafari and other African-Caribbean worldviews* (pp. 1-19). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Chevannes, Barry (1999). *What we sow and what we reap: problems in the cultivation of male identity in Jamaica*. GraceKennedy Foundation Lecture, Kingston, Jamaica.
- Chevannes, Barry (2006). *Betwixt and between: explorations in an African-Caribbean mindscape*. Kingston: Ian Randle.
- Cooke, Mel (2010). Wild Gilbert – a song for all seasons. *Jamaica Gleaner*, March 14. Retrieved April 2018 from <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20100314/ent/ent5.html>
- Cooper, Carolyn (1995). *Noises in the blood: orality, gender, and the “vulgar” body of Jamaican popular culture*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Cooper, Carolyn (2004). *Sound clash: Jamaican dancehall culture at large*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Cooper, Carolyn (2008). Obscene policy on ‘bad’ words. *Jamaica Gleaner*, March 10. Retrieved April 2018 from <http://old.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20080309/cleisure/cleisure2.html>
- Homiak, John P. (1995). Dub history: soundings on Rastafari livity and language. In Barry Chevannes (Ed.), *Rastafari and other African-Caribbean worldviews* (pp. 127-181). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Hope, Donna P. (2010). *Man vibes: masculinities in Jamaican dancehall*. Kingston: Ian Randle.
- Lake, Obiagele (1994). The many voices of Rastafarian women: sexual subordination in the midst of liberation. *New West Indian Guide/Nieuwe West-Indische Gids*, 68, 3/4, 235-257.
- Lovindeer, Lloyd (2010). Personal interview with author, July 9.
- Lovindeer, Lloyd (2010). *Jamaica: Reggae Nation to the World* (Double CD album).
- McLaughlin, Gerald & Anna Kasafi Perkins (2012). Reflections on the Black Power Statement. In Anna Kasafi Perkins, Donald Chambers & Jacqueline Porter (Eds.), *Justice and peace in a renewed Caribbean: contemporary Catholic reflections* (pp. 41-60). New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

- McWhorther, John (2011). Swearing in: are curse words becoming more common? *The New Republic*, March 23. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from <https://newrepublic.com/article/85504/curse-words-pop-music-see-lo>
- Mercury, Robin-Eliece (1995). Swearing: a “bad” part of language; a good part of language learning. *TESL Canada Journal*, 13, 1, 28-36.
- Palmer Adisa, Opal (2004). *Caribbean passions*. Leeds: Peepal Tree Press.
- Perkins, Anna Kasafi (2017). “Shi wi use har blood tie him”: a theological interrogation of cultural beliefs about menstruation and female [im]morality in Jamaica. In Nicholas Faraclas et al. (Eds.), *Memories of Caribbean futures: reclaiming the precolonial to imagine a postcolonial in the languages, literatures and cultures of the Greater Caribbean and beyond* (pp. 349-359). Curaçao/Puerto Rico: University of Curacao/Universidad de Puerto Rico.
- Perkins, Anna Kasafi (2011). Carne vale (goodbye to flesh?): Caribbean carnival, notions of the flesh and Christian ambivalence about the body. *Sexuality and Culture*, 15, 4, 361-374.
- Simms, Glenda (2007). A nation of ‘bad words’. *Jamaica Gleaner*, November 4. Retrieved April 2018 from <http://old.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20071104/focus/focus4.html>
- Slone, Thomas H. (2003). *Rasta is cuss: a dictionary of Rastafarian cursing*. Oakland: Masalai Press.
- Sobo, Elisa J. (1993). *One blood: the Jamaican body*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Sobo, Elisa J. (1997). Menstrual taboos, witchcraft babies and social relations: women’s health traditions in rural Jamaica. In Consuelo López Springfield (Ed.), *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean women in the twentieth century* (pp. 143-170). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Tafari-Ama, Imani (2006). *Blood, bullets and bodies: sexual politics below Jamaica’s poverty line*. [S.l.]: Multimedia Communications.
- Tosh, Peter (n.d.). Peter Tosh explains the word bumboclatt (interview). Youtube video. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edvi3-Ezl-U> [Published on Youtube August 1, 2009].
- Tosh, Peter (n.d.). Bumbo Klaat (song). Youtube. Retrieved April 7, 2018 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7mQaWYV2wY&NR=1>
- Wright, Jacqueline (2005). Brand Jamaica’ is being captured, *Jamaica Gleaner*, August 6. Retrieved April 2018 from <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20050806/letters/letters1.html>
- Yawney, Carole (1983). Rastafarian sistren by the Rivers of Babylon. *Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahiers de la Femme*, 5, 2, 73-75.

AFRO-CARIBBEAN DANCE AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS IN THE SPANISH EASTERN AND WESTERN CARIBBEAN

ANN ALBUYEH

UNIVERSIDAD DE PUERTO RICO, RÍO PIEDRAS

Introduction

Despite the fact that, “before 1820, perhaps three times as many enslaved Africans crossed the Atlantic as Europeans” as David Eltis (2010) notes in *Voyages: the trans-Atlantic slave trade database*, our understanding of the cultural identities of Africans forcibly settled in the Caribbean colonies remains incomplete. In particular, our understanding of which Africans were sent where is especially underinformed when it comes to the ex-colonies of Spain. While noting that “Spanish America was . . . the part of the Americas with the most enduring links to Africa”, Alex Borucki, Eltis and David Wheat (2015: 460) nonetheless, characterize it as “the least known branch of the African Diaspora.”

From the standpoint of a linguist, the relative scarcity of creole languages in the Spanish Caribbean, in contrast to the British, French and Dutch Caribbean for example, represents one of the difficulties in tracing African influences in the region. Linguistic analysis by creolists can uncover much information about the ethnic identities of the speakers of African languages who contributed to the evolution of these hybrid language forms. However, even for former Spanish colonies such as Trinidad which later became home to Creole speakers, linguists have sometimes expanded their analysis to non-linguistic cultural constructs in their effort to uncover earlier historical links between areas of Africa and the Caribbean. An important example of this research is the work of Maureen Warner-Lewis, a linguist from Trinidad and Tobago, exemplified by her 2003 book *Central Africa in the Caribbean: transcending time, transforming cultures*.

In particular, researchers of music and dance, have pointed to both African and European connections which help to illuminate how the movement of peoples across the Atlantic and around the Caribbean Sea contributed to the Afro-Caribbean cultures which evolved there. As Mamadou Diouf and Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwanko (2010: 1) assert:

“Afro-Atlantic peoples have used music and dance to continually represent and reinvent their multiple bases of identity/ Through the two genres, these

communities dramatize, articulate, and appreciate their historical narratives in relation to their African, European, and American genealogies.”

In their research on Afro-Caribbean dance forms, both Ivonne Daniel and Julian Gerstin have proposed that the French colonial presence and slave trading pattern, respectively, had an impact that extended beyond the French colonies. Daniel (2011: 49) claims: “The entire Caribbean region contains the influence of colonial France, irrespective of how long the French occupied any particular island. . . . French culture enveloped not only Europe but all European colonies.” In the Americas this resulted in the spread of the eighteenth-century French *contradanse* (a social “country dance” in contrast to the courtly *minuet*). Daniel asserts: “In fact, the French model persisted on Haiti even after the demise of most Europeans on that island” (ibid.).

Gerstin (2010: 29) concurs, and while noting the importance of the Bight of Benin area (modern Benin and Yoruba-dominated southwest Nigeria) to French slave trading, maintains: “It seems, therefore, that the French were largely responsible for the Congolese impact in the Caribbean.” Gerstin’s analysis of Afro-Caribbean dance forms leads him to further hypothesize:

“Bantu-speaking enslaved people from the Congo-Angola area played a greater role in early Caribbean culture than is often understood – and that French slave trading played a major role in bringing them. The French were also particularly influential in spreading European dance and cultural forms such as contradance and Carnival, adopted and adapted by people with African origins in the Caribbean” (2010: 11).

This article will examine the theories put forth by Daniel and Gerstin in two former Spanish colonies in the Eastern and Western Caribbean: Trinidad and Puerto Rico. The article will explore how this line of research might contribute to what we understand about this “least known branch of the African Diaspora” and what direction future research might take.

Afro-Caribbean dance names provenance

Certainly the majority of dance/drum names in the Caribbean that I have collected over the years appear to be from Bantu languages, a very large sub-branch of the Benue-Congo branch of the Niger-Congo family that extends from Cameroon down to South Africa. Other names may come from languages in the Bight of Benin area, especially Yoruba. Moreover, a few names have an apparent French provenance. In Table 1 below Bantu words are underlined. (Hypothesized reconstructed forms of Proto Bantu have an asterisk.)

Table 1 Suggested provenance for the names of some Afro-Caribbean dance/music forms in the Eastern and Western Caribbean

NAME	SUGGESTED PROVENANCE	SOURCE
Bamboula	<u>Koongo bambula</u> ("to deflect, to transfer in a mysterious way") = refers to grievances and gossip aired in the singing	Weeks 1914
Bele, Bèlè,	<u>Koongo velele</u> ("a dance, hip movements") <u>Kongo boela</u> = a dance French <i>bel air</i> ("charming melody") <u>Lingala mabele</u> ("earth, land, ground or floor") = clearing where bele is danced	Baker 1993 Cyrille 2002 Possible folk etymology (e.g. Rose-maine 1986) Daniel 2011
Calenda, Kalenda, Kalinda, etc.	<u>Koongo lenda</u> (to oppose) = stick fighting Dance	Warner-Lewis 2003
Calypso	Hausa ? <i>kaico</i> or <i>kaito</i> (exclamation) French <i>carousse</i> ("festivity") Ibibio? <i>Kaiso</i> "Go on," "more of it" "don't stop" Efik? <i>Kaiso</i> "Go on, continue"	Hill 1972 Imbua 2014 Udoh 2016
Chica, Sicá, etc.	<u>Proto-Bantu</u> * <i>tètem</i> , variant <i>titi</i> ("to shake, tremble") <u>Koongo tiita</u> ("to quiver") <u>Kikongo sika</u> ("to play an instrument")	ProBan website Warner-Lewis 2003 Bilby (Gerstin 2010)
Congo	<u>Congo</u> language <i>nkunga</i> ("song, dance, festival")	Hill 1972
Danois, Danuá	French <i>Danois</i> ("Danish") = from the Danish Virgin Islands	Álvarez-Nazario 1974
Guateque	<u>Batuque</u> dance of Congo and Angola	Álvarez-Nazario 1974
Gwoka	<u>Bantu ngoka</u> or <i>ngoma</i> (drum, drum dance)	Gabali 1980 (Gerstin 2010)
Holandés	French <i>Hollandais</i> ("Dutch") = from the Dutch Territories	Álvarez-Nazario 1974
Juba, Yubá, Djouba, Leró, Le Rose	Yoruba <i>juba</i> ("homage, obeisance") French <i>le rond</i> ("circle") French <i>le rose</i> ("the rose")	Lawal 2004 Álvarez-Nazario 1974 Possible folk etymology (e.g. Álvarez-Nazario 1974)
Limbo,	<u>Nsundi lungu-</u> (type of dance) "limbs form a bow" (folk etymology)	Warner-Lewis 2003 Arnead 1982 (Ahye 2002)
Mariangola	Mbundu <i>ma</i> (plural prefix) + <i>ri</i> (nominal prefix) + Angola ("Angolans") <u>Bantu</u> of Fernando Po <i>maringa</i> (a type of dance)	Warner-Lewis 2003 Álvarez-Nazario 1974
Samba	<u>Angolan</u> language <i>semba</i>	Gerstin 2010
Tambu	<u>Proto-Bantu</u> * <i>tamb</i> ("play, dance, jump") <u>Koongo ntambu</u> ("drum")	ProBan website Warner-Lewis 2003
Tambu-di-sanka Tambu telele	<u>Kongolese sanga</u> ("to dance or bring into ecstasy") <i>tele</i> Nigeria source: Yoruba "to gather" Benin source: Fon : "to revolve" <i>lele</i> Congo source?: "disinclination to work" Nigeria source: Bini "to follow"	Rosalia 1997 Rosalia 1997
Ya Mapele, Ya Ngapele	<u>Koongo yanga</u> ("leap") or <i>yánnga</i> ("enjoy oneself") + <i>mpelele</i> ("whiteness") = dancing on moonlit nights or <u>Koongo ya</u> ("belonging to, of") + #Mbundu <i>mapalo</i> ("games")	Warner-Lewis 2003

An Afro-European continuum of Caribbean dance

The notion of a Caribbean Creole continuum for language, which both reflects historical development and synchronic variation, can place more African-language influenced forms at one end (“basilects”), more mixed forms in the middle (“mesolects”) and more European standard language forms (“acrolects”) at the other end. Daniel (2011: 46) has proposed a similar continuum for Caribbean dance, placing more African forms at one end (e.g. drum dances), with Creole (very mixed) forms in the middle, and European forms (e.g. French *contradanse*) at the other end.

In her Caribbean dance continuum, Daniel characterizes “European Style of Movement,” exemplified by the French *contradanse*, as exhibiting erect posture, emphasized extremities, undivided torso, and partnered ballroom dancing. Daniel characterizes “African Style of Movement” as exhibiting a flexed posture, all body parts in isolation, divided torso, and serial, solo and couple dancing in front of drums. In Daniel’s African Style of Movement, for example, a flexed posture with the back tilted forward and knees flexed (or a “grounded” stance) (2011: 68) has been depicted by Kariamu Welsh (2010) and Marian Aguiar (1999) as an earth-centeredness, characteristic of various traditions of African dance.

Among the most iconic of the Caribbean dances considered by Daniel are versions of the Puerto Rican *bomba* and certain types of Trinidadian *bele* which Daniel places toward the African end of her continuum. However, in both *bomba* and *bele* while the dancers sometimes exhibit a flexed posture, they also perform some of the dance standing erect. Relating the development of *bele* to the European *quadrille*, Daniel, in fact, places many of the varieties of *bele* closer to Europe on her dance continuum. That Africans and those of African descent were under pressure to abandon dances of the drum has been well documented, and Daniel claims that this was one of the motivations for their adaptation of a European dance form. However, Daniel (2011: 73) singles out the Trinidadian “Queen’s solo” *bele* dance as being more “African”: “no longer a ‘mincing’ European imitation, but a challenge.”¹

¹ See the list of relevant You Tube videos in References which illustrate dances and dance moves discussed throughout this section.



Figure 1 Contemporary *bomba* and *bele* dancers Source: drawing by author.

The lifting of the skirts of the female dancers is also understood to be a European influence, and the classic *bomba* and *bele* costumes consist of head ties combined with ruffled long-skirted dresses, showing elements of both African and European provenance. Figure 1 above illustrates a Puerto Rican *bomba* dancer on the left and a Trinidadian *bele* dancer on the right.

One of the most salient characteristics of *bomba* and the Queen's solo in *bele* is the interaction which can be found between musicians, vocalists, dancers, and audience. This illustrates the fact that other differences among African, Creole and European dance forms reflect the relationship between the dancers and the musicians. Significantly, many African dance traditions, as pointed out by Aguiar, and dance traditions in the Caribbean include a rhythmic dialogue among the musician and dancer participants. For example, unlike European dances, these forms can feature a dancer leading a musician's musical performance. Whereas, for example, in European dances, the dancers follow the rhythm set by the musicians as a group, in African and Caribbean dance traditions, the individual movements of the lead dancer may direct the individual poly-rhythmic musical pattern of the lead drummer.²

Some very distinctive West Central African dance moves survive in Trinidad and Puerto Rico. For example, a bent-over backwards movement with bottom bumping/shimmying seems to be related to similar moves by contemporary dancers from Congo and Gabon. However, other salient West Central African dance features may only occur in the French ex-colonies such as Saint-Domingue/Haiti and Martinique. For example, the truly distinctive stomach or thigh smacking of couples reported by Père Labat in 1724

² My thanks to Awilda Sterling-Duprey and Tito Matos for both insight into the varieties of *bomba* found in Puerto Rico and an invaluable *bomba* workshop at the Universidad de Puerto Rico-Río Piedras in 2007.

in Saint-Domingue, which can be seen today on Youtube in Martinique in the dance “*bèlè mabélo*,” have been attested to in dances of Angola and Luanda (Weeks, 1914 and Monteiro, 1875, reported in Warner-Lewis 2003: 240-241).

On the other hand, one of the more salient moves found in varieties of Puerto Rican *bomba*, shoulder shaking or snapping, in my opinion, most likely comes from the Gold Coast where upper body movement is emphasized in some of the dances. While Warner-Lewis reports shoulder moves in Nsundi dancing in West Central Africa, and versions of contemporary Yoruba *bata* dancing (Bight of Benin area) feature shoulder movements, the closest thing to the snapping of shoulders I have found occurs in dancing in Ghana/Togo (Gold Coast region).³ The vigorous combination of upper and lower body movement found in these versions of *bomba* can also reflect the influence of a variety of Igbo dancing (Bight of Biafra region) called Atilogwu (Kenneth Kalu, 2016; 2018 personal communication).

First steps: from the coast of Africa to the islands of the Caribbean

While, as noted above, not enough is recorded of the cultural identities of Africans who ended up living in the Caribbean, one source is the surviving data from trans-Atlantic slave voyages. The continually updated Trans-Atlantic slave trade database (slavevoyages.org) currently has information on almost 36,000 slave voyages, involving the embarkation of approximately ten million Africans. That the slave voyages data will inevitably never be complete and cannot be completely conclusive in many regards is a given; yet it is nonetheless an invaluable record worth examining in understanding which Africans ended up where in the Caribbean.

More than any other colonizer of the Caribbean, with regards to the trade along the African coast Spain was crucially dependent on other European colonial powers. Because during most of the colonial period Spain largely complied with the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) which restricted Spain’s access to Africa (and Portugal’s access to the Americas), it depended on its European rivals for access to the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. The slave voyages data show the importance of foreign-flagged ships to the transporting of Africans from regions on the coast to the Spanish colonies, and this invites a look at one aspect of Gerstin’s hypotheses: French colonial slaving patterns.

In Table 2 below, the extant data for French-flagged slave ships supports Gerstin’s contention that the French probably played an important role in bringing Congolese and Angolan people to the Caribbean, although Dutch and especially British-flagged ships carried many captives, and the majority from West Central Africa were carried by Portuguese/Brazilian-flagged ships to Brazil.

³ This observation is based on my participation in workshops on Ewe dancing held at the University of Ghana, Legon in 1996 as well as Youtube videos available.

Table 2 Slave ship voyages by flag whose principal place of purchase was West Central Africa/St. Helena. (Totals = number of people disembarked.)

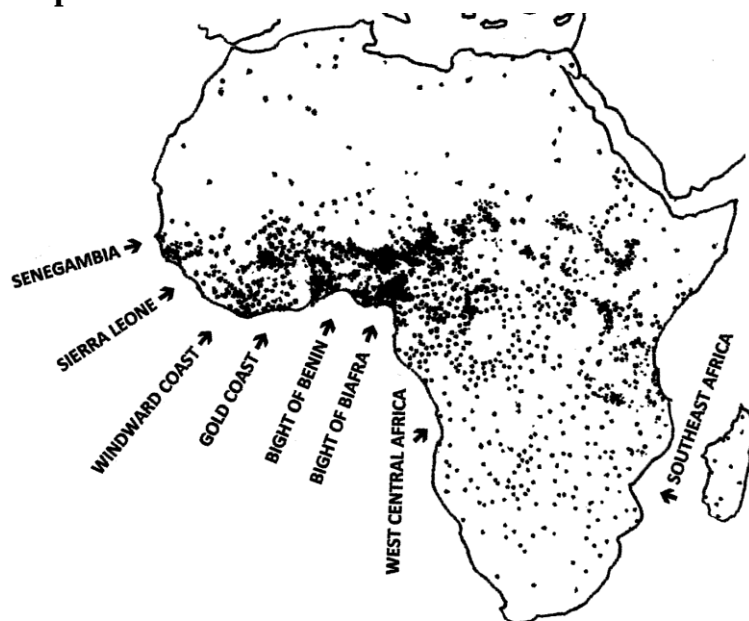
Years	Spain/ Uruguay	Portugal/ Brazil	Great Britain	Nether- lands	U.S.A	France	Den- mark/ Baltic	Other	Totals
16 th C	1,736	17,773	0	574	0	0	0	0	20,083
17 th C	13,394	131,016	22,721	69,595	114	1,013	665	259	238,777
18 th C	1,867	719,800	247,377	98,544	559	351,994	657	0	1,420,798
19 th C	24,266	1,085,854	52,380	302	60,656	10,140	1,860	1,757	1,237,215
Totals	41,263	1,954,443	322,476	169,015	61,329	363,147	3,182	2,016	2,916,873

Source: <http://slavevoyages.org/voyages/ajqBfes>

Eltis (2010) notes that “Latin-American expeditions were seriously under-represented” in pre-1999 slave voyage data and had been considerably updated since “no less than sixty percent of the slave voyages in the Voyages Data base contain information unavailable” just eleven years earlier.⁴ Map 1 below illustrates the regions used by the Slave Voyages database, and the possible number of discrete languages currently spoken in the relevant areas.

85

Map 1 Areas of embarkation



Sources: slavevoyages.org and ethnologue.com; map drawn by author.

⁴ For example, since I began tracking the slavevoyages.org data documenting Africans disembarked in Puerto Rico, the numbers reported for the 16th century have been augmented by over one thousand.

The slave voyages data for Trinidad and Puerto Rico (as of May 2018) share a pattern in which African slaves embarked in the Bight of Biafra area (Igbo-dominated south-eastern Nigeria and Cameroon) are in significantly greater numbers, especially in Trinidad, than those embarked in West Central Africa. The number of Africans embarked in the Bight of Benin is among the lowest numbers reported.

Table 3 Trinidad

Years	Sene- gam- bia	Sierra Leone	Wind. Coast	Gold Coast	B of Benin	B of Biafra	West Cen- tral Africa	South East Africa	Other ⁵ Africa	Totals
17 th C	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	470	470
18 th C	0	0	0	432	334	4,746	971	0	451	6,934
19 th C	615	888	279	1,111	279	6,815	2,227	0	5,667	17,881
Totals	615	888	279	1,543	613	11,561	3,198	0	6,588	25,285

Table 4 Puerto Rico

Years	Sene- gam- bia	Sierra Leone	Wind. Coast	Gold Coast	B of Benin	B of Biafra	West Cen- tral Africa	South East Africa	Other Africa	Totals
16 th C	5,250	0	0	0	0	341	0	0	593	6,184
17 th C	28	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	287	336
18 th C	35	350	392	0	195	2,922	2,668	0	3,559	10,101
19 th C	98	740	0	0	334	1,355	1,078	421	3,132	7,158
Totals	5,411	1,070	392	0	529	4,618	3,767	421	7,571	23,779

Source: slavevoyages.org/search the database

Looking for answers: movement throughout the Caribbean basin

Anticipating the 2018 launch of their “Final Passages Database” on the Trans-Atlantic Voyages website, Gregory O’Malley and Borucki (2017: 346) point out that

“Scholarly understanding of the scale, routes, and lived experiences of the Inter-American slave trade lags behind knowledge of the forced migration across the Atlantic. . . . The slave routes crossing colonial boundaries – as well as the continuous flow of runaways across maritime and land frontiers – created social networks connecting black communities throughout the Americas.”

In this respect, the Spanish colonies were in a unique position. Borucki, Eltis and Wheat (2015: online notes) claim that

⁵ “Other Africa” means, for example, that the embarkation region in the ship’s documents was unclear or multiple embarkation regions were listed.

“Overall over one quarter of the African captives brought into the Spanish Americas did not come direct from Africa but rather via the colonies of Spain’s European rivals. There were far more trans-imperial intra-American slave voyages going to Spanish America than to any other colonial empire.”

Two French colonies in the Eastern Caribbean stand out as important to the intra-Caribbean slave trade: Martinique and Guadalupe. Eltis and David Richardson (2010: 238) state that:

“Guadalupe and particularly Martinique became the main disembarkation centers for African captives in the French Caribbean in the late seventeenth century Martinique became an important venue for French traders during the illegal period of French slaving, 1814-1831. French dominance in the Bight of Benin and West Central Africa ensured that these regions accounted for over half of the slaves arriving in these French islands.”

Unlike Martinique and Guadalupe, France’s largest Caribbean colony, Saint-Domingue (Haiti), in the Western Caribbean, was more important as a destination for African captives than as a port of trans-shipment. Saint-Domingue was the most prosperous European colony in the Caribbean, and by 1791 fifty percent of the world’s sugar was being produced by its plantations. Its nearly 800 large-scale plantations employed almost 500,000 enslaved Africans and people of African descent (Gomez, 2004: 92). However, the revolution which transformed French Saint-Domingue into an independent Haiti (1791-1804) had an important impact on the populations in its Caribbean neighbors in two ways. First of all the Haitian revolution and the destruction of much of the plantation system had the unforeseen outcome of increasing demand for African slaves, particularly in the Spanish Caribbean. Second, many planters, free African-descended people and slaves became voluntary and involuntary emigrants to other colonies, both French and non-French. Thus, there is a second potential source of French influence in which the Africans associated with the French slave trade were introduced into Spanish colonies.

The French planters and the Africans and African-descended people who arrived in the Spanish colony of Trinidad to develop sugar plantations transformed the island. Eric Williams (1962: 39) goes so far as to claim that Trinidad was changed from “a backward Amerindian colony governed by Spain into a Spanish colony run by Frenchman and worked by African slaves.” In particular, through the decree of 1783, the *Cédula de Población*, the Spanish crown encouraged Roman Catholic French planters, free French-speaking persons of mixed African and European descent, and any slaves they brought with them to develop plantations in Trinidad. Bridget Brereton (2013: 2) states: “By 1797 Trinidad had the makings of a sugar and slavery economy and society, with a mainly French elite, and an important free coloured class of landowners.” Moreover, French planters with their slaves, as well as free African descended people emigrated

to Trinidad after the Haitian revolution. Dalleo (2013: 6-7) states that from the beginning of the Haitian Revolution

“Trinidad thus became a prime location for planters fleeing the French islands, so that by the time the British did win control of the island in 1797, the ground had already been established for the French linguistic and cultural substrate that persists in Trinidad to this day.”

In fact, in discussing the impact of refugees from Saint-Domingue/Haiti in the Greater Caribbean, David Gaspar and David Geggus (1997: 26) claim “Their most lasting impact, perhaps, was in the reinforcing of Francophone culture in Louisiana and Trinidad.” However, of equally lasting impact, from the standpoint of reinforcing African culture, is the fact that the vacuum created by the loss of sugar and coffee cultivation in Haiti motivated the large importation of Africans and African-descended people into islands like Cuba and Puerto Rico. (See Albuyeh, forthcoming, for further discussion.) Borucki, Eltis and Wheat (438) point out that “notwithstanding the fact that the Spanish bureaucracy probably generated more documentation per imperial subject than any other empire before the nineteenth century” there is much evidence that the official records underreport the real numbers of Africans transported there and of an “uncontrollable slave trade” to Spanish colonies like Cuba and Puerto Rico.

In the aftermath of the Haitian revolution, as Spain joined other colonial powers in attempting to exploit the resulting sugar and coffee production opportunity, it issued a royal decree for Puerto Rico. The *Real Cédula de Gracias* of 1815 had the aim (similar to that of Trinidad) of inviting foreigners to develop Puerto Rico’s agricultural production. To enable the anticipated large-scale agricultural expansion, Miguel de la Torre, governor from 1823-1837) also issued licenses to slave traders, the majority of whom were foreigners (Pérez Vega, 2015).

In Puerto Rico, evidence points to over a thousand Saint-Domingue emigrants settling primarily in the southwestern part of the island, of whom over a third were slaves (Rosario-Rivera, 2006-2010). In addition, the records of southern and southwestern cities after the Haitian revolution indicate that French ships continued to bring African slaves to Puerto Rico from other French colonies. For example, the records of the southern port of Ponce indicate that a French schooner brought 200 slaves from Guadalupe to be sold in the southern Puerto Rican port in 1821 by the most important slave trader of the period, the French-Corsican known as José Tristany (Pérez Vega, 2015; Vidal, 1821, reported in Picó, 2012).

However, in addition to ships bringing African captives from the French colonies, ships from both the Danish and Dutch Caribbean also carried slaves to the Spanish colonies. Thus, for example, traders in the nearby island of St. Thomas in the Danish Caribbean, and also from the distant island of Curaçao, in the Dutch Caribbean sent Africans to Puerto Rico. In the early nineteenth century St. Thomas came to be a center for slave trading which fed the Puerto Rican market. Recounting his travels between 1799 and

1841, George Coggeshall reports St. Thomas to be “the very center of the slave-trade . . . the greatest number are sold in Puerto Rico” (reported in Díaz Soler, 1970). Africans were trans-shipped to both San Juan and the west of the island from Curaçao. Luis González Vales (1983: 99) claims that under the policies of Governor de la Torre the slaves needed “in the *haciendas* of the western end came primarily from Saint Thomas and Curaçao (González Vales, 1983; Carbonell Fernández, 1988). Thus, through the sometimes illegal trade in Puerto Rico, Africans ended up in this Spanish colony from Danish and Dutch slave trading regions on the African coast.

Conclusion

The languages spoken in Trinidad and Puerto Rico tell us part of their African-European history. The fact that in Trinidad both French and English-lexifier creoles came to be spoken is a reflection of the complicated colonial past of an island that was first a colony of Spain, subsequently developed by French planters and African laborers, and then a colony of Britain. The two creoles now exist within a language continuum whose European focus is largely English, the official language. Puerto Rico, where French influence was less, remained a colony of Spain until claimed as a US territory in 1898. Unlike Trinidad, there is no creole language spoken in Puerto Rico today, and there may never have been one in the past. Linguistically we are left with “Africanisms” which punctuate the local Spanish vernacular primarily, but also the English spoken by the minority of people who are bilingual.

The Afro-Caribbean dances considered the cultural heritage of both islands also tell us of their African-European history. In the case of Trinidad, where more French planters settled, the dance forms largely support the assertions and hypotheses of Daniel and Gerstin. The colonial French influence and the impact of Africans arriving from regions important to the French slave trade can be seen for example, in the various contemporary forms of *bele*.

However, it appears that differences between the Eastern vs. Western French colonies deserve more scrutiny because evidence for the dominance of West Central Africa proposed by Gerstin is challenged by the slave voyages data. In the French Eastern Caribbean islands of Martinique and Guadalupe the first three sources of African captives come from the Bight of Benin, the Bight of Biafra and thirdly West Central Africa (Eltis & Richardson, 2010: 238). Where West Central Africa predominates is in the trade to the Western Caribbean island of Saint-Domingue, with a second area in the Bight of Benin and a third in the Gold Coast (ibid.: 138, 248).

Moreover, an examination of Puerto Rico suggests the importance of the non-French inter-Caribbean trade. Although areas in Puerto Rico where emigrants from Saint-Domingue and their slaves settled exhibit the most *contradanse*-like versions of *bomba* (e.g. *bomba* from Mayagüez), there are also versions of the dance which eschew the European skirt waving, etc. and present a more complicated provenance, such as the

upper body focus seen in shoulder snapping discussed above (e.g. *bomba* from Loíza). For example, while the current trans-Atlantic data for Puerto Rico indicate zero Africans arriving there from the Gold coast, fifty percent of the Africans sent to the Danish Caribbean (e.g. St. Thomas) were embarked in the Gold Coast (ibid.: 250). This indicates that in the area of Afro-Caribbean dance the influence of even “minor” European slave trade patterns may be more significant than acknowledged by Daniel and Gerstin. In addition, while apparently late to embrace the popularity of *contradanse* forms, (Daniels (p. 54) surmises as a result of the influence of the supposed “puritanical blinders of many Dutch colonial Protestants”), the Dutch Caribbean could be important to the African component of Afro-Caribbean dance because the Dutch slave trade to its Caribbean islands of Curaçao and St. Eustatius parallels the pattern of the French slave trade for Saint-Domingue. Most of the African captives were embarked in the Central West African region, with next in importance the Bight of Benin, and third the Gold Coast. In other words, the potential African influences spread when these islands were used as sources of slaves in the Spanish Caribbean would be similar. Thus, non-French European slave trade patterns may also be accountable for the West African and Bight of Benin influences Gerstin points to.

I should note that the primary and secondary sources I have been able to consult so far have not reported instances where Africans were transported from Jamaica, which Eltis and Richardson (p. 234) call the “the hub of the British West Indian slave economy and a base for British slave trafficking with Spanish America.” Most of the time British involvement in Spanish America appears to have consisted of British-flagged ships carrying Africans from coastal regions directly to Spanish islands such as Puerto Rico, and thus, the extant information which appears in the trans-Atlantic voyages data reveals the embarkation regions, as in Table 4 above. However, Eltis and Richardson also maintain there was the “reexport of slaves to Spanish America [from Jamaica] . . . notably in 1713-1739” (ibid.). In the British trade to Jamaica, two thirds of the Africans were embarked in the Bight of Biafra and Gold Coast, with the third area of importance being West Central Africa (ibid.). Although there are references to British planters, with their slaves moving from the “older” British colonies to Trinidad, I have been unable to consult sources which have more specific information. Two other areas to be explored in the future are the important issue of runaways (including e.g. North Americans as reported in Weiss, 2002), and Africans liberated by the British who settled in Trinidad later in the nineteenth century.

The transporting of Africans across the Atlantic and throughout the Caribbean has had widespread cultural import. In particular, this research underlines the importance of a recent focus on the inter-Caribbean movements of both Africans and Europeans, and their descendants, throughout the colonial period. Moreover, analysis of Afro-Caribbean dance has the potential to communicate as much, and in the Spanish Caribbean

possibly more, than analysis of language in revealing the links between Africa and Europe and between the Eastern and Western Caribbean. As Barabara Browning (1999: 53) attests:

“Because it is nonverbal, dance has often been perceived by Western observers as a relatively insignificant cultural medium, capable of communicating only abstract thought or emotion. In the African diaspora, however, bodily movement can be a form of prayer, or of protest. . . . In some cases, the brutal repression of verbal expressions . . . has necessitated this other, more discreet form of communication. Meaningful motion is an important and continuous aspect of diasporic culture.”

REFERENCES

- Aguiar, Marian (1999). Dance in sub-Saharan Africa. In Kwame Anthony Appiah & Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Eds.), *Africana* (pp. 555-558). New York: Basic Civitas Books.
- Albuyeh, Ann (forthcoming). The lasting cultural impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Spanish Caribbean. In Kenneth Kalu & Toyin Falola (Eds.), *Encounters, oppression and resistance in Africa and the African diaspora*. New York: Routledge.
- Borucki, Alex, David Eltis & David Wheat (2015). Atlantic history and the slave trade to Spanish America. *American Historical Review*, 120, 2, 433-461.
- Brereton, Bridget (2013). Trinidad, 1498-1962. In Cruse & Rhiney (Eds.), *Caribbean Atlas*, Retrieved February 2018 from <http://www.caribbean-atlas.com/en/themes/waves-of-colonization-and-control-in-the-caribbean/waves-of-colonization/trinidad-1498-1962.html>
- Browning, Barbara (1999). Dance in Latin America and the Caribbean. In Kwame Anthony Appiah & Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (Eds.), *Africana* (pp. 553-555). New York: Basic Civitas Books.
- Dalleo, Raphael (2013). Introduction. In Carla Calargé, Raphael Dalleo, Luis Duno-Gottber & Clevis Headley (Eds.), *Haiti and the Americas* (pp. 3-22). Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Daniel, Yvonne (2011). *Caribbean and Atlantic diaspora dance: igniting citizenship*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Díaz Soler, Luis M. (1970). *Historia de la esclavitud negra en Puerto Rico* (3rd ed.). Río Piedras: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.
- Diouf, Mamadou & Ifeoma Kiddoe Nwankwo (2010). *Rhythms of the Afro-Atlantic world: rituals and remembrances*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

- Eltis, David (2007). A brief overview of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In *Voyages: the trans-Atlantic slave trade database*. Retrieved August 2015 from <http://www.slavevoyages.org/assessment/essay>
- Eltis, David & David Richardson (2010). *Atlas of the transatlantic slave trade*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Gaspar, David Barry & David Patrick Geggus (Eds.) (1997). *A turbulent time: the French revolution and the greater Caribbean*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Gerstin, Julian (2010, [2004]). Tangled roots: Kalenda and other neo-African dances in the circum-Caribbean. In Susanna Sloat (Ed.), *Making Caribbean dance: continuity and creativity in island cultures* (pp. 11-34). Gainesville: University Press of Florida.
- Gomez, Michael A. (2005). *Reversing sail: a history of the African diaspora*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- González Vales, Luis (1983). Towards a plantation society. In Arturo Morales Carrión et al., *Puerto Rico: a political and cultural history* (pp. 79-107). New York: W.W. Norton.
- Labat, Jean Baptiste (1972, [1724]). *Nouveaux voyages aux isles de l'Amérique, 1693-1705*. Fort-de -France: Editions de Horizons Caraïbes.
- O'Malley, Gregory E. & Alex Borucki (2017). Patterns in the intercolonial slave trade across the Americas before the nineteenth century. *Tempo*, 23, 2, 314-338. Retrieved from http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1413-77042017000200314
- Pérez Vega, Ivette (2015). *Las sociedades mercantiles de Ponce 1816-1830*. San Juan: Ediciones Puerto.
- Picó, Fernando (2012). *Ponce y los rostros rayados: sociedad y esclavitud 1800-1830*. San Juan: Ediciones Huracán.
- Rosario-Rivera, Raquel (June 2006-July 2010). Las migraciones femeninas a Puerto Rico en el periodo revolucionario (1791-1848). *Boletín de la Academia Puertorriqueña de la Historia*, XXVI-XXX, 71-80, 267-290. Retrieved January 2016 from <http://www.raquelrosario.net/Migraciones%20Femeninas%20a%20Puerto%20Rico.pdf>
- Warner-Lewis, Maureen (2003). *Central Africa in the Caribbean: transcending time, transforming cultures*. Barbados: University of the West Indies Press.
- Weiss, John Mc Nish (2002). *The Merikens: free black American settlers in Trinidad 1815-16*. London: McNish & Weiss.
- Welsh, Kariamu (2010). *African dance*. (2nd ed.) New York, Chelsea House.
- Williams, Eric (1962). *History of the people of Trinidad and Tobago*. New York: Praeger.

YouTube Videos:

1. Trinidad *bele*
Trinidad and Tobago Sanfest showing Trinidadian *bele* with a “queen” dancer. Retrieved September 2012 from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wz_3f_5VnpI
2. Martinique *bèlè mabélo* with stomach/thigh smacking. Retrieved April 2018 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtG2uLDEUUI>
3. Puerto Rico *bomba*
Mayagüez style showing a version more similar to *bele* Retrieved May 2018 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDgsSFjwGx0>
Loíza style showing a version without *contradanse* elements. Retrieved May 2018 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J09tYXHH0uk>
Male as well as female *bomba* dancing by Grupo Yuba showing style differences between the two. Retrieved June 2010 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4OFgIKkLDk>
3. West Central African dancing
Ikoku dance, Gabon. Retrieved June 2010 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=--Tkph6Zrjc>
Congo - Danse Traditionnelle "Région du Pool." Retrieved November 2013 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZKlclld25Aw>
Congolese drum dancing workshop Retrieved June 2010 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4L6vrl1xIM>
4. Nigeria Yoruba Bata dancing
Ayan'jo Dance Bata. Retrieved May 2013 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ma-wH3fUDJA>
Bata Dancers Appeasing Sango. Retrieved Accessed November 2013 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WZpuFKfteH0>
5. Nigeria Igbo Atilogwu dancing, female non-acrobatic version. Retrieved May 2018 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yMR66wtoH1Q>
6. Ghana Ewe dancing
Ewe traditional dance at Dagbe. Retrieved May 2018 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MauXAul751>
Brifor Dance from Northern Ghana. Retrieved May 2018 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaYsmHH8hJw>

ELIZABETH MAGALI ROBLES Y LA ACCIÓN COMO CONDICIÓN

LYDIA PLATÓN

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, CAYEY

Sin un mundo entre los hombres y la naturaleza, existe un movimiento eterno, pero no objetividad.

Hannah Arendt

Comencé mi acercamiento imaginario al trabajo de Elizabeth Robles desde un deseo de poder conformar desde estas letras un proyecto participativo, modelando algunas de las inclinaciones de trabajar con otras miradas que la artista ha utilizado en exhibiciones o acciones públicas previas. Esto se ha dado de varias maneras en su trayectoria, ya sea invitando a artistas a intervenir en su reciente exhibición *Lito-grafía Sensorio* (febrero, 2017, Cuartel de Ballajá, San Juan, Puerto Rico), donde cada fin de semana llegaban a interactuar con la exhibición bailarines, músicos, escritores, performers¹, y otras, en acciones públicas en la calle. Sobre todo, me imagino poder testimoniar su práctica y comunicarla de modo que se sienta el peso de la piedra, el calor de la cera o la ferocidad de la naturaleza que ella dice reconocer en sus piezas escultóricas y en sus motivaciones para hacer arte en general. Primero, pasaremos por los materiales de Robles para juntos (los materiales, los comentarios de escritores sobre su obra y las provocaciones de la filósofa Hannah Arendt) llegar a *La Equilibrista*, pieza de instalación exhibida en mayo de 2017, por un mes, como parte de una exhibición colectiva llamada *Simulacro* en un espacio histórico: el Polvorín (almacén de pólvora en los tiempos de la colonia española) en el Parque Luis Muñoz Rivera en Puerta de Tierra.

Excavar, acumular, desenterrar, derretir, destruir, revelar, redescubrir son algunas de las palabras que describen el proceso de hacer arte de Elizabeth Robles. Algunas las articula ella, repetidas veces, otras las articula la espectadora (yo) desde otro lugar de descubrimiento, de su propia excavación en la imaginación. Otras, las han articulado interlocutores con su obra. El trabajo escultórico, pictórico, escritural y conceptual de Robles provoca una mirada de proceso, comenzando con esa enumeración de verbos de acción. Esta mirada coexiste con la articulación de sus materiales en todas sus expresiones, incluyendo el hecho de que todos son maleables y que cambian de materialidad según el deseo de usarlos: “cera”, “piedra”, “tejido-bordado”, “escritura” y “caminata”. A veces uno se imagina cómo la artista (haciendo) y otras, a la artista como arqueóloga,

¹ Estas intervenciones incluyeron poesía, danza, música en vivo y performance.

desenterrando un objeto, una semilla olvidada que todavía se puede cultivar o como escritora sobre su trabajo, trabajando con el descubrimiento de una falsa idea, de que interpretar no debe ser superior a experimentar (Sontag, *Against interpretation*, 1966), y por eso, su escritura es poesía. Esta reflexión va dirigida a considerar las provocaciones de la artista Elizabeth Robles. Me ayuda apoyarme y dialogar con y desde las lecturas que otras y otros escritores han tenido con su obra, además de un ancla en el arte como condición, como la artista lo explica y su eco en *La condición humana* de la filósofa Hannah Arendt (o vice-versa).

Cera

Los ideales del *homo faber*, el fabricante del mundo, que son la permanencia, estabilidad y carácter durable, se han sacrificado a la abundancia, ideal del *animal laborans*. Vivimos en una sociedad de laborantes debido a que sólo el laborar, con su inherente fertilidad, es posible que origine abundancia; y hemos cambiado el trabajo por el laborar, troceándolo en minúsculas partículas hasta que se ha prestado a la división donde el común denominador de la más sencilla realización se alcanza con el fin de eliminar de la senda de la fuerza laboral humana – que es parte de la naturaleza e incluso quizás la más poderosa de todas las fuerzas naturales – el obstáculo de lo “no natural” y puramente mundana estabilidad del artificio humano. (Arendt: 135)

96 Elizabeth Robles comienza a exhibir escultura con objetos hechos en cera. La cera en el principio era como la piel, algo que se acumula en capas y que guarda memoria e historia. Durante sus años en Nueva York, en algún momento formativo después de haber estudiado Historia del Arte en la Universidad de Puerto Rico, le presentaron el material y cómo mezclarlo con la resina Damar. Robles entró en contacto con una ma



Foto: Taller de la artista (Platón)

teria alquímica. Un material sólido que calentado con fuego se prestaba a su manipulación en líquido al que podía añadir pigmentos u observar como algunas ceras ya vienen pigmentadas de intensos azules, violetas y rosados, que evocan vísceras, pero también atardeceres, amaneceres, tierra rojiza, canoas y aguas cristalinas y la doble posibilidad de ser un material de la historia del arte tradicional y del misterio de la manipulación de la materia, siempre novel en las manos del artista.

En la Historia del Arte, la cera es el material de la encáustica, antiguo método para la pintura de retrato. Las investigaciones de Robles la llevaron a descubrir los retratos egipcios de Fayum (Siglo I A.C.) que todavía hoy conservan su luminosidad. De este aprendizaje dice ella que “la cera se parece a quien la usa”. Inclusive dice que te permite crear tus prótesis, y su primera exhibición era sobre esculturas “prótesis” (Prótesis-pieza de evidencia, 2007) – lo que te falta para poder sustituir las extremidades ausentes – de este modo crea esculturas que son como extensiones de lo que necesitas.

Pero ¿cómo saber lo que se necesita ante la escultura en cera de Elizabeth Robles? Esto lo percibe y escribe Rebeca Noriega en su reflexión en torno de la exhibición *Arabescas* (Arsenal de la Puntilla, 2013) curada por Nelson Rivera, que reunía a 5 esculturas de gran formato en cera:

Así, la obra de Robles te hace un par de preguntas a ti como espectador: Qué miras? Por donde me miras? Te gusto o no te gusto? Quieres tocarme, explorarme, lo sé, pero sabes que aunque parezco fuerte me puedo romper, así que, manos atrás. Y pienso que estas son esculturas creadas con la sensibilidad que parte de aquello que fue; en lo que una camisa vieja puede llegar a convertirse y a transformarse cuando la cera la abraza con todo su calor. Elizabeth nos reta a nuestra propia transformación y en la mayoría de las ocasiones, lo logra. (80grados)

Ante las preguntas que se hacen los espectadores sobre las esculturas de cera de Elizabeth como en el caso de Noriega, existe también el deseo de imprimírle un sentido propio – como ese algo que nos falta. La escultura más bien, provoca que imagines ese algo, incluyendo como te ves por dentro a colores, tanto en tus órganos como en los colores psicodélicos con los que tu cerebro ve en sueño y en viajes de la imaginación o inclusive cómo la iluminación natural cambia de tono cada superficie según la hora del día.

Esteban Alberty comenta la obra de Robles en la instalación *Variaciones de Verdever*, dos años más tarde, ante la pieza realizada como ganadora de la Beca Lexus en el 2014 y expuesta en el Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico en 2015. En un ensayo titulado *buitre* persigue la relación que la cera le ofrece de pensar en la descomposición y la cera como partícipe de algo repulsivo:

Variaciones de Verdever debe leerse como el simulacro de la pérdida y por consiguiente, como preparación para ella. Estructura, núcleo y colapso, las tres piezas que constituyen la instalación ilustran estos conceptos organizadores, sometiéndolos a las miradas contrarias del auxilio y la voracidad. Recordemos que la historia del arte ya ha hermanado al naufragio y al hambre carnívoro, basta con recordar la historia de supervivencia que inspiró el cuadro romántico *La balsa de la Medusa* [...] de Théodore Géricault. (80grados)

Estas lecturas de repulsión reinciden en los espectadores del trabajo de cera de Robles. Nelson Rivera, dice: “Rara vez habíamos visto en Puerto Rico una obra tan bellamente repulsiva como la de Robles” (Hinca por ahí: 277).

Es el material mismo de la cera, sospecho, que seduce, pero aleja, como a Noriega, pero fascina por su capacidad de mostrar la carroña y el cadáver, como dice Alberty, y lleva a Rivera a cualificarlo desde su contradicción profunda. Su aparente fragilidad y fuerza contiene su belleza, sus potencialidades que por supuesto también pueden ser abyectas, algo que la misma Robles recalca cuando habla del mundo de la cera y sus esculturas-preguntas. La búsqueda en las construcciones de Robles de cera responde a su experiencia de experimentar con la cera y otros materiales y como laboratorio científico, crear sobre el experimento. En realidad, estas esculturas de cera fueron creadas desde la pregunta y la pregunta está en todo momento abierta.

Piedra

El material ya es un producto de las manos humanas que lo han sacado de su lugar natural, ya matando un proceso de vida, como en el caso del árbol que debemos destruir para que nos proporcione la madera, o bien interrumpiendo uno de los procesos más lentos de la naturaleza, como en el caso del hierro, piedra o mármol, arrancados de las entrañas de la Tierra. Este elemento de violación y de violencia está presente en toda fabricación. (Arendt: 160)

Todo sobre la piedra es una punta de lanza para Elizabeth Robles: “Mi taller está lleno de piedras, el patio es todo piedra, el auto no cabe en el estacionamiento. Crece el cúmulo, piedra a piedra sube por las escaleras hasta acomodarse sobre la mesa de mi casa” (Canales de Transito, 2016).

Su conexión profunda con la piedra comienza probablemente desde su geografía de infancia y crianza en Camuy, la zona de piedra caliza en Puerto Rico. Es un material orgánico que produce distintos productos secundarios, que de un modo muy diferente a la cera, también se transforma con el paso del tiempo, el agua la amolda, se cae de los precipicios, sus pedacitos se nos quedan estancados en las suelas de los zapatos, hasta en la ciudad. Las piedras son ese recuerdo primario de la creación del planeta, decoran, protegen litorales y sirven de lienzo para los humanos que pintaban sus imágenes dentro de las cuevas.

Al igual que con la cera, la artista y sus materiales comparten una mirada *milénaria* del ser y el uso y entendimiento de la naturaleza que los rodea: la violencia como parte de toda fabricación es parte de ese encuentro con la piedra y su potencialidad como material de creación artística. Escribe Efraín Barradas sobre su experiencia de visita al taller de Robles:

“Ahora en mi taller todo es piedra”: así dice y al hacerlo habla metafóricamente. La frase la podríamos entender como una declaración de las inagotables posibilidades de acción a las que se enfrenta en su ámbito de trabajo porque para ella todo es base para la creación y su taller no se limita a las cuatro paredes donde habitualmente labora. (80grados)

Enfrentarse a la acción y hablar de piedra parecerían dos polos imposibles de conciliar en el caso de la creación en el arte. Por un lado, porque solemos imaginar la piedra como materia prima, o como obstáculo – piedra en el camino. Inclusive cuando imaginamos la piedra en la conceptualización tradicional de la escultura: pensamos en la tecnología y los objetos que hacen falta para domarla y hacerla transformable en figuras sensuales, como las inolvidables esculturas de la francesa Camille Claudel.

Esta aparente incompatibilidad es la que magistralmente nos muestra la visita de Barradas al taller de Robles, alrededor de las letras del puertorriqueño maestro grabador Lorenzo Homar, que inspiran a la artista y cuyo tema es lo que provoca esta visita, ya que Barradas también ha tenido interés por la tipografía de Homar². Dice Barradas sobre la letra, como si hablara de piedra:

Su ojo descubrió el movimiento y la solidez que definitivamente podemos hallar en las letras del maestro, pero, sin así decirlo, ella misma, al apropiarse de esas grafías, al fragmentarlas y transformarlas, le añaden otro movimiento y otra solidez, los suyos, los propios, los nuevos.

Estos encuentros que son frutos de las visitas al taller, y no desde la observación solitaria de la exhibición ya montada, se acercan a lo que pretende Robles: recrear en el espectador ante la exhibición de piedras tal cual las encontró en el camino, sin hacer sobre ellas trabajo de escultura: ellas por si solas, cambiarán de forma y en su disposición artística, cobrarán sentido.

La Picapedrera es un performance de Robles presentado como parte de un Festival callejero llamado *Quiebre* (agosto, 2016), bajo el mando del artista del escenario Mickey Negrón. En esta acción en el casco de Río Piedras, Robles pasó 4 horas literalmente picando piedras con marrones de distintos tamaños, sola y con ayuda del público, junto a un letrero que leía “No a la Junta de Control Fiscal”. La piedra protagoniza de

² Según Barradas: “La puerta del taller de Robles se me abrió porque ella leyó por casualidad un texto mío donde comentaba un libro sobre el arte de la tipografía. Llegué al mismo por mi interés en la obra de Lorenzo Homar (1913-2004), artista apasionado por la letra, tanto la caligráfica como la tipográfica.”

algún modo su trabajo reciente de *Lito-grafía Sensorio* (2017) sin que uno pueda decir cabalmente que cuando hay un material más protagónico que los demás no están siendo igualmente representados en sus exhibiciones e instalaciones. En esta particular exhibición, la que preparaba cuando Barradas hace su vista al taller, hay dibujos y pinturas expuestos, por ejemplo, además de las piedras. Y la pintura en las creaciones escultóricas de Robles está siempre presente en sus usos del color y entendimiento de la potencialidad de la textura, como subraya Nelson Rivera, así sea en una reflexión de que la piedra es también madre del pigmento. Y los tonos que ella usa en esta ocasión: colores amarillentos y marrones, rojizos y tierra, entre otras relaciones naturales y fabricadas por la artista, picando la piedra.

Tejido

Sólo con su imagen del futuro producto, el homo faber es libre de producir y, frente al trabajo hecho por sus manos, es libre de destruir. (Arendt: 164)

Al hablar del universo de materiales al alcance de Elizabeth, propongo más que la materialidad de lo que usa, la capacidad de acción que cada uno le brinda. Uso la palabra tejido porque concibe ambas cosas: el textil o tela y la acción de tejer. En el caso de Robles, tejer o coser es descoser para rearmar. Elizabeth Robles conoce bien el mundo de la aguja, ya que su madre era costurera. Soraya Serra lo describe en su reflexión sobre *Puesto Afuera* (El Cuadrado Gris, 2015) en un ensayo titulado: *Coser pa'fuera*, donde le llama a la práctica de coser “pa fuera” – para otros.

Estos oficios de costura, baja, alta, cotidiana o del mundo del diseño de moda, remiten a oficios íntimamente ligados a la relación entre las mujeres y el textil tanto en Puerto Rico, como hoy día en las maquiladoras que regadas por el mundo son ejemplo de la cruel explotación de trabajadoras de la aguja. La tela también crea esculturas en las manos de la artista, para entre otras cosas denunciar esta relación entre las mujeres y la costura que tanto como ha sido en Puerto Rico ligada a la explotación, también provee libertad económica a otras. Dice Serra:

Con la acción de descocer/separar y el de cocer/reagrupar ocurre una renovación interna que comienza con entender la asociación entre las partes, desprendiéndose, eliminando, destruyendo lo que las ata unas con otras para poder mezclar y transformar creando nuevas conexiones y posibilidades. Al descocer estos trajes realizados muy posiblemente por mujeres tal vez explotadas u oprimidas en la industria textil, se revierte ese proceso, en cierto modo las libera eliminando la conexión previa. Elizabeth las descose y las enrolla como para tapar sus viejas costuras, sus viejas connotaciones de opresión. (80grados)

Robles además creó estas piezas de ropa usada, de su propia ropa y de ropa desechada por otros, creando así su materia prima de una comunidad de historias del hilo o que se hilan.

Esas múltiples capas de significación creativa, social y política, incluyeron un performance en las afueras de una sala de emergencia de Hato Rey, llamado “*Trote en furor*”, donde la artista se sentaba a deshilar ropa acompañada de un tendedero para poner las piezas de tela, durante 12 horas (ininterrumpidas). La poeta Irizelma Robles, testigo de este performance, le dedica unos versos en una reflexión titulada *Descosidas* (80grados, 2015), donde hilvana la acción de descoser con el pasar del tiempo y el ciclo de vida y muerte, entre otras reflexiones sobre los espectadores, la experiencia de verla y el acto en sí:

Miras largamente

Miras largamente
el hilo que llevas en la mano
para medir cuánto queda de la vida
mientras deshilvanas cuanto queda de la muerte.

Igualmente, Carmen Zeta, dramaturga y directora de teatro, dialoga con los performances de Elizabeth que se enfocan en el tejido, recalcando “La elocuencia del silencio” en un ensayo del mismo título. El silencio y la soledad, según Zeta, hacen de estos performances acciones políticas contundentes. Además de *Trote en Furor*, Zeta habla de *Halar del hilo* y *34 soles para Oscar*³, ambas acciones de larga duración, eco de resistencia, reclamando la libertad de nuestro preso político, quien luego de 34 años fue puesto en libertad en enero, 2017. Concluye su análisis diciendo:

Si para trabajar sus piezas en encáustica se rodea de cacerolas y fuego, en los performances recurre a la faena relacionada con el hilo y la aguja y, lejos de mantenerla en el lugar doméstico, oculto e íntimo que ha ocupado siempre... la pone afuera. Es en este “poner afuera” que reside la mayor subversión. Con paciencia y destreza de araña, Robles se encarga de tejer y destejer, de crear y destruir, de transformar y trastocar el mundo; de ofrecernos su arte, un arte empeñado en evocar, convocar y provocar. (Del silencio elocuente, *Visión Doble*, junio, 2015)

Poner afuera es además una acción valiente ante la expectativa del otro, como sucede en la exhibición que dialoga con estos performances.

En *Puesto Afuera* hay una pieza dedicada a la joven cantautora Ivania Zayas, quien fue vilmente arrollada por un conductor, cuando caminaba a su casa de noche. Se trata de un tapiz que tiene bolsillos con plumas, cabellos, trazos de la vida perdida y el homenaje a lo perdido. La tela es de organza transparente, pero la pieza es densa, de la misma

³ En *Halar del hilo* la artista tiene un paño bordado con el nombre Oscar López Rivera a relieve y su acción consta de deshilar el paño. En *34 soles para Oscar*, puso 34 soles bordado por ello en la verja del Tribunal Federal, significando los 34 años que llevaba López Rivera en la cárcel. Y donde además el paño donde bordó el nombre de Oscar tenía las dimensiones de la celda donde paso 12 años en solitaria.

densidad de la muerte incomprensible de la víctima de un azar cruel, una injusta combinación del hecho y los comentarios que sucedieron el evento, donde el teniente que hizo las declaraciones a la prensa sobre el caso, “acusaba” a la joven de haber causado su muerte por estar “caminando de noche sola” (febrero, 2015). Tejer, bordar, coser sirve de metáfora de la historia⁴, la narración que se hila de fragmentos. La pieza recoge los trazos de lo que significó para la comunidad la muerte de Ivania, las transeúntes y el desfasado discurso del hombre sobre el lugar de la mujer.

Escritura

En el caso de las obras de arte, la reificación es más que simple transformación; es transfiguración, verdadera metamorfosis en la que ocurre como si el curso de la naturaleza que desea que todo el fuego se reduzca a cenizas quede invertido e incluso el polvo se convierta en llamas. (Arendt: 186)

La escritura está implícita, como la pintura, en el proceso creativo de Robles. La acción de crear libros acompaña varias exhibiciones de Robles. También tiene dos poemarios y en esta colección de *Sinestesias* publica Canales en Tránsito (2016). Apalabrar tiene unas dimensiones de articulación de dolor y pérdida que ocupan otros imaginarios ante la creación, como apunta Arendt: “En cualquier caso, el dolor y la concomitante experiencia de liberarse de él son las únicas experiencias sensoriales tan independientes del mundo que no tienen la experiencia de ningún objeto mundano” (p. 124).

Las reflexiones sobre la escritura de Robles especialmente en *Rescoldo Arrebol* que hace Oscar Dávila, apuntan a este lugar fuera del lenguaje en cuanto a la sensación de abismo o pérdida en el trabajo poético de Robles desde sus primeras publicaciones. Pero también, resalta el filósofo Dávila, quien también fuese lector de la tesis de maestría de Elizabeth, que el diálogo inter-artístico permite ir más allá de una sola sensación dolorosa y más bien es una apertura a lo indescifrable, precisamente donde puede nacer la creatividad el encuentro entre la lectora y la poeta-escultora-pintora y el alivio al dolor:

Elizabeth Robles no es una poeta/artista fácil. No lo fue en su tesis de maestría, nuestro primer encuentro, ni lo es en **Rescoldo Arrebol**, la instancia que nos vuelve a reunir. Sin embargo, si somos de los que queremos llegar a intimar con nuestro centro más profundo para desde allí abrir nuevas rutas para la pasión y la reflexión, busque, observe, lea y reflexione: no se arrepentirán. (80grados)

Dávila coincide con los demás interlocutores de Robles aquí citados, en que hay una invitación a la acción para ser lectores del arte creado por Robles en sus múltiples lenguajes. Dice la artista en *Canales de Tránsito*: “Estoy viva – nadie lo puede resolver.”

⁴ La tela de Penélope, el mito de Aracne, el rol del tejido en la creación comunitaria de múltiples etnias, entre tantas otras metáforas del hilo y el acto de tejer en la cultura.

Caminata

Incluso si el origen histórico del arte fuera de carácter exclusivamente religioso o mitológico, el hecho es que el arte ha sobrevivido de manera gloriosa a su separación de la religión, de la magia y del mito. (Arendt: 184)

La acción misma de caminar describe el proceso creación de Elizabeth Robles y define su práctica. Recorre su barrio, la ciudad, el campo, la playa, el camino que se le presente, de noche y de día. “Caminar es excavar.” “Hacer arte es excavar.” Estas son máximas esenciales de Robles.” (Barradas). Cuando camina encuentra, recoge, acumula. Las capas son después cubiertas de cera, rodeadas de piedra, hilachas para hacer tejidos, las experiencias se convierten en palabras, aunque sean las palabras para decir que la palabra no es suficiente.

Michel De Certeau, como parte de sus teorías del *Les Arts du Faire* (El arte de hacer), incluye un análisis de caminar en la ciudad, como práctica. Habla específicamente de las funciones enunciativas de “ser peatón:

It is a process of appropriation of the topographical system on the part of the pedestrian (just as the speaker appropriates and takes on the language; it is a spatial acting-out of the place (just as the speech act is an acoustic acting out of the language; and it implies relations among differentiated positions, that is, among pragmatic contracts in the form of movements (just as verbal enunciation is an allocution,” “posits another opposite” the speaker and puts contract between interlocutors into action). It thus seems possible to give a preliminary definition of walking as a space of enunciation. (*The practice of everyday Life*: 98)

Este caminar como acto enunciador y luego como escritura, se manifiesta a través de una lexografía de objetos encontrados que componen los vocablos de Robles.

La Equilibrista (obra de tres superficies: piso, tope de mesa, aire-piezas ensambladas con cuerda y maderas, de 15’ (largo) x 7’ (ancho) x 9’ 2” (el largo y ancho son aproximados y varían según el espacio expositivo) es una instalación a escala humana de la reproducción del taller de Robles. El taller se representa además con su exterior, que es otro taller en sí mismo: el patio donde ella cultiva y mantiene una composta viva con lombrices rojas y experimentos con distintas plantas medicinales. Aquí se hila la historia enterrada que ha ido hilvanando y que quiere mostrar como un todo. Percibo que en esta instalación, hay un cuento que quiere ser contado, en prosa. Unos capítulos que reúnen los materiales previos y que hablan de pertenencia de lugar – de relación.

Su propuesta juega con un guiño a la pintura de Paul Klee con título “El equilibrista, donde prevalece el “papel mediador entre lo visible y lo invisible” (José Jimenez, <https://www.march.es/conferencias/anteriores>). Robles menciona esta referencia para hablar de su propia intención en su pieza – que ella llama un “desafío”. Primero, el desafío a la gravedad que presupone la cuerda floja del equilibrista y segundo como un

balance entre estas capas del aire al suelo del taller y al subsuelo. Explica Robles en sus notas conceptuales:

El arte no solo se arriesga, trastoca la vida porque desafía el orden imperante. Algo está pasando cuando desafío el aparente equilibrio adquirido, algo solo es posible en el camino que conduce a estar en otro lado, al otro lado, un paso más, al otro lado; en el desafío de dar un paso adelante la transformación está ocurriendo.

La equilibrista de Robles, presenta su homenaje al proceso artístico, evocando a Klee, pero también en un retrato personal de su búsqueda, proceso y vida.

Si bien es verdad que parte de sus procesos anteriores ha sido la investigación de los límites de los materiales y la ejecución de sus ideas en performance o en palabra escrita, en esta instalación quiere concentrarse en el desafío que esto le supone. Es decir, es un retrato “real” de su espacio, con las capas expuestas – la radiografía. Aquí uno no puede dejar de pensar en las notas de campo de los científicos exploradores de la Ilustración como Alexander von Humboldt, quienes combinaban desafío con consciencia ambiental y una filosofía de la relación del ser humano y la naturaleza. Dice una reciente publicación sobre el científico, que: “He saw the earth as one great living organism where everything was connected, conceiving a bold new vision of nature that still influences the way that we understand the natural world.” (Wulf: 2) Elizabeth Robles ha acompañado varias exhibiciones de notas de campo sobre sus exploraciones, precisamente en un empeño muy serio de dar fe de la observación y subsiguiente transformación-transfiguración a la obra de arte. También para dar fe de sus caminatas como enunciaciones, como describe De Certeau, siempre transcribiendo su realidad en objetos, poemas y escenarios.

Acción

El lapso de vida del hombre en su carrera hacia la muerte llevaría inevitablemente a todo lo humano a la ruina y destrucción si no fuera por la facultad de interrumpirlo y comenzar algo nuevo, facultad que es inherente a la acción a manera de recordatorio siempre presente de los hombres, aunque han de morir, no han nacido para eso, sino para comenzar. (Arendt: 265)

Robles está acercándose a una nueva forma de enunciar su práctica. Termino esta reflexión a la vez que la artista anuncia su apertura del garaje en su casa como “Franja Roja” (Agosto, 2017). *La equilibrista* fue el ensayo de transportar el taller afuera – práctica que ya comenzaba en *Puesto Afuera* para el tema y el material del tejido. Los límites del performance como sus acciones cotidianas de transeúnte-peatón le han dado más tela todavía para cortar, más piedra que picar y más cera que calentar.

Ahora la invitación es de viaje a la semilla – que el ser espectador de la acción, u obra, no represente un encuentro casual o solitario, como en el museo o espacio cultural, sino que se cite con la obra, en el espacio íntimo y con la artista. No se eludirán las miradas

y las palabras, cohabitarán con su acción, el lenguaje y la práctica en la Franja Roja. Esta frontera espacial nueva para esta artista, sirve de modelo para una etapa aun desconocida en la isla que habitamos, que poco a poco quizás sea despojada de sus instituciones culturales y que necesita de sus artistas para expresar lo que nos acontece. La oportunidad que nos brindará Robles en su nuevo proyecto dentro de su casa-taller puede amasar una comunidad lista para enfrentar la conversación que precede la acción de transformación que aspiramos.

REFERENCIAS

- Alberty, Esteban (2015). Elizabeth Robles: buitre. *80grados*, 20 de noviembre. www.80grados.net
- Arendt, Hannah (1993). *La condición humana*. Barcelona: Ediciones Paidós.
- Barradas, Efraín (2017). Visita al taller de la artista: la Lito-Grafía de Elizabeth Robles. *80grados*, 3 de marzo. www.80grados.net
- Dávila del Valle, Oscar G. (2015). Elizabeth Robles y las sustancias inapresables en su Rescoldo arbol. *80grados*, 11 de diciembre. www.80grados.net
- De Certeau, Michel (1988). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Noriega, Rebecca (2013). Y es que estamos vivos. *80grados*, 15 de noviembre. www.80grados.net
- Rivera, Nelson (2016). *Hinca por ahí: escritos sobre las artes y asuntos limítrofes*. San Juan: Ediciones Callejón.
- Robles, Elizabeth (2016). *Canales en tránsito*, publicación de la artista.
- Robles, Irizelma (2015). Descosidas. *80grados*, 13 de febrero. www.80grados.net
- Sontag, Susan (1966). *Against interpretation and other essays*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Wulf, Andrea (2015). *The invention of nature: Alexander Von Humboldt's new world*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Zeta, Carmen (2015). Del silencio elocuente. *Visión Doble*, 15 de junio. www.vision-doble.net

TOWARD A GENDERED UNDERSTANDING OF CALYPSO MUSIC

MEAGAN SYLVESTER

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, ST. AUGUSTINE

This article constitutes an initial study of the phenomenon of gendering in the Calypso music of Trinidad in relation to issues of gendered performance, femininity and music, perception of gendering and sex attribution. The lyrics of the Calypsonian are often used to carry signifiers which require that both performer and listener share a common vocabulary. Adorno (1998: 3) states that “music is permeated through with intentionality, similar to language” Considerable research has been devoted to the relationship between the intentions behind lyrics and the meanings attributed to them by listeners (Behrens & Green, 1993; Gabrielsson & Juslin, 1996; Gabrielsson & Lindstrom, 2010; Juslin & Laukka, 2003; Juslin & Timmers, 2010; Kaminska & Woolf, 2000; Quinto et al., 2014; Thompson & Robitaille, 1992; Monelle, 2000; Christensen, 1995; Meyer, 1968). While several scholars have explored gendering in Western music, this study focuses on a non-Western musical genre, Calypso.

Communication through music is a critical component of the stage performance of the Calypsonian. Displayed in the Calypso art form are sounds, lyrics, the nature of the performance space, the stage performance, and the interplay between performer and listener. All of these contribute to the ways in which communication is realised through music. I contend that in the case of Calypso music, the cognitive and emotional meaning of each of these elements is reflected in the inter-relationship between the audience/listener and performer. In Calypso music, the African inspired call and response technique is built into lyrical composition, which promotes a process of co-creation of meaning between performer and audience, which to some extent distinguishes it from Western traditions, where the composer typically is seen as having a monopoly on meaning and the listener is positioned as a passive consumer of pre-packaged meaning as a commodity.

The links between musical meaning and society are well established (Olsson, 2007: 989; DeNora, 1995; Citron 1993: 120), and, in the case of Calypso, this connection between society and music is both foregrounded and explicit. Another aspect of Calypso music that links it to its African roots and differentiates it to some extent from Western

music is its critical focus on the socio-political realities of the place and time in which it is performed.

Calypso music is widely considered to be the mouthpiece of the people and their view on the political and social realities of Trinidad and Tobago. Calypso music from the 1930s to the present constitutes nothing less than the social political history of the nation as seen in the main, through the eyes of the general Afro-Trinidadian population, rather than through the eyes of the symbolic elites who have hijacked the process of recording history in Western societies, and increasingly are commandeering this process in most of the societies that have been colonised by the West. This is dramatically illustrated by the fact that the Calypso art form achieves full representation at both the junior and senior levels of competition and it is the only art form which has a performers' union in the form of the Trinbagonian Unified Calypsonians Organisation (TUCO) which advocates on behalf of Calypsonians across both islands.

The socio-political and economic conditions which gave rise to Calypso have been well researched (Davies, 1994; Liverpool, 1998 and 2001). Guilbault (2007) demonstrates how "from the outset, Calypso's sounds have been hybrid products enmeshed in colonial cultural politics" and how "musical tours, recordings, migration, new instrumental technologies and audiences from outside Trinidad have spurred the continual transformation of Calypso" (p. 22). Using Guilbault's analysis as a catalyst, the present work focuses on issues of identity, ethnicity, race and, especially, gender, in Calypso.

Calypso music has traditionally been created and performed as an integral part of the annual Carnival festivities in Trinidad. Davies (1994), Liverpool (2001) and Sofo (2014). The theorist Sofo discusses the linkages between the culture of Trinidad, the event of Carnival and identity of the people.

The Carnival of Trinidad is a performative ritual of cultural resistance and awakening, claiming a space and celebrating freedom from any kind of oppression. The history of this ritual is strictly connected to the process of cultural decolonisation and political independence of the Caribbean country from the mother land; it is in Carnival and for Carnival that Trinidadians have successfully fought colonialism to gain their freedom. (p. 17)

Carnival and its accompanying Calypso music are inextricably interwoven and together they are an integral part of the identity of the Afro-Trinidadian. Given the very diverse demographic structure of Trinidad and Tobago as a twin island republic, however, the history and the practice of Carnival should be considered to be a totalising representation of national culture.

Theorists have proposed that social meanings are saturated by gendered perspectives and by extension so too are musical meanings (Guck, 1994; Treitler, 2011; Taylor,

2012; Maus, 1993; Brett et al., 2006; Shepherd, 1991). The Calypso art form was traditionally Afro-Caribbean male dominant with few spaces for women until the mid-1970s. The themes of Calypsos sung by women since that time have tended to be more centred on issues which affect women such as femininity, motherhood, divorce, domestic abuse, intimate partner violence and parenting. This type of Calypso music also appears to be gendered differently than the Calypso typically sung by males in its lyrics, stage performance, nuanced vocal intonation, bodily expression and emotive delivery. The question can therefore be asked as to what extent is there an identifiable “woman's voice” in Calypso composition, a quality of woman-composer-speak, “a specifically female style in music” We may also ask such questions as: What differences can be discerned by listeners between Calypso composed by women and Calypso composed by men? Are there discernible distinctions between man-composer-speak versus woman-composer-speak? Are there differences in the impact on the listener of female Calypsonian stage performance as opposed to male Calypsonian stage performance? To help answer these questions, I propose a critical discourse analysis of several songs by female Calypsonians that incorporate themes of female resistance, including compositions such as the following:

Singing Francine: “Run away” which deals with domestic violence/intimate partner violence (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mz5xRuB6vk4n>)

Singing Sandra: “Die with my dignity” which delves into the issue of sexual harassment on the job (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_PgUvEzNGA)

Calypso Rose: “Abatina” which addresses issues of domestic violence/intimate partner abuse (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vNcGaYfa0o>)

Denyse Plummer: “Woman is boss” which asserts female identity and empowerment (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afoT4KedrU4>)

To complement the discourse analysis described above, I also propose a to conduct a study of music industry captains, radio program producers, DJs and fans who have been part of the Calypso milieu over the last 30 years. In this regard, I have carried out a preliminary pilot survey using a quantitative sample of 20 male and 20 female members of this target population. Qualitatively, I interviewed members individually and conducted focus groups to ensure that the collected information was verifiable. The main interview questions posed were the following:

1. Is either the sex or gender of a Calypso songwriter evident from the lyrical content of a composition?
2. Do the themes/topics in a composition, or their organization communicate information relating to sex or gender?
3. If music is perceived by listeners as being gendered, is that gendering influenced by the sex or gender of the listener?

The overwhelming opinion of the respondents was that the themes/topics in a lyrical composition of a song reveal information about issues related to sex or gender. Mention was made as to the gendered nature of the theme itself, performance dress on stage related to the theme, and vocal and tonal stress related the theme. In spite of this, the respondents generally felt that the sex or gender of a Calypso songwriter cannot be determined from the lyrical content of their composition and that there are no hidden codes or embedded lyrics used by Calypso songwriters that might be understood as hidden signifiers of gender. Instead, respondents attributed the main responsibility for the gendering of Calypso on the audience. They contended that listeners' general impressions related to gendering are influenced by how they respond to the music at a subliminal level, imposing stereotypical perspectives concerning gender on to the performer by the listener which are linked to socially normative schemata of masculinity or femininity. From the findings we might conclude, as does Bem (1987) that masculinity and femininity exist primarily in the mind of the perceiver and in the social structures and discourses that shape that mind.

REFERENCES

- Adorno, Theodor W. (1998). Music and language: a fragment. In *Quasi una fantasia: essays on modern music* (Trans. Rodney Livingstone) (pp. 1-6). London: Verso Classics.
- Behrens, Gene Ann & Samuel B. Green (1993). The ability to identify emotional content of solo improvisations performed vocally and on three different instruments. *Psychology of Music*, 21, 1, 20-33.
- Bem, Sandra L. (1987). Masculinity and femininity exist only in the mind of the perceiver. In June Machover Reinisch, Leonard A. Rosenblum & Sephanie A. Sanders (Eds.), *Masculinity/femininity: basic perspectives* (pp. 290-304). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brett, Philip, Elizabeth Wood & Gary Thomas (2006, [1994]). *Queering the pitch: the new gay and lesbian musicology*. New York: Routledge.
- Christensen, Otto M. (1995). Interpretation and meaning in music. In Eero Tarasti (Ed.), *Musical significations: essays in the semiotic theory and analysis of music* (pp. 81-90). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Citron, Marcia J. (1993). *Gender and the musical canon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Davies, Stephen (1994). *Musical meaning and expression*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- DeNora, Tia (1995). The musical composition of social reality? Music, action and reflexivity. *The Sociological Review*, 43, 2, 295-315.

- Gabrielsson, Alf & Patrik N. Juslin (1996). Emotional expression in music performance: between the performer's intention and the listener's experience. *Psychology of Music*, 24, 1, 68-91.
- Gabrielsson, Alf & Erik Lindstrom (2010). The role of structure in the musical expression of emotion. In Patrik N. Juslin & John Sloboda (Eds.), *Handbook of music and emotion* (pp. 367-400). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Guck, Marion A. (1994). A woman's (theoretical) work. *Perspectives of New Music*, 32, 1, 28-43.
- Guilbault, Jocelyne (2007). *Governing sound: the cultural politics of Trinidad's carnival musics*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Juslin, Patrik N. (2001). Communicating emotion in music performance: a review and a theoretical framework. In Patrik N. Juslin & John Sloboda (Eds.), *Handbook of music and emotion: theory, research, applications* (pp. 309-340). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Juslin, Patrik N. & Petri Laukka (2003). Communication of emotions in vocal expression and music performance: different channels, same code? *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 5, 770-814.
- Juslin, Patrik N. & Renee Timmers (2010). Expression and communication of emotion in music performance. In Patrik N. Juslin & John Sloboda (Eds.), *Handbook of music and emotion: theory, research, applications* (pp. 453-492). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kaminska, Zofia & Jennifer Woolf (2000). Melodic line and emotion: Cooke's theory revisited. *Psychology of Music*, 28, 2, 133-153.
- Liverpool, Hollis (1998). Origins of rituals and customs in the Trinidad Carnival: African or European? *TDR/The Drama Review*, 42, 3, 24-37.
- Liverpool, Hollis (2001). *Rituals of power and rebellion: the carnival tradition in Trinidad and Tobago, 1763-1962*. Chicago/Trinidad and Tobago: Research Associates School Times/Frontline Distribution.
- Maus, Fred E. (1993). Masculine discourse in music theory. *Perspectives of New Music*, 31, 2, 264-293.
- Meyer, Leonard B. (1968, [1956]). *Emotion and meaning in music*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Monelle, Raymond (1995). Music and semantics. In Eero Tarasti (Ed.), *Musical significations: essays in the semiotic theory and analysis of music* (pp. 91-108). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Monelle, Raymond (2000). *The sense of music: semiotic essays*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Olsson, Bengt (2007). Social issues in music education. In Liora Bresler (Ed.), *International handbook of research in arts education* (pp. 989-1002). Stockholm: Springer.

- Quinto, Lena, William F. Thompson & Alan Taylor (2014). The contributions of compositional structure and performance expression to the communication of emotion in music. *Psychology of Music*, 42, 4, 503-524.
- Shepherd, John (1991). *Music as social text*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Sofo, Giuseppe (2009). *Jouvay of a culture: risveglio e resistenza culturale nel teatro di carnevale a Trinidad*. Master's thesis, Università di Bologna.
- Sofo, Giuseppe (2013). Forged from the love of liberty: popular music, resistance and identity in Trinidad and Tobago's carnival. *Gli Spazi della Musica*, 2, 1, 24-32.
- Sofo, Giuseppe (2014). Carnival, memory and identity. *Культура/Culture*, 4, 6, 17-24.
- Taylor, Jodie (2012). Taking it in the ear: on musico-sexual synergies and the (queer) possibility that music is sex. *Continuum*, 26, 4, 603-614.
- Thompson, William F. & Brent Robitaille (1992). Can composers express emotion through music? *Empirical Studies of the Arts*, 10, 1, 79-89.
- Treidler, Leo (2011). *Reflections on musical meaning and its representations*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

CONTRASTING FILM TECHNIQUES IN MARIA GOVAN'S *RAIN* AND ERNESTO DARANAS' *CONDUCTA*

NICOLE DÍAZ MORELL
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO

The Caribbean film industry has been growing and people are noticing. Even though they share common themes, each country within the Caribbean has its own filming style and techniques. Although the filming industry has been growing it is difficult to access these types of movies versus their counterparts in Hollywood. This essay aims to study two films, one from Cuba and the other from the Bahamas, in order to compare and contrast the filming techniques used by Cuban director Ernesto Daranas and Bahamian director Maria Govan. Cuba has devoted itself to getting its films viewed. The Cuban film trajectory dating from the nineteen-nineties to the most recent productions have included topics interpreted through various representational discourses based on the history of Cuba. In contrast, in the Bahamas it is more difficult not only to make films but also to get the movies out to the public. In the past it was more difficult to make films because of their high cost but today it is less expensive. Hollywood has influenced the work of Bahamian films because of the many movies filmed in the Bahamas.

Cuban and Bahamian films deploy different styles, story lines and techniques. Ernesto Daranas' *Conducta* focuses on the story of young Chala, whose life circumstances make him grow up before his time, and Carmela his teacher, whose family migrates from Cuba leaving a void in her life, and whose age, experience and views become factors that motivate the school to attempt to force her to retire. Maria Govan's *Rain* opens with the tragedy Rain experiences on Ragged Island. After losing her grandmother, she has to move to Nassau with her birth mother who is a drug addict and she must face the hardships that come from moving from the country to the city.

Rain, directed by Maria Govan, was released in 2008 and has won eight different awards since, including best film and best new director at the Pan Africa Film Festival. The original language of the film is English and its run time is 93 minutes. Rain, played by Renel Brown, has to go through many life changes in a short period of time and in the process she discovers not only a new kind of life but also herself. Rain is an innocent girl who has been shielded from the harsh realities of living in the Bahamas, but after getting on a boat in order to find the mother who abandoned her, she confronts the harsh reality of the slums and the types of lives that the different characters are experiencing.

Rain tries to fit in at her new school where she excels in running, and finds support in characters like Ms. Adams, played by CCH Pounder, as well as Magdalene, played by Shervante Nixon. Rain was born during a storm (the reason for her name) and the grandmother who raises her dies during a storm. Rain in the Bahamas is a symbol of uncertainty. Rain can be a life saver but it can also, when it arrives as a storm, destroy anything in its path.

Govan presents the Nassau that the real community experiences, not the Atlantis hotel resort. Atlantis is presented as a glimpse in the background of one shot which marks the difference between what the Nassau tourist sees and the real Nassau. This is the Nassau of suburbs and ghettos, where hardships are ignored by those who accumulate ever more wealth and political power. Ms. Adams lives in a comfortable house with her lesbian partner but spends her life battling the prejudice that she faces on the island because of her sexual orientation. Govan's strong point is that she not only focuses on a narrative that tells a story that is a reality to the Bahamian community, but also focuses on the different social classes that live there. Govan presents poverty as a negative circumstance that people go through and overcome through determination and dignity.

The film uses different kinds of shooting techniques such as static shots which are used to focus on the character of Rain, giving her the audience's full attention. Govan uses but does not abuse close up shots in order to capture the character's emotions in specific scenes such as the grandmother writing a fateful letter and the mother realizing she needs to change. She also uses full shots to portray the community and the environment that is surrounding the characters. Govan uses cold colors like blue and white which could represent the colors of the Bahamian flag, or could suggest the storm that is brewing in Rain's life. Another prominent color in the film is yellow which could be seen as a warmer color. This is observed in scenes where Rain starts to change her negative circumstances into positive ones.

Each scene's color seems to be carefully chosen. For example, when the preacher tries to rape Rain the colors are washed out but there is a depressing blue light in the house that is in the background. Once Rain meets Ms. Adams and starts attending school the colors in the film start to become more vivid. This symbolizes the changes in Rain's life. Water can be seen a lot at the beginning of the film but once Rain moves to Nassau the film focuses more on the land instead of the sea. The aptly named Graveyard slum where Rain lives is dried up and in the words of the characters this is the place where once you arrive, you never leave. The sea is again in the background when Rain starts to practice for her big race. The sea and running become Rain's escape, what makes her feel free. In one of the final scenes of the film, Rain is walking back to the sea, which indicates that she has found some sort of freedom. Running gives her hope, she wants to achieve a better life and uses running and training as a means to achieve this.

In the 1960s, Cuba organized a modest film industry based in its cultural ideals and responding to the technical requirements of the filmmaking style of the new socialist system. The Cuban Institute of Cinematographic Art and Industry (ICAIC) manages the country's film production, which rejects clichés and other mechanical concepts that have been imposed on the creative process, thus avoiding predictability. Cuban filmmakers use their films to criticize and discuss topics which are normally taboo in the country and incorporate strong criticism, aimed not only at their own country but also at the United States. Documentaries have been favored over fiction because of economic and ideological factors, but there is increasing awareness that fictional narratives can be very powerful in depicting social realities. In an article titled *Revolutionary Cuban cinema* (1978), Julianne Burton writes that “this growth in awareness and social sensitivity is largely responsible for the intense dialectic between historical circumstance and individual response, which informs fictional as well as documentary production in post-revolutionary Cuban cinema” (p. 19). In his film *Conducta*, Ernesto Daranas uses some of the sophisticated techniques developed over the past decades in Cuban cinema to include the viewers, playing with their reality and emotions as well as projecting a faithful account of the realities of Cuban society.

Conducta was released in 2014 and has won 11 different awards, including best film, best director, and best actress in the Latin American section of the Malaga Spanish Film Festival and the Havana Star Prize for best film at the 15th Havana Film Festival in New York. *Conducta* was also selected by the commission of the Cuban Film Institute to be Cuba's official submission for both the Academy Awards in the United States and Spain's Goya Awards, in which it was nominated for Best Latin American Film. The original language of the film is Spanish and its run time is 108 minutes. Daranas not only directs the movie but also wrote the screen play. The film's producers include Isabel Prendes, Joel Ortega, Danilo Leon and Adriana Moya.

In the film, we encounter the sad reality that confronts not only the people of 21st century Cuba but those of the rest of the world as well. The film casts a critical glance at the daily lives of the inhabitants of Havana, in part by allowing the public to interact with and within the film as if it was talking directly about them. In an interview for *TV Cubana*, Daranas states that *Conducta* looks at the risks children are exposed to, including social and economic conditions which affect their lives in their families and at school. Even though Daranas says that the movie is not based on problems facing the Cuban educational system the viewer can interpret this as an element of social criticism within the film. When asked where the idea came from, Daranas explains that:

We conceived this project as a film-workshop for a group of students of the Faculty of Audiovisual Media of ISA. They were an active part of this work. They chose the film's subject matter, the parallel investigation for the script and the selection of the children that would appear in the film. *Conducta* is a result of that work, summed up with a few personal concerns. What type of concerns?

After a quarter of a century in crisis, the changes that were finally happening in our society and economy have not achieved the desired impact expected in our more humble sectors. What we have seen is what everyone has heard of; the crisis in moral values without getting a deeper explanation of their causes. Kids are the biggest target of those problems. (TV Cubana, 2014) ¹

Ernesto Daranas' *Conducta* tells the story of Chala, played by Armando Valdes Freire, who supports his alcoholic/drug addict mother by training fighting dogs as well as breeding pigeons, while establishing a relationship with his teacher who understands and supports him. He is sent to a school for children with behavioral problems. Chala is an eleven year old that has had to learn to survive and become an adult instead of just living like a child without worries. He doesn't know who his real father is, which is a constant preoccupation, because the rest of the children, no matter what kind of circumstances they face, know who both their parents are. Chala has a special relationship with Carmela his teacher, who becomes like a grandmother figure in his life. Carmela provides Chala with order, respect, knowledge and understanding. She cares for him when no one else is present in his life.

Carmela, played by Alina Rodriguez, suffers a heart attack when her family migrates from Cuba in order to find a better life. This has made her stay at home for a few weeks until she recuperates and is temporarily replaced by young Marta. Carmela takes care of her students, giving special attention to those who need it the most. She provides love and understanding to the children, which they are not receiving at home. She also defends these children when the system seeks to punish them. Carmela is seen as a rebellious teacher who is old and needs to retire because she is causing too many problems in her school. Carmela makes rebellious comments throughout the film. When defending Chala against the school inspector's decision to send him to reform school, for example, she states that:

Carmela: Sending him to a reform school will be another mark against him in life. It alienates him, whether we like it or not. I was his mother's teacher, I've been his teacher for the last three years, I know him better than any of you.

Inspector: But we can't begin such a serious process and then back down three weeks later.

Carmela: You're thinking about what it will do to your reputation. I'm thinking about what it will do to the boy's reputation

Inspector: Carmela, you know you are held in great esteem, but there's been a series of problems in your classroom. You have to realize that we can't allow it.

Carmela: Excuse me, but you don't allow anything in my classroom. I started teaching here before you were born.

¹ Entrevista con Ernesto Daranas, realizador de TV y Cine . Entre tu y yo. Televisión Cubana (2014), translated by Nicole Diaz Morell

Inspector: Perhaps that's too long.

Carmela: Not as long as the leaders of this country. Do you think that's too long?

The scene where Carmela slaps Chala demonstrates both her concern for him and her desire to save him. Carmela is a symbol of hope to Chala who by the end of the film fights to do the right things and to make Carmela proud.

Marta, played by Miriel Cejas, lacks real classroom experience and reveals to the viewer truths about the system's intolerance and unconditional attachment to formal and bureaucratic rules, while ignoring the present reality of the students who come from broken homes. Marta does not see the hardships the children are facing and is constantly opposing Carmela's ideals and methods. She eventually starts to pay attention to her surroundings and the consequences of others' actions on the lives of the children, especially Yeni, who gets deported from Cuba. Yeni, played by Amaly Junco, is a Palestinian girl who lives in a hut near the train tracks with her father who is unable to get Cuban citizenship. Yeni is Chala's sweetheart and becomes Chala's conscience, reminding him of how bad actions affect not only one's own but also other people's lives. Yeni is the smartest student in her class but is suffering because the Cuban police are always following her father and making him pay bribes in order to avoid being deported. Yeni seems to always have a shining light on her that other characters do not have.

Daranas includes voice-over techniques which give insight to the thoughts of Carmela. Most of the camera shots used throughout the film are medium shots and close-up shots. The movie treats the characters with remarkable depth which promotes intimacy with the characters thus making the viewer feel the intensity of each character and each situation they are going through. Besides the close-up shots the film also employs handheld shots which make the story seem more real to the viewer and making them feel part of the film's story.

All the scenes recorded in open places have an orange tone and the characters are also often depicted as sweating, all of which suggests heat, both in terms of temperature as well as in terms of extreme tension and pressure. The color red, in contrast to the green and yellow which are the other two vivid colors inside Carmela's classroom, has a marked significance within the movie. The school uniforms include a red scarf, even though Chala in his rebelliousness rarely wears it, and the girls' uniforms are also red. In her home, Carmela lights a candle to Saint Barbara who is also the representation of Shango, the Yoruba warrior deity in the Santeria tradition which Carmela says she believes in. There are red flowers placed next to the saint's statue which is one of the elements used when worshipping this figure in both Catholic and Santeria belief systems. The hand fan Chala gives Yeni is also red.

The final scene of the film has an open ending. The future is uncertain because that is the reality of these characters, their lives can go in many different directions depending on their realities and life choices. The characters may know where they come from but

have no idea where they are going, because their social surroundings may not necessarily provide them the means to achieve their dreams or goals. In this scene, Carmela is walking and Chala is walking behind her. When he sees her, he calls to her after she has crossed the road. Carmela turns to look at Chala and smiles at him, leaving us to interpret the film in whichever way we wish, in a way that makes it easy for all of us to find something that we can all relate to.

Both films deliver a very similar message using similar themes, but in many instances *Conducta* is more subtle and complex than *Rain*. For example, in *Conducta* there is a scene where we can hear a song playing in the background, a poem set to music by an unknown author written to honor la Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre, the protector of children. In *Conducta*, Chala's mother's prostitution is only hinted at, while in *Rain* the viewer witnesses Rain's mother Glory actually prostituting herself. Faith and religion are important in both films as they are in Caribbean society. Even though they have different religious beliefs, Carmela and Glory both have figurines of their patron saints in their houses.

Both Carmela and Ms. Adams are rebellious teachers who challenge authority to fight for their students' well-being, becoming their guardians when their mothers are taken to rehab, ensuring that Chala keeps going to school and Rain makes it to her competition. Both teachers break social norms of what is expected of a teacher and each has painful experiences that have perhaps given them cause to rebel. Ms. Adams' sexuality has destroyed her relationship with her father, and Carmela's family has abandoned her. Both films have open endings. The viewer never finds out if Chala's or Rain's mothers have committed to never using drugs again, or if Rain has won the competition or if Chala has avoided reform school or even if Carmela was fired. The films do not attempt to provide a solution, because the problems that face too many young people in the Caribbean and the rest of the world also remain unresolved. People usually think that the countries of the so-called 'British' and 'Spanish' Caribbean are worlds apart. Even though many differences exist, life for young people across the Caribbean is more similar than people want to admit. Both Govan and Daranas demonstrate that even though their styles are somewhat divergent, common Caribbean themes such as the struggles of marginalized youth, socio-economic problems, addiction, broken families, and religious devotion, provide common threads that draw both films together as testimonies to what is happening throughout the Caribbean. And both these films do so in such a powerful way that Caribbean viewers can readily feel that either of these stories could be a page from their own lives.

REFERENCES

- Burton, Julianne (1978). Revolutionary Cuban cinema. *Jump Cut*, 19, 17-20. Available at <http://www.ejumpcut.org/archive/onlinessays/JC19folder/CubanFilmIntro.html>
- Cumaná, Maria C. (2009). Cuban film and the burden of revolutionary representation. In Karen Dubinsky et al. (Eds.), *New world coming: the sixties and the shaping of global consciousness* (pp. 153-160). Toronto: Between the Lines.
- Conducta* (2014). Ministerio de Cultura; ICAIC. Film.
- Entrevista con Ernesto Daranas, realizador de TV y cine (2014). *Portal de la Televisión Cubana*. Available at <http://www.tvcubana.icrt.cu/seccion-entre-tu-y-yo/1096-entrevista-con-ernesto-daranas-realizador-de-tv-y-cine>
- Rain* (2010). Image Entertainment. DVD.

**TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY
OF LANGUAGE IN THE
GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND**

THE VISUAL AND VERBAL REPRESENTATIONS OF *MAMI WATA* BILLBOARDS IN GHANA

FRANCES S. RIVERA CORNIER
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO

Introduction

This article begins by exploring the concept of the image in reference to Barthes, who placed semiotics under the umbrella of linguistics, then proceeds to use selected tools and frameworks from various disciplines to perform an interdisciplinary-multimodal analysis of *Mami Wata* billboards in Ghana. Machin & Mayr (2012) see their multimodal approach to discourse as responding to an “increase in interest [by linguists and discourse analysts] in analyzing the way that meaning is communicated not just through language, but through visual language (Hodge & Kress, 1988; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Kress, 2010). Machin & Mayr explain how: “Many of the texts linguists analyze can also communicate through their visual features, which they had formerly been overlooking through their desire to understand language, which ... was problematic as much of the way meaning was communicated was being missed” (p. 1). This is important because this framework sees the image as not just a complement to ‘language’ but instead speaks of a language proper to the image, as messages may be conveyed through the image by itself, and this language proper to the image can also affect the meaning expressed by verbal text if both are shown together.

This article explores how the image of the West African mythical figure of *Mami Wata* is represented on the six billboards under study, which claim their space along the roads of coastal Ghana, and how these representations resonate with African Art practices of playing on concealing and revealing. The billboards employ rich imagery juxtaposed with an enigmatic verbal text and using a persuasive discourse based on secrecy. The accompanying verbal text reveals nothing about *Mami Wata* and yet it is there to lure passersby to her. The image and text are thus interdependent.

As for the literature on text and image, this article has made use of: Machin & Mayr (2012) *How to do critical discourse analysis: a multimodal introduction*, Kress & Van Leeuwen (1996) *Reading images: the grammar of visual design*; Bell (2001) “Content analysis of visual images” and Jewitt & Oyama (2001) “Visual meaning: a social semiotic approach”, from *Handbook of visual analysis*; and Scollon & Scollon (2003) *Discourses in place: language in the material world*. In reference to African art practices, this article has utilized: Jules-Rosette (1984), *The messages of tourist art: an African*

semiotic system in comparative perspective; Preston Blier (1988), *Words about words about icons: iconology and the study of African art*; Fabian (1996), *Remembering the present: painting and popular history in Zaire*; and Nooter (1993), *Secrecy: African art that conceals and reveals*. On the topic of English in Ghana, this article relies on: Owu-Ewie (2006), *The language policy of education in Ghana: a critical look at the English-only language policy of education*; *Ethnologue: languages of Africa and Europe*, 19th ed.; Edu-Buandoh & Otchere (2012) “*Speak English!*”: a prescription or choice of English as a lingua franca in Ghanaian schools; Obeng (1997) *An analysis of the linguistic situation in Ghana*; Dseagu (1996) *English in Ghana*; and Agbedor (1994) *English vs. Ghanaian languages: the sociocultural issues*. As for literature on Mami Wata, this article makes use of: Van Stipriaan (2003) *Watramama / Mami Wata: three centuries of creolization of a water spirit in West Africa, Suriname and Europe*; Wendl (2001) *Visions of modernity in Ghana: Mami Wata shrines, photo studios and horror films*; Drewal (1988) *Interpretation, invention, and re-presentation in the worship of Mami Wata*; and Drewal et.al. (2008) *Mami Wata: arts for water spirits in Africa and its diasporas*.

Semiology, image and text

De Saussure postulated the existence of semiology, proposing linguistics as a part of this general science of signs. Parting from this Saussurian view, Barthes (1977) states that it is instead semiology that constitutes a part of linguistics, the part that covers “the great signifying unities of discourse” (p. 11). Barthes also formulates the definition of semiology as one that has language at its core, stating, “It is true that objects, images and patterns of behavior can signify, and do so on a large scale, but never autonomously; every semiological system has its linguistic admixture. Where there is a visual substance, for example, the meaning is confirmed by being duplicated in a linguistic message” He further proposes that this occurs in the case of the cinema, advertising, comic strips, press photography, etc. (p. 10).

Barthes states, “[...] there exists a general category language/speech, which embraces all the systems of signs” (p. 25). Barthes then maintains the use of the terms language and speech, even when they are applied to communications whose substance is not verbal. This line of thought is of particular interest for this paper as a means of broadening the umbrella of semiology to encompass the study of the artistic image, not as subsidiary to, but as system of language. In this same text, Barthes illustrates his theories of communication by explaining the conceptualization of garments, which may be subdivided into three different systems: clothes as written about, clothes as photographed, and clothes as worn. In a sense, this example provides reinforcement to the visual as a form of communication which is linguistically significant yet independent of text or speech as the garments themselves are bearers of meaning in a communicative event. Barthes’ theories relating to signs and signification, can be applied to artwork or advertisements

as meaning is being communicated through artistic choices in their production.

Barthes (1977) presents a series of questions pertaining to whether images could ever be considered language. Barthes explains that “the image is felt to be weak in respect of meaning: there are those who think that the image is an extremely rudimentary system in comparison with language and those who think that signification cannot exhaust the image’s ineffable richness” (p. 152). To this effect, he submits an advertising image – a Panzani advertisement containing some food items: packets of pasta, tomatoes, onions, peppers, and a tin, a sachet, and a half-opened string bag – to an analysis of the messages possibly contained therein. By means of factors such as the cultural meaning of items, the distribution of color and lighting, composition of the general image and the arrangement of the scene (framing, reduction, flattening), the advertisement is shown to convey a particular message not dependent on, but complemented by its textual component. Text and image, through a relation of mutual redundancy, successfully transmit three inter-related messages: a linguistic message, a coded iconic message, and a non-coded iconic message. Many messages are thus being transmitted through the general image; the verbal text then serves to direct the spectator from this set of messages to one main particular message.

Barthes realizes that we can recognize only that which we have knowledge of; as in the example of the Panzani ad, basic knowledge of the food elements along with anthropological knowledge, as in what he calls Italianicity, is required. Van Leeuwen (2001: p. 94) explains how “Anyone who has tried to describe images in this way knows that such knowledge is often lacking or existing only at a very general level. We may recognize a uniform as a uniform without knowing what kind of uniform it is, or a tool as a tool without having the faintest idea what it is for.” He goes on to explain how this is not a problem, or at least not one we are aware of, until we have to describe what we see. “Clearly images can be perceived at different levels of generality, depending on the context, depending on who the image is for, and what its purpose is. In describing denotative meaning it may therefore be desirable to introduce a little more context than Barthes did, to set a plausible level of generality for the reading” (Van Leeuwen, 2001: p. 95). Therefore, it is necessary to adopt other methods of textual analysis and of accessing detailed knowledge of the subject matter.

Machin & Mayr (2012) show how tools used by critical discourse analysts can be used to analyze a range of media texts, including images. The term “media” should include/reference the image or visual text in its context. They assert that:

While visual analysis has more traditionally been the domain of Media and Cultural studies, linguists such as Kress and van Leeuwen (1996; 2001), O’Halloran (2004) and Baldry and Thibault (2006) have begun to develop some of their own models for analysis that draw on the same kinds of precision and more systematic kinds of description that characterized the approach to language in [Critical Discourse Analysis]. These authors began to look at how language,

image and other modes of communication, such as toys, monuments, films, sounds, etc., combine to make meaning. (Machin & Mayr, 2012: 1)

Machin & Mayr explain how tools from Critical Discourse Analysis may be used to analyze images by breaking down elements of visual communication such as advertisements, articles accompanied by photographs, etc. As with texts, in the arrangement of an image for a particular purpose, choices are made with the intention of convincing or eliciting a certain response from the receiving public (e.g. consumer). Then, “the job of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis is to identify and reveal these choices through a careful process of description guided by the tools provided.” (p. 9) This is illustrated via an advertisement from *Cosmopolitan*, a women’s lifestyle magazine. In this advertisement there is a well-dressed woman posing like a glamorous model next to a desk, on which is placed a computer and a cup of coffee. It is a scene in which the articles have been purposefully and obviously placed; this is not a depiction of a “real working woman”. This image is accompanied by fun, lively text encouraging women to attain a healthy lifestyle by looking for ways to stay fit while at work. Machin & Mayr explain how great attention to detail in the use of coordinating colors between the model’s clothing and background, lighting, and placement of utilities, among other choices, create a “decontextualized, low naturalistic setting” (p. 203) in which the accompanying text may become more convincing. Here, it is demonstrated through method of textual/visual integrative analysis, that both image and text are intertwined and serve a function that may not manifest itself if separated.

Bell (2001) explains how the analysis of ‘items’ and ‘texts’ of both verbal and visual nature is possible by separating their content into constituent units. Jewitt & Oyama (2001) demonstrate how social semiotics can be a meaningful tool for use in critical research, and how it is useful when interpreting communicative interactions. Point of view, an example of a semiotic resource, allows a subject to be depicted from above or below, frontally, from the side or from the back. Decisions as to the point of view to be used affect the kind of meaning image producers and viewers will co-create. Meaning then can be potentially influenced by whether the subject is depicted frontally or in profile, for example. “If you look down on something, you look at it from a position of symbolic power. If you look up at something, that something has some kind of symbolic power over you. At eye-level there is a relation of symbolic equality” (p. 3). This may also affect the degree of perceived relatedness to or detachment from the subject in the image. In some cases, the text resonates with the rendered image; in others, they may work in opposition, contradicting one another.

Another possibly critical factor in a textual/visual integrative analysis is location, which can be regarded in the social and/or geographical sense. Ron Scollon and Suzie Wong Scollon (2003) deal with geosemiotics – “the study of the social meaning of the material placement of signs and discourses and of our actions in the material world” (p. 2). A sign may only be able to express its intended meaning once placed in the appropriate

and intended setting, e.g. a sign prohibiting nude bathing; If this sign is on the back of a service truck on its way to a beach, it will have abstract linguistic meaning but not any binding ‘in place’ meaning until actually placed at the beach (pp. 2-3). The ‘in place’ meaning of these signs and discourses may refer to a geographical location, a place in time or history; it also refers to “how we use language in concrete, physical instances: A heavy brass sign means this company is here to stay; a hastily made cloth banner means this sale will not last long” (p. 2). The authors also discuss Indexicality, which “is the property of the context-dependency of signs, especially language; hence the study of those aspects of meaning which depend on the placement of the sign in the material world” (p. 3). To facilitate the analysis of images, Scollon & Scollon detail the differences between icons (which resemble what they represent in the real world), indexes (which point to their meaning), and symbols (which are completely arbitrary). They show how meaning can be assigned to the upper (ideal) and the lower (real) aspects of an image.

Referencing the work of Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996), Scollon & Scollon discuss ‘visual semiotics’; and describe how there are different relationships that occur in relation to images; “relationships among the participants within the picture frame; there are relationships among those who make the picture and further between those who make the picture and the participants within the picture; finally there are also relationships between those who are in the picture and those who are viewing it” (p. 84). They further explain some aspects of Kress and van Leeuwen’s ‘visual semiotics’, focusing on four of the main semiotic systems: represented participants (narrative or conceptual), modality, composition, and interactive participants. Within the image, there may also be ‘vectors,’ such as gaze or direction of movement, which can directly affect meaning. Indicators of modality will also affect meaning; some main indicators may be related to color, contextualization, depth, illumination, brightness, etc. (with highest modality being closest to what it would look like in person).

Secrecy and context in African art

Nooter (2003) explains the role of secrecy in African art and its adherence to African cultural norms. Westerners and Africans see the concepts of knowledge and art in vastly different ways; In Western views, knowledge is seen as a public good, “the word “secrecy” tends to summon up sinister, negative connotations [...] (Bellman 1984: 4). [...] In Africa [...] secrecy is viewed less as sinister than as a necessary part of social reality (Fernandez in Bellman, 1984: ix) and as a coherent part of the methodologies of certain systems of knowledge” (p. 56). This distinction affects not just the development and creation of each work of art, but forms an integral part of the cultural baggage necessary to understand it. Uncovering the secrets of other cultures is part and parcel of a Western philosophy, as evidenced in ethnographic research, anthropological writing, and cultural representation. In the context of African culture, secrecy is so important that

though “most art history focuses on visible, perceptible art [...] some African art forms are intended to be viewed only in brief, often subtle interludes, or not at all (Gottlieb, forthcoming; Drewal, 1988)” (p. 56). Thus, “the aesthetic effect of a work of art in Africa may depend on the deliberate obstruction, obscuring, or withholding of its presence [...]. The essence of African art may be that in ‘seeing’ you do not see” (p. 56). Secrecy is not just the means through which knowledge or meaning is partially or not at all shared; it also includes the idea of secrecy as a strategy. There is power in letting others know there exists a secret, of which you are privy to the details, that you nonetheless will not share. Nooter (2003) expresses how visual arts relating to secret knowledge are often characterized by a play of concealment and revelation (p. 58). The purpose of artworks themselves or their placements is, in some cases, to either attract or distract attention to or from restricted places such as shrines; which have visible public aspects as well as other invisible or secret ones sometimes ‘hidden’ in plain sight. A work of art must be considered not just by the images that it contains but also in the piece itself and its place in the world, geographically and in reference to people. As stated by Meyer (2010), “pictures need to be understood not simply as depictions, but also as “things” that may impress themselves on their beholders, instilling sensations ranging from blissful amazement to sheer anxiety” (p. 103). There is reference here then to the effect of the communication interaction between spectators and artwork, both in the play on concealing and revealing within the work but also in what is shared or hidden by its placement. Preston Blier (1988) speaks of the role of context in African art work. In African sculptural traditions, for example, “context is often more important to a work’s meaning than either subject matter or related features” (p. 77), making the following comment about the Fon vocabocio figures “In order to grasp the full meaning and rich religious, social, and psychological groundings of these works within the geomancy system, one has to know exactly where the sculpture was placed, for whom and why it was carved, and with respect to which geomancy sign” (p. 78). In other cases, such as a mother-and-child Asante sculpture, it is necessary to know the specific shrine from which it was taken; otherwise, the work’s underlying religious identity and significance are lost.

Mami Wata

Tobias Wendl (2001) states that *Mami Wata* incorporates a number of elements from many different African water spirits and water goddesses. “Pidgin English for “Mother of Water”, [*Mami Wata*] refers to an African water spirit whom Africans regard as foreign in origin” (p. 160). The water spirit is worshipped in Africa and the Caribbean, under various names, such as: Yemaya and Osun. Her most recognizable image is that of a longhaired woman with a snake circling her torso, which Wendl claims is based on a 19th century chromolithograph of Samoan snake charmer and circus performer, Maladamajaute. Adapted into a poster, this image was reportedly taken to Nigeria by British

colonial personnel in 1901; and the image was then disseminated throughout coastal West Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas. Wendl asserts that:

The original link to the Samoan snake charmer Maladamajaute was lost; the image was stripped of its original meaning and put into a completely new frame of reference: that of the emerging modern transafrican Mami Wata complex It turned into a key religious image, a true icon – often referred to as a “photograph taken by Europeans in the underwater world” (p. 271).

Mami Wata is often pictured as a mermaid, half-human and either half-fish or half-reptile, and has strong associations with water. She is also often portrayed with serpents. Drewal (1988) states: “Building on indigenous beliefs in water spirits, often represented as aquatic creatures such as fish, crocodiles, and water snakes, Africans incorporated new spirits such as the mermaid, when Europeans arrived along the coast in the late 15th century” (p. 161). Stipriaan (2003) refers to the importance of water and water spirits in both West African and Afro-Caribbean religions. Water has always been a vital means of communication, transport, trade, and sustenance. However, water can also mean drowning, floods and easy entry for intruders. Water was also significant to enslaved Africans who suffered transport over the Atlantic. *Mami Wata* is similar in nature to water itself; she may be calm or violent. *Mami Wata* is sometimes described as a beautiful mermaid/woman who offers riches in exchange for faithfulness and takes care of those who worship her, yet she is also known to kidnap or kill passing strangers or those who disobey her wishes.

Mami Wata uses both females and males as mediums. *Mami Wata* is known to exude beauty, wealth, good fortune, grace, vanity, and sexuality. While being known mainly as *Mami Wata*, this figure is also sometimes called the male or androgynous *Papi Wata*. *Mami Wata* is also sometimes rendered in paintings as the Hindu deity Densu, known as the male *Mami Wata* (Drewal, 1988: 174). In some Bantu languages the term *Mambu Muntu* is used instead of *Mami Wata*, with *muntu* being the word for ‘person’ and *mamba* meaning ‘snake’ or ‘crocodile’ (Fabian 1996: 198). Crocodiles are known to change biological sex in different environments.

English in Ghana

English is the de facto national language of Ghana, as reported by Ethnologue, 2016. Ouadraogo (2000: 89) states, “Education and language issues are very complex in Africa because of the multi-ethnic, multi-lingual situation”. The situation is even more complicated when the official language of the nation is different from any of the indigenous languages (Owo-Euwie, 2006). English has been the main medium of instruction in the formal education system since the 19th century, when missionaries started western-type formal schooling on the Gold Coast (now Ghana) (Edu-Buandoh 2012). Despite some fervor for the use of indigenous languages – there were sways in policy from

English to indigenous language to English and so on – , the British colonial government maintained use of the English language. This forward and backward shift would continue even after independence. Despite recent efforts to implement bilingual policies and advocacy for education in the students' own languages, this change has only occurred in few Ghanaian schools (Edu-Buandoh, 2012).

Agbedor (1994) discusses how English is used more as a necessary tool of communication than as an affective language of the homeland. He observes how English being the language of administration and education in Ghana gives rise to a tendency to overlook the development of the African languages that are spoken there, leading to negative attitudes from the indigenous people to their own languages. Though there are political reasons to use English as language of instruction, the fact that this language is used instead of any African language has helped to “project the indigenous languages as inferior vehicles of communication compared with English” (p. 222).

A different perspective is provided by Dseagu (1996), who contends that, though Ghana has six languages as its official languages (Hausa, Dagbani, Twi, Ewe, Ga, and Fante), English has been chosen as the ‘common language’ because, “as a neutral language, English enjoys the unique status of being nobody’s language and therefore least associated with native traditional negative sentiments” (p. 59). Another benefit mentioned of using English as the lingua franca is, “as the language of commerce, it can be accessed by the educated in the standard form as well as by the uneducated in its pidgin” (p. 60). Dseagu (1996) also explains how, as English serves as medium in formal and informal communication, students from a variety of linguistic groups are able to use it communicate with one another.

Obeng (1997) cites Dakubu (1988: 196), to the effect that in Ghana “almost every literate person who ever reads, writes or listens to the radio, does so in English more than any other language” (p. 65). Obeng states that English is also the language most used for publishing and the major language of broadcasting. However, he notes that, even in areas where English is used extensively, the level of competence is sometimes low. Pidgin English is also used as a lingua franca, but speakers are “looked down upon as uncultured and as not properly educated” (p. 65). This might account for why *Mami Wata* billboards usually have text in English, and this also might provide a possible explanation as to why these advertisements rely as much as they do on visual imagery to convey messages. As the text in the *Mami Wata* billboards is written in English and will be subject to discourse analysis, it is useful to have information about the current language situation in Ghana, and some background for understanding the decision to use this particular language over African languages. It is interesting to note that, just as the spread and influence of the English language in Ghana occurred due to British colonial policy, at least according to Wendl’s (2001) theory, the image now attributed to *Mami Wata* has its origin in European colonial iconography.

The *Mami Wata* billboards¹

Billboard 1:

Verbal text:

TRADITIONAL HERBALIST

KRACHI DENTE BUBUYABU [location]

KOKU HUNOR TORGBUI LAVOE [practitioner's name]

Tel. 0243384872

SEE & BELIEVE (persuasive verbal message)

Visual text

On the left, is rendered the figure of a man of brown skin and short black hair sitting atop a white animal shaped stool (possibly a lion or tiger). He is wearing a white t-shirt with a red cross painted on, pants of blue, white, and red stripes, a beaded bracelet on the wrist of his left hand; a beaded necklace held by his right hand, along with what looks to be cloth of the same blue/white/red pattern found on his pants in his left hand. He wears no shoes. His eyes face forward, peering directly into those of the viewer.

In the center, sits a man (possibly the same man as they share a near perfect likeness) behind a table draped in a white cloth. He is wearing a white t-shirt; what he wears on the lower half of his body remains unknown as the table covers it. He holds a mirror with both hands up and stares into it, textually reinforced by the name of the object written on its back. On the table, is placed a red cloth and a book that reads "Holy Bible."

On the right, is rendered a woman, of brown skin and long black hair, in an up-right position. She is wearing a white t-shirt with a red cross painted on it and a skirt with the repeated blue/white/red stripe pattern. She wears earrings, beaded bracelets on both wrists, and a beaded anklet on her left ankle. She is barefooted. In her right hand, she is holding her tail. Her facial features and hair type correspond with the image most associated with *Mami Wata*.

The billboard has a plain yellow background, which allows for the de-contextualization of the figures painted. It is located by the side of a road, and placed above eye-level. It features a red arrow, pointing to the trail that leads to the place of worship. Blue, white, and red strips of cloth are attached to a nearby tree.

Billboard 2:

Verbal text:

TRADITIONAL HERBALIST

¹The order in which the billboards are placed here corresponds with the order in which each one was visited and photographed. The reading of each billboard has been done from the spectator's perspective and left to right, arbitrarily. The terms verbal text and visual text were adopted from Van Leeuwen & Jewitt (2001).

KRACHI DENTE BUBUYABU [location]
KOKU HUNOR TORGBUI LAVOE [practitioner's name]
Tel. 0243384872
SEE & BELIEVE [persuasive verbal message]

Visual text:

On the left, is rendered an androgynous figure, possibly a man, with brown skin and short black hair, in an upright position. His torso is bare, he wears a straw skirt, a shell headpiece atop his head, a beaded or shell anklet on his left ankle, a shell waistband, and a piece of an animal carcass hanging from his neck. He holds a long knife in his right hand and a skinned snake carcass and hide in his left. There are line marks on his right arm.

In the center, is a woman, of brown skin and long flowing black hair, whose blue-green fishtail reveals her to be a mermaid. She wears several pieces of jewelry; a necklace, several bracelets and armlets, and earrings, and a blue-green tube top with bare midriff. On her forehead, between her brows, is a design of arranged small red dots. With a relaxed and in control demeanor, she grasps a live snake in both hands.

On the right, sits a man (possibly the same man as the one on the left because of their near perfect resemblance) on an animal shaped stool (that resembles a cat). His torso exposed, he wears a white cloth around his neck, a red cloth with blue-green edges that resemble pants, several bead bracelets on his left wrist, and shell anklets on his left ankle.

There is a serious or neutral expression on the faces of all three figures. The male figures have African phenotypical features, but the woman has South Asian phenotypical features. The billboard has a plain yellow background. It is located by the side of a road, and placed above eye-level. Placed on the opposite side of the same trail as Billboard 1, it features a red arrow, pointing to the trail that leads toward the place of worship.

Billboard 3:

Verbal text:

TORGBUI ATSU HAVOR AWUTE [practitioner's name]
NATIONAL TRADITIONAL HEALER
P.O. BOX 23, AKOSOMBO—MARINE [location]
Call: 0206684241/ 0243134357.
SEEING IS BELIEVING [persuasive textual message]

Visual text:

On the left is the figure of a woman with several arms (four or six), which resembles the Hindu goddess, Kali Ma. Her complexion is not a natural color; it is of a light blue hue. She wears a headdress and jewelry: a pair of earrings, various necklaces, and several bracelets and armlets. In her left hand, she holds a large conch; she twirls something

around the index finger of her right hand.

In the center, is an alligator or crocodile facing downwards or forwards, its scales colored in the same light blue.

On the right, stands a male figure, of light cream skin tone. He wears earrings, a necklace and armlet, a cloth draped around his arm, and harem pants of a light color. He carries a baby of light blue skin, who also wears jewelry, a headband, a necklace, and two armlets and bracelets. Behind him, in an upright and erect position, are twelve snakes whose bottom halves join together to form one mermaid tail. The figure is a faithful depiction of Hindu deity Krishna as a baby, carried by his father Vasudeva.

The billboard's background has a plain white color. It is located by the side of a road, and placed above eye-level. It features a red arrow, pointing to the pathway leading to the place of worship. The contact information is placed on the top portion of the billboard, with the persuasive text directly under it, near the center.

Billboard 4:

Verbal text:

06259317 [contact number]

ALUFA ABIWU MAWUKO [practitioner's name]

BELIEVE

ME

TO BE [persuasive verbal message]

133

Visual text:

In the center, and covering most of the billboard, lies a mermaid of brown skin and long flowing black hair, her scaly fish tail in full view. Her perky breasts are completely exposed. She wears jewelry, a pair of earrings, bracelets and an armlet. She plays a flute and lies on top of a crocodile that wears a potted plant on his head. Both figures are in a neutral position; the animal seemingly controlled by the music of the mermaid-charmer. Neither stares at the viewer.

The billboard is placed on the ground, the image at eye-level. It has a plain white background with signs of wear from years past. Overall, the colors are naturalistic.

Billboard 5:

Verbal text:

HUNOR ZORKPO [practitioner's name]

TRADITIONAL PRIEST AND HERBALIST

WE SOLVE THE FF PROBLEM: STROKE, MARRIAGE, VISA/TRAVEL-
LING, POWER & PROTECTION, ETC. [persuasive verbal text]

TEL. 0246629566/ 0245603601

Visual text:

On the left is rendered the figure of a woman/mermaid of brown skin and long flowing

black hair, holding a snake above her head and around her neck with her right arm; the length of the snake continuing until it wraps around her left wrist, like a bracelet. Looking straight ahead, she stares piercingly at the viewer. She wears a blue-green bodice, with a red and yellow-lined brassier-shaped cover. Her mermaid tail is of an iridescent blue.

In the center and slightly to the left, is placed a large pot lined with tassels of white, blue, and red. It stands on what may be a tree trunk or fire wood. Slightly to the right, stands a man of brown skin and black hair, possibly dreaded, and of medium length. His torso and feet bare, he wears a straw skirt and bears line marks on his left arm. He hides his right hand behind his back, and holds a long knife in his left. Just as the mermaid, he stares straight ahead, sharing with her a piercing glance.

On the right, stands an androgynous figure, possibly a man. His back turned; his face and front remain hidden. His torso and feet are bare, and he wears a light-colored cloth that drapes from above his hips. His dark medium length hair is held up and made into a ponytail. He holds a pot above his head, with what looks like water inside, as though it was depicted just before he was pouring it onto himself. The billboard's background is of a plain white color, the figures decontextualized from any scene. The contact information and services offered are written on the top portion of the billboard. It is placed slightly above eye-level and has a red arrow in the center pointing to the path leading to the place of worship.

Billboard 6:

Verbal text:

NANA BUGRI (KUFA YAKUL) [practitioner's name]
SERVICES *BROKEN LEGS, *BROKEN HAND, *UNTREATED SOW
WORKING DAYS HEALING DAYS
MON. – SAT. 8AM – 5PM WED. – SAT.
NO ENTERING FOR MENSTRAL WOMEN
ASANTE AKYEM KONONGO NEAR MAYANKA [location]
055789466 / 0554001672 / 0502029563 [contact numbers]

Visual text:

On the left is a photo of a young man of brown skin and short black hair. He is wearing a white shirt and headdress, and a white shell necklace. He stares away from the viewer. In front of him, covering the lower half of his body, is a table, on which are around 30 small glass bottles, and a container lined with white shells, filled with money. Behind the young man, a snake crawls on a bed of dollar bills. In his left arm, the man holds something dark that extends from the middle of the billboard to the right side, where it becomes a snake.

On the right, is the “photograph” of *Mami Wata* a woman, of brown skin with dark

flowing black hair, cut off at mid-torso. She wears gold jewelry, bracelets and an extravagant necklace with a moon-shaped pendant, and a white and blue striped top with a red and gold-trimmed cover. She holds a snake with her right hand and it wraps around her neck and left wrist, like a bracelet. There is another snake in front of her, facing her. Her gaze meets the viewers as she stares straight ahead. Still on the right, towards the bottom, is a smaller figure of a woman in profile-view playing a flute to several snakes. The contact information is located at the top of the billboard. The information on services and hours is located at the bottom. The background is white and light blue. Throughout, the billboard makes use of the color scheme of white, blue, and red.

Analysis of the billboards

On all six billboards, the figures of *Mami Wata* are either mermaids themselves, or there are elements pertaining to such, e.g. the snakes that join to form a mermaid tail on Billboard 3. They also include images of crocodiles, snakes and different renditions of water. On billboards 2, 3, 4, and 5, *Mami Wata* is depicted as a mermaid. On billboard 1, *Mami Wata* is reflected in a mirror held by a practitioner, as “mirrors figure prominently in devotees’ communications with the spirit” (Drewal, 1988: 165). On Billboards 1,2,3,5, and 6 male and female genders are depicted; this corresponds with *Mami Wata* using both men and women as vessels. The bottles on Billboard 6, the mirror on Billboard 1, the shells worn or placed on other objects on all the billboards, correspond to items that are kept in shrines as objects of veneration or objects used during rituals (Drewal, 1988). The table draped in white cloth on Billboard 1 corresponds to those used as shrines, and the overall use of white cloth correlates with the spotless white cloths and white walls where shrines are placed, “creating a space that is distinctly otherworldly” (Drewal, 1988). The influence of Hindu deities on billboard 3, might correspond with how “Africans determined that there was a direct connection between these South Asian images, the beliefs associated with them, and South Asians’ perceived success in financial matters (just as mermaids and other icons such as marine sculptures and saints’ statues had been linked with European wealth and power).” (Drewal, 1988: 173)

In the representations of *Mami Wata* on the billboards, as these are paintings and not meant to be realistic depictions, there is a shift away from a naturalistic modality. The identity of each figure is specified by a number of particular features each corresponding to a version of the generic image of *Mami Wata*. This reduced articulation of detail may also correspond with a reduced reality, as this figure represents a divinity and an iconic image, it does not and should not resonate with a realistic depiction of a human being.

With regard to the degrees of articulation of the backgrounds, a characteristic which all billboards in the group share is that they are all of a plain uniform light color, mainly white or light blue – disregarding wear over time – ; and as such, modality is reduced

so much that all context is removed. The aim here then is to move from the particular and real to the general and symbolic. (Machin & Mayr 2012: 203). There is also a very low degree of depth articulation, approaching almost an absence of any depth. “Through lowered articulation of details, of background, and diminished depth, these images lose their origin in time and space” (Machin & Mayr, 2012: 203). In these cases, we might “want to ask what is concealed by use of this abstraction” (Machin & Mayr, 2012: 204). In these images, there are also reduced degrees of articulation of tone, color modulation, and color saturation. The exception to this, by slight degree, is Billboard 5 where the mermaid figure has an iridescent blue tail.

As for the *indexicality* of the billboards, since all six are placed in a specific area near a place of worship, they do not just have abstract linguistic meaning but also binding ‘in place’ meaning (Scollon & Scollon, 2003: 2-3). A sign may only be able to express its intended meaning once placed in the appropriate and intended setting, in this case, the *Mami Wata* billboards are able to express their intended meaning as they are placed in close proximity to the pathways that lead to the shrines where services are offered. There is thus a direct relation between where each billboard is placed and what is offered by the advertisement. The ‘in place’ meaning of these signs and discourses, in the case of this group of billboards, refers to a geographical location, and also a cultural locus, i.e. they are situated within Ghana and therefore within the pluri-cultural universe of Ghana. The billboards are *indexable* as they are anchored in the social-cultural-physical world in which they are placed; the billboards themselves and the signs therein are context-dependent. The verbal text is written in English and the locations have names in Twi, the language used for interethnic contact and marketing in Ghana. As most of the commercial establishments of the area are built with wood or cement, what is deemed by Scollon & Scollon (2003: 2) to be “concrete” (intended to last a significant amount of time) for this area can be considered to be properly built with wood. Each of these billboards was sturdy and properly constructed, mainly in wood, with the exception of Billboard 3, which was built with cement.

The significance behind the location of the billboards also relates to African art practices. In revealing some *Mami Wata* secrets, and in identifying the pathway to the locations but not the places themselves, these billboards participate in the play on concealment and revelation that characterizes some African art. This occurs within the the image on each billboard as well; with the image providing a view of these religious practices through depictions of several artefacts, but none of these are explained. The message is explicit yet does not say anything. It is with this richness of imagery that the billboards simultaneously reveal no explicit truths; a charged image without explanation. In this way, verbal and visual text work together to deliver a message of the enigmatic symbol that is *Mami Wata*; the imagery serving to illustrate her powers and the gifts they may bestow, while the verbal texts urge us not to ask too many questions in

order to adopt the requisite attitude to receive those gifts, and the arrows literally point to where we may find her.

Conclusion

This paper analyzes six particular billboards depicting *Mami Wata* in Ghana, and does not pretend to generalize over all such billboards in Ghana or elsewhere. Though Machin & Mayr (2012) present this limitation in scope as an example of the deficiencies of Critical Discourse Analysis, it can be seen in a different light; if the intent of a given study is not to prove a certain ideology as typical of a given source, it can instead be appreciated for its process and insight into how messages are conveyed. Its importance then lies in the ability to analyze specific texts without having to make generalizations, as this is not the intended motive.

The intent of this paper is to say that images, art, and visual discourse can be studied from a linguistic perspective and that an interdisciplinary approach is relevant to the study of linguistics. This paper is a sample of what may be done in these areas. A continuation of this particular study might include a comparison of *Mami Wata* billboards in Ghana with similar advertisements incorporating her images in the Caribbean. Those in Ghana might be read in a different way from those in the Caribbean, almost like dialects of one visual language. Because the baggage a linguist carries is different from that carried by an art historian or an anthropologist, a multi-disciplinary approach can help to shape new and different perspectives and analyses. The same texts viewed through different lenses and subject to different gazes, can yield multiple interpretations.

This study demonstrates that images provide a plethora of relevant information that may affect and even dominate the message of the discourse at hand, in this case the messages of billboard advertisements. Without the study of the images, the verbal text would be insufficient to analyze the communicated messages. This paper combines African art, geosemiotics, theories of visual communication, discourse analysis and information on English in Ghana, and the history of *Mami Wata*. This is done in order to make possible the identification of icons, symbols and indexes within the texts under study and to demonstrate how these interact with the billboard itself and its location and how all of this affects the communicated meaning, especially how the message of secrecy of *Mami Wata* is conveyed through revealing rich imagery and concealing succinct bits of verbal text. The name of *Mami Wata* is never explicit on the billboards and yet the visual text is enough of an identifier for those who wish to pursue her. The billboards themselves are in a way representative of *Mami Wata* herself, a complicated and enigmatic figure that has much to reveal yet remains elusive and conceals in order to appeal to would-be followers. To know you must “see & believe” and yet you will never see. The billboards themselves speak to her nature. They are placed in a position of power, above eye level and have text that purposefully reveals none but the most basic logistical information

(telephone numbers, etc.). In this way, the billboards also have a performative aspect; they function as absent performance art pieces as they not only present visual representations but embody the figure represented as well.

By use of various disciplines and finding ways to interweave and synthesize the knowledge provided by each, the intent of the present study is to show how these billboards, knowingly or not, make use not only of the practices of African art, but also of geographical and cultural location to articulate the messages they are communicating. These billboards placed elsewhere would hold a different meaning and would not be able to communicate the “follow me” or “walk this way to find me” messages that they convey. If there is an inkling of curiosity on the part of the spectator, this is followed by a sense of immediacy as the arrow points to a location close by, a path that makes one privy to the knowledge that this place, and in a sense, this divinity, is within walking distance. The gifts that the divinity can offer are for the spectator to obtain by just taking a few extra steps in her direction.

REFERENCES

- Agbedor, Paul K. (1994). English vs. Ghanaian Languages: the sociocultural issues. In *Language planning for national development: the case of Ghana*. PhD thesis, University of Victoria.
- Barthes, Roland (1977, [1964]). *Elements of semiology*. (Trans. Annette Lavers & Colin Smith). New York: Hill & Wang.
- Barthes, Roland (1977). Rhetoric of the image. In Stephan Heath (Ed. and trans.), *Image-Music-Text* (pp. 151-163) London: Fontana Press.
- Bell, Philip (2001). Content analysis of visual images. In Theo van Leeuwen & Carey Jewitt (Eds.), *Handbook of visual analysis* (pp. 10-34). London: SAGE Publications.
- Drewal, Henry J. (1988). Interpretation, invention, and re-presentation in the worship of Mami Wata. *Journal of Folklore Research*, 25, 1/2, 101-140.
- Drewal, Henry J. et al. (2008). *Mami Wata: arts for water spirits in Africa and its diasporas*. Los Angeles: Fowler Museum at UCLA.
- Dseagu, Samuel A. (1996). English in Ghana. *English Studies in Africa*, 39, 1, 57-66.
- Edu-Buandoh, Dora F. & Gloria Otchere (2012). “Speak English!”: a prescription or choice of English as a lingua franca in Ghanaian schools. *Linguistics and Education*, 23, 3, 301-309.
- Fabian, Johannes (1996). *Remembering the present: painting and popular history in Zaire*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Frank, Barbara (1995). Permitted and prohibited wealth: commodity-possessing spirits, economic morals, and the goddess Mami Wata in West Africa. *Ethnology*, 34, 4, 331-346.

- Hodge, Robert & Gunther Kress (1988). *Social semiotics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Jewitt, Carey & Rumiko Oyama (2001). Visual meaning: a social semiotic approach. In Theo van Leeuwen & Carey Jewitt (Eds.), *The handbook of visual analysis* (pp. 134-156). London: SAGE Publications.
- Jules-Rosette, Bennetta (1984). *The messages of tourist art: an African semiotic system in comparative perspective*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Kress, Gunther & Theo van Leeuwen (1996). *Reading images: the grammar of visual design*. London: Routledge.
- Kress, Gunther (2010). *Multimodality: a social semiotic approach to contemporary communication*. London: Arnold.
- Lewis, Paul, Gary Simons & Charles Fennig (Eds.) (2016). *Ethnologue: languages of Africa and Europe* (19th Ed.). Sil International, Global Publishing.
- Machin, David & Andrea Mayr (2012). *How to do critical discourse analysis: a multi-modal introduction*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Nooter, Mary H. (1993). Secrecy: African art that conceals and reveals. *African Arts*, 26, 1, 54-69.
- Obeng, Samuel G. (1997). An analysis of the linguistic situation in Ghana. *African Languages and Cultures*, 10, 1, 63-81.
- Owu-Ewie, Charles (2006). The language policy of education in Ghana: a critical look at the English-only language policy of education. In John Mugane et al. (Eds.), *Selected proceedings of the 35th Annual Conference on African Linguistics* (pp. 76-85). Somerville: Cascadilla Proceedings Project.
- Preston Blier, Suzanne (1988). Words about words about icons: iconology and the study of African art. *Art Journal*, 47, 2, 75-87.
- Scollon, Ronald & Suzanne B.K. Scollon (2003). *Discourses in place: language in the material world*. London: Routledge.
- Van Leeuwen, Theo & Carey Jewitt (2001). Visual meaning: a social semiotic approach. In *Handbook of visual analysis* (pp. 134-156). London: SAGE.
- Van Stipriaan, Alex (2003). Watramama / Mami Wata: three centuries of creolization of a water spirit in West Africa, Suriname and Europe. In Gordon Collier & Ulrich Fleischmann (Eds.), *A pepper-pot of cultures: aspects of creolization in the Caribbean* (pp. 323-337). Amsterdam: Rodopi.
- Wendl, Tobias (2001). Visions of modernity in Ghana: Mami Wata shrines, photo studios and horror films. *Visual Anthropology*, 14, 3, 269-292.
- Yeager, Joseph & Linda Sommer (2012). Language symmetry: a force behind persuasion. *The Qualitative Report*, 17, 14, 1-10. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR17/yeager.pdf>

CULTURATION AND LANGUAGE IN GUYANA

ALIM HOSSEIN

UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA

Guyana's language situation is at an interesting juncture. While the official language of the country is stated as "English", not only is there the usual language variation and speaker variability but also wide recognition (though not necessarily *acceptance*) of what is variably called "Guyanese English lexifier Creole", "Creole", "Creolese", and "Creole English" among other names. The country's Amerindian languages are also under study even though they are often disadvantageously referred to as "dialects" rather than "languages", even by persons who otherwise support their revival, maintenance and preservation. Other languages – Bhojpuri, Hindi, Sanskrit, Urdu, Arabic – are even further off the radar of most local discussions of language, probably because they are only used in a functionally-diglossic manner centered around religious observation and membership in very specific communities of practice. In addition, recently in-coming Chinese and Brazilian workers and business people have begun adding other dimensions to our linguistic landscape.

All Guyanese function daily within a language environment that ranges from English to Creolese. But there are significant questions as to where one of these ends and where the other begins, which one of them is being used in a particular communicative interaction, and the relative importance and value that should be accorded to each one. These questions are further complicated by attitudes to language which exist among Guyanese. This situation is illustrated by a recent letter to the editor of the *Stabroek News*: "Learning Creolese is a waste of time and valuable resources" (March 20, 2018). An article on attitudes to language in Guyana by Hosein (2014) elicited comments on Facebook such as the following:

I am pretty sure in Guyana we speak English... Guyanese does not speak Creole. Creole is a whole different language.... (Asif, 03/13/2014)

and:

I can tell that there is difference between the way my friends and I would speak in formal settings and then the way awe dees does talk when awe deh home. But I don't think I changed the language there but rather just used it more informally, relaxed the rules. Much of what we do as Guyanese is relaxing the "rigor of standard English [sic]." (Kevin, 08/10/2014)

These comments illustrate not only some of these different attitudes, but also some of the different criteria that Guyanese use to define the language they speak.

From Allsopp (1958) who first demonstrated the graded variation of language in Guyana, to the present-day, there has been no shortage of ideas and models, proposed by linguists and laymen, to describe the language situation that exists in Guyana and the English-speaking Caribbean. These can be grouped into four general positions:

1. The language of Guyana is in a post-creole state; that is, after undergoing a process of creolization, it is currently in a state where, because of the influence of another language (English) it is losing its creole elements and taking on elements of English. In this process, variations in the language appear, which can be situated along a continuum ranging from the forms which retain the most creole elements to the ones which are most similar to English.
2. Covert diglossia exists in Guyana, where English is the “high” (H) variety and Creole the “low” (L) variety.
3. What we speak in Guyana must be regarded as part of the English language and must be so identified. Some define it as a dialect of English, others as a particular version of English: Guyanese Standard English.
4. Guyanese are consolidating a language of their own rather than following a path of decreolization or a path towards English.

The traditional decreolisation/post-creole continuum model for describing our language situation has long faced strong criticism. Gibson (1982) argued against the three levels proposed in the traditional model, arguing that the distinction is really between the acrolect and all the other varieties which are basically different only in lexicon. While disputing this view, Rickford (1987) also points out its lack of adequacy in describing the multiple levels of creole language use, and critically, questions whether the variations along the continuum represent a movement toward the lexifier. Escure (2008) also contends that change in a creole language is not necessarily evidence that the Creole is decreolising.

Studies in decreolization have shown that it is a complex process. Lipski (2011: 277) observes that “... the motivations and mechanisms responsible for decreolisation are subject to ongoing debate”. Other researchers have found that the processes of decreolization are far from straightforward. Seigel (2008) has found some of the predicted changes in Tok Pisin and Hawai‘i Creole, but also other contradictory changes such as greater use of some anglicized forms in rural rather than urban areas; lexical expansion through the resources of the language itself rather than through English; morphophonological reduction and “covert decreolisation” (retention of the creole form but with functions that are similar to those from the lexifier).

Decreolisation implies a stable target language. However, change in English over the last century, the rise of “World Englishes” or “International English”, more inclusiveness by institutions such as the BBC and the Oxford English Dictionary, and increasing autonomy in countries in which English is spoken, including former colonies of Great Britain, among other factors, all make the concept of “English” a much more complicated matter than it was fifty years ago. As Pauline Christie (2012: 12) observed, “In many countries throughout the world today, the idea that Standard English must be synonymous with British Standard English is no longer accepted. English is now seen as a heterogeneous language with different norms in different countries....”. Positing target-related decreolization for Guyanese Creole is therefore a fraught exercise. It is more cogent to examine the way in which the speakers of the Guyanese language are refashioning available linguistic resources and creating new ones to meet their communicative needs.

Devonish (2008: 619) argues that “creole languages are by their very origin ... languages in a diglossic relationship with the dominant European language, or in a relationship “analogous to diglossia” with the dominant European language.” But this is open to debate in the case of Guyana, since circumstances have made the boundary between the purported H language (English) and the purported L language (Creole) permeable, and movement from one language to the other happens easily. Factors such as lack of models of English, poor English-language education, the loss in value of language as tool for upward social mobility, among other factors, means that the integrity of English is not preserved and its role as a “high” language is not maintained in practical terms. In addition, globalization, increased movement of people and information and technological developments have created a more open space for language development that allows the expansion of non-standard varieties into areas that were once reserved for standard varieties of English. In such a situation of “unstable diglossia” Devonish observes that as “the H variety “...is pressed to expand into the private and informal domains that were the preserve of the L, the creole language... [and] the de facto national language, the creole, is pressed to expand into the state domains that were previously the preserve of the H...” (2008: 618). In Guyana, such phenomena are evident everywhere.

In Guyana, as in many other Caribbean countries, the boundary between English and Creole has become blurred because of seeming similarities in the linguistic systems. The result is that a situation has been created which easily causes and perpetuates confusion. Robertson (2015: 160) points out that “[t]here is sufficient lexical, syntactic and even semantic overlap between the popularly used Creoles and the target standard to give the impression of a simple dialectal relationship. These similarities often mask fundamental differences and serve to give the Creole speaker a false sense of control of the target”. The result is a situation of linguistic complexity in Guyana, a situation which

cannot be captured by the conventional concepts of “standard”, “dialects”, “decreolization”, “continuum” or “diglossia”.

There is conflicting evidence concerning attitudes towards Guyanese Creole. Rickford’s examination of Guyanese Creole (1980) found that, contrary to the commonly-held view, positive attitudes to Creole did exist. However, the most positive views were recorded among what he called the “estate class” rather than the “non-estate class”. In another article in 1985, he basically confirmed his previous findings and reinforced his proviso that attitudes to the creole language were related to sociocultural dimensions such as socioeconomic status, friendship, identity and so on. Other research such as that carried out by Mühleisen (2001), the Jamaica Language Unit at UWI Mona (2005) and Escure (2008) have reported the emergence of positive attitudes towards creole languages. In a survey of language attitudes in 2010 among 40 students at the University of Guyana, Hosein (2012) found that 27 agreed that Creole must be used in as many domains as English. Interestingly, 22 out of the 28 younger students in the group (age range 17-30) agreed on this, while only 5 out of 12 students aged 31-50 agreed. This suggests that older, more conservative views about the language exist primarily among the older generations and are slow to change.

Devonish (2000) has also remarked on the kinds of perceptions that Guyanese have about the linguistic structure of their Creole. For example, they describe its phonology as “braalin” (raw or uncouth). In their 2001 survey of Guyanese Creole, Holbrook and Holbrook found that: “Creolese is used in almost all domains where communication takes place. We have heard Creolese used in almost every domain of communication”. However, they still found that “...the overall attitude toward Creolese is very negative. It is not a language valued by most Guyanese.” But there is also the other side of the coin. Robertson (2015: 162) records the following phenomenon in Caribbean countries including Guyana: “For many, speaking standard English is culturally uncomfortable or even unacceptable, representing as it does a way of life that is part of the upper or even foreign social levels and tastes.”

It is not surprising, then, that English is privileged in Guyana, and for it is reserved the title of “language” while the notions of “broken” and “ungrammatical”, “patwa” and “slang” are ascribed to the Creole. In some discussions, the highest descriptor of the Creole is to award it the status of a “dialect”, even by highly-regarded commentators and researchers on Guyanese culture who champion the value and worth of the language. In many newspaper columns, the celebrated Guyanese musician and social observer Dave Martins writes with passion and obvious love about our “dialects” – not only that of Guyana, but those of the entire Caribbean. He dedicated an entire article to the subject, in which he declared: “I take particular delight in this dialect “awe dis does talk”... we must also wholeheartedly accept these dialects we speak because time after time they are the most telling and pungent and effective ways we have to communicate, and they are our creations; substantial ones”. (Martins, 2013).

It might seem that the distinction between “dialect” and “language” that I have been pursuing here is a mere technical quibble. However, within the contemporary Guyanese linguistic context, the distinction has crucial implications for national identity and development. Makoni and Pennycook (2007: 30) counsel that “...definitions of language have material consequences on people and ... such definitions are always implicitly or explicitly statements about human beings in the world”. The characteristics and functions associated with the “dialect” in Guyana imbue it with an aura of marginality. The danger for Guyanese is that the concept of “dialect”, associated as it is with the special words we use, preserves the sense that we are not part of the mainstream of language. In the media over the last fifteen years or so, especially in the newspapers, a practice has developed of including verbatim Creole in the reporting of the news. While this helps to place Creole within a sphere previously reserved for English, most of the reports that contain creole quotations centre on crime, or on the distress of the poor. Quotations for stories about crime committed by the rich or middle class, or reports on other social issues concerning them, are done in English.

The term “dialect” is also vague, and its boundaries depend on the perceptions of the individual. Also, the term sets up a false and misleading distinction between our language and English: English is seen to be everything that is not “dialect”.

This raises the issue of understanding how to we treat Guyanese usage of words such as “over” (as in “I live over the river”), “hand” (= “arm”), “foot” (= “leg”), “body” (= only the torso), and statements such as “we need something to do about it”. In such cases, the situation is much greyer. Pauline Christie’s observation (2012: 12) about the situation in Jamaica is also appropriate to Guyana: “... [t]he sharp distinction made ... between Jamaican English and Jamaican Creole disguises the fact that in practice there is often no clear distinction between them.” Further, as Robertson (2015: 163) has pointed out: “There is even less clarity about the domains of use. Indeed, in many of these societies, persons with minimal competence in the official language have managed to rise to positions of prominence in a range of areas.”

Guyana is indeed at an interesting juncture in its language development – and its cultural evolution. Positive attitudes to the Creole are growing, alongside a growing national identification with the language, but resistance to full acceptance of its linguistic worthiness remains significant. These tensions between acceptance and continued stigmatization of typically Guyanese usage associated with Creole are illustrated in the brief discussion of current linguistic trends in the country that follows.

Phonologically, two general tendencies are noted among Guyanese: to avoid “rawness” and to articulate “Englishness” without sounding like an “English duck”. Speakers who aspire to more English-like speech move the articulation of vowels from the periphery to the centre of the mouth, producing /ɔ/ as /ɜ/ and /a/ as /ə/. Those attempting more sophisticated styles use the central vowels /ə/ and /ʌ/. Among some speakers, this produces articulations such as: *chɜrch* (church), *bɜrs* (burst), and *ərganaiz* (organize). On

the other hand, peripheralisation of medial vowels as in *hor* (her), *orlier* (earlier), *fodr* (further) and *os* (us) typically found in basilectal speech now also appears in careful speech. It is not uncommon, even at the formal level, to find the variable presence and absence of these features in the speech of the same speaker. In the articulation of words, the elision of syllables can now be found, not only in the speech of market vendors, mini-bus conductors, taxi drivers and others who use rapid speech to attract customers, but in the speech of other persons in every-day conversations: *Vreed-en-Hoop* > *Vreenoop*; 200 > *tuondred*; *calalu* > *ca:lu*; porridge > *pa:rj*; and understand > *aa:stan*. In the area of grammar, creole elements such as reduplication and idioms, alongside creole patterns in the formation of the passive, the use of the copula, time referencing, complementation, and the use of phrasal verbs not only persist, but are becoming more and more acceptable. Other developments in semantics, syntax and morphology which may not historically stem from the process of creolisation are transforming the language into a particularly Guyanese tongue which has a surface resemblance to English. These include grammatical and functional shifts, semantic extensions, morphological extensions, and grammatical shifts, as exemplified by the following:

- Semantic extension: *Which over is Russell Street?* (“over” = *intersection*)
- Semantic shift: “*UGSS to reach with President Granger next week*” (Strapline, HGPTV News, 6th April, 2016)
- Morphological shift: “*...waiting for the vehicle to full...*” (Stabroek News, 5th February, 2016, p. 22)
- Grammatical shift: “*He gone in town*” (He has gone to town)
- Increase in the valency of verbs: “*mus’ shout me w’en you done*”
- Verbalization of adjectives: “*we goin solid the block*”

Other examples from the media are:

- Bandits “carted off with” various sums of money (from various news reporters on television channels 28, 67, 65 among others)
- “would have” is used as the simple past tense: “I do hope that you would have enjoyed this feature” (widespread in all spoken media)
- “affected him from his duties”
- “the system comprises of”
- “...canes for both the Wales and Uitvlugt estates would grind at the latter” (Stabroek News, 1st January, 2016)
- “Wanted to Buy: Two Lands at Mocho” (Kaieteur News, 17th April, 2016, p. 68)

Lexically, transparent pidgin-like compounding, continues to be a productive strategy in Guyanese. Following the ubiquitous pattern of *descriptor* + *man* (e.g. *wukman* instead of *labourer*) contemporary Guyanese create new lexicon for new occupations such as *chicken girl* (the woman who sells chicken), *phone bai* (the young man who sells and repairs cell phones), *raaba man* (thief, bandit) and *murda man* (murderer). Currently we are witnessing a very interesting retrofitting of *Coca Cola* into the descriptive *black*

drinks, which shows the continuing vitality of creole word-formation processes. Also attested in the lexicon are what I will term “Guyanesisms” which make sense only to a native speaker of Guyanese languages because they are part of his or her everyday life. These include:

- *She an all a hol head wid Shirley* (“she colludes with Shirley”)
- *Sheer ants deh hay* (indicating the presence of lots of ants)
- *was bare gunshot* (indicating that many gunshots were heard)

While Washabaugh (1977: 334) argued that “[t]he strongest motive for variation in decreolisation is the pressure to avoid the basilect, not the pressure to acquire the acrolect”, Guyanese society evidences a complex mixture of negative beliefs and attitudes about Creole, alongside increasingly positive attitudes and more extended use of this language. Within this ambit of usage and attitudes, language continues to evolve, with the line between “English” and “Creolese” becoming increasingly blurred. Pauline Christie’s (2012: 12) comments about Jamaica are again relevant: “[t]he problem lies in knowing where to draw the line between what should be considered part of SJE [Standard Jamaican English] and what should still be attributed to error”. The pedagogical challenges are evident, with Robertson (2015: 163) correctly pointing out that in the English-speaking Caribbean “...there is little accessible codification of either the creole language or the local standard version of English that is supposed to serve as the target. There is even less clarity about the domains of use.” Other challenges include the fact that our education system, staffed as it is by teachers who are themselves products of the same unclear language situation, is unable to deliver the guidance needed to help students master academic English. Recent economic developments in the country and the attendant social and cultural changes promise to add even more complexity to this already multiplex linguistic situation from which an increasingly unique Guyanese language seems to be emerging.

REFERENCES

- Allsopp, Richard (1958). *Pronominal forms in the dialect of English used in Georgetown (British Guiana) and its environs by persons engaged in the non-clerical occupations*. Master’s thesis, University of London.
- Allsopp, Richard (Ed.) (1996). *Dictionary of Caribbean English usage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bickerton, Derek (n.d.). *Guyanese speech*. (Unpublished).
- Bickerton, Derek (1980). Decreolization and the Creole Continuum. In Albert Valdman & Arnold Highfield (Eds.), *Theoretical orientations in Creole studies* (pp. 109-28). New York: Academic Press.

- Christie, Pauline (2012). Whither Standard English in the Caribbean? In Jeannette Allsopp & John Rickford (Eds.), *Language, culture and Caribbean identity* (pp. 9-16). Kingston: Canoe Press.
- Dargan (1981). LANGUAGE...Heritage and fungus growth. *Guyana Chronicle*, Friday, February 13, 1981.
- Devonish, Hubert (2000). On the writing of normative grammars for Caribbean creole languages: the case of Guyanese creole. In Thomas Acton & Morgan Dalphinis (Eds.), *Language, blacks and gypsies: languages without a written tradition and their role in education* (pp. 52-58). London: Whiting & Birch.
- Devonish, Hubert (2008). Language planning in Pidgin and Creoles. In Silvia Kouwenberg & John Victor Singler (Eds.), *Handbook of Pidgin and Creole studies* (pp. 615-636). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Edwards, Walter (1973). *Phonological differences between Standard English and Guyanese Creole*. (Unpublished).
- Edwards, Walter (1994). *The grammars of phonological and morphological choices in rural and urban ideolects in Guyana*. Paper presented at X Biennial conference of The Society for Caribbean Linguistics, University of Guyana, April 24-27, 1994.
- Escure, Geneviève (2008). Pidgins/creoles and discourse. In Silvia Kouwenberg & John Victor Singler (Eds.), *Handbook of Pidgin and Creole studies* (pp. 567-592). Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Gibson, Keane (1982). *Tense and aspect in Guyanese Creole: a syntactic, semantic and pragmatic analysis*. PhD Dissertation, University of York.
- Gleason, Henry A. (1961, [1953]). *An introduction to descriptive linguistics*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Holbrook, David J. & Holly A. Holbrook (2001). *Guyanese Creole survey report*. SIL International. Available at <http://www-01.sil.org/silesr/2002/011/SILESR2002-011.pdf>
- Hosein, Alim (2012). Reduplication and language change in Guyana. In Jeannette Allsopp & John R. Rickford (Eds.), *Language, culture and Caribbean identity* (pp. 29-41). Kingston: Canoe Press.
- Hosein, Alim (2012). Is there evidence of decreolisation in Guyanese phonology? In Nicholas Faraclas et al. (Eds.), *Double voicing and multiplex identities* (pp. 207-215). Curaçao/Puerto Rico: FPI; UNA/UPR.
- Hosein, Alim (2014). Attitudes to Guyanese. *Insight*. Available at <http://insight.gy/attitudes-to-guyanese/>
- Irvine, Alison (2004). A good command of the English phonological variation in the Jamaican acrolect. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, 9, 1, 41-76.
- Jamaica Language Unit (2005). *Language attitude survey of Jamaica*. Mona: UWI.

- Jordan, Michael (2010). Dave Martins – Guyanese cultural icon. *Kaieteur News*, May 9, 2010. Available at <https://www.kaieteurnews.com/2010/05/09/dave-martins-guyanese-cultural-icon/>
- Le Page, Robert B. & Andrée Tabouret-Keller (1985). *Acts of identity: creole-based approaches to language and ethnicity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lipski, John M. (2011). Decreolisation as emergent grammar(s). Some Afro-Bolivian data. *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, 26, 2, 276-340.
- Makoni, Sinfrey & Alastair Pennycook (2007). Disinventing and reconstituting languages. In Sinfrey Makoni & Alastair Pennycook (Eds.), *Disinventing and reconstituting languages* (pp. 1-41). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Martins, Dave (2013). This is dialect. *Sunday Stabroek*, February 16, 2013, Online.
- Mühleisen, Susanne (2001). Is 'bad English' dying out? A diachronic comparative study of attitudes towards Creole versus Standard English in Trinidad. *Philologie im Netz*, 15, 43-78.
- Rickford, John (1980). *Language attitudes in a Creole continuum*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Linguistic Society of America, San Antonio, December 29.
- Rickford, John (1985). Standard and non-standard language attitudes in a Creole Continuum. In Nessa Wolfson & Joan Manes (Eds.), *Language of inequality* (pp. 145-159). Berlin: Mouton.
- Rickford, John (1987). *Dimensions of a Creole continuum: history, texts and linguistic analysis of Guyanese Creole*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Robertson, Ian (2015). The role of grammar in English-language teaching. In Ian Robertson & Hazel Simmons-Mc Donald (Eds.), *Education issues in Creole and Creole-influenced vernacular contexts* (pp. 151-166). Kingston: The University of the West Indies Press.
- Romaine, Suzanne (1988). *Pidgin and Creole languages*. London: Longman.
- Sapir, Edward (1929). The status of linguistics as a science. *Language*, 5, 4, 207-214.
- Seigel, Jeff (2008). *The emergence of Pidgin and Creole languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stabroek News*, January 1, 2016.
- Stabroek News*, February 5, 2016.
- Stabroek News*, March 20, 2018.
- Washabaugh, William (1977). Constraining variation in decreolisation. *Language*, 53, 2, 329-352.

A STUDY OF THE NEGATIVE IN GRENADIAN FRENCH LEXIFIER CREOLE

MARGUERITE-JOAN JOSEPH
THE GRENADA CREOLE SOCIETY

Introduction

The French lexifier Creole spoken in Grenada, also called ‘Patois’ or ‘Grenadian Creole French’, is defined by Ethnologue (2013) as a variety of Lesser Antillean Creole French which is significantly endangered, and has become increasingly difficult to encounter in the tri-island state of Grenada. We believe the present study to be the first one that examines and documents the use of the preverbal negative marker /ba/ in this variety, which seems to be unique in this respect, when compared with the varieties of Antillean Creole French used in the other islands of the Lesser and Greater Antilles, such as St. Lucian, Dominican, Martinican, Guadeloupean and Haitian Creole, which use the negative marker /pa/ instead. While a simple change in the voice onset time of the initial consonant could account for the presence of /ba/ instead of /pa/ in Grenada, in this article I would like to advance a more nuanced and multi-causal account for the presence of /ba/ in Grenadian French lexifier Creole, which includes consideration of both African and non-Standard French influences.

Apart from works such as Ferreira & Holbrook (2001) which focussed mainly on language vitality, linguistic studies on Grenadian French lexifier Creole are few, and Roberts’ (1971) work on verb use stands virtually alone. In the present article, I have made use of Roberts’ ground-breaking work, and I have also utilized two studies of sociolinguistic (Hughes, 1989) and anthropological (Brizan, 1998) nature, as well as another work (Collins, 2008) which, via Afro-Caribbean oral tradition, establishes a link between West Africa and the first speakers of Grenadian French lexifier Creole. The data presented here was obtained through interviews of Grenadians who have knowledge of the language. After interviewing the immediate descendants of Grenadian creolophones from all areas of mainland Grenada, creolophones from Concord and its environs in the West Coast Parish of St. John’s were interviewed with video documentation. The negative morpheme was consistently reproduced in both the preliminary exercise and the final video recorded investigation.

The data considered in this study was gathered from two main sources, students in classes sponsored by the Grenada Creole Society and video recorded interviews. Since its

establishment in 2009, the Grenada Creole Society (GCS) has dedicated itself to promoting the learning, teaching, research, documentation, and preservation of Grenadian French lexifier Creole. Over the course of the present study, it has become evident that the pedagogical efforts of the society can inform its research work as well. Ongoing GCS class sessions have become rich sources for the documentation of the language, as participants engaged their elderly creolophone relatives and neighbours in the process. An important result has been that the participants in particular and the community in general have gained a sense of their importance as agents in the research and documentation process. After acquiring their informed consent, the video recorded interviewees were visited at home and asked to translate the following short negative English sentence into Grenadian French lexifier Creole: “Don’t give him anything!” The sentence to be translated was selected to juxtapose the negative marker to a phonetically similar word. In order to obtain independent, spontaneous translation, no prior preparation was allowed and there was no opportunity for consultation between the subjects.

Results

We begin with the non-video recorded interviews that took place among members, associates and students at the Grenada Creole Society. Table 1 summarizes the data gathered that attests to the use of the preverbal negative marker /ba/ in Grenadian French lexifier Creole by members and associates of the Grenada Creole Society. In Table 1, the identity code assigned to each interviewee can be found in row 1 and the region of origin of each interviewee can be found below their code in row 2. ‘Ba’ in row 3 indicates that the interviewee reported the knowledge of /ba/ as a preverbal negative marker. In row 4, *‘Convicted usage’ or ‘usage’ indicate that the interviewee insisted that /ba/ was correct and /pa/ was incorrect; **‘Memory’ indicates that the interviewee remembered parental usage of /ba/

Table 1 Testimony to the use of the preverbal negative marker /ba/ in Grenadian French lexifier Creole by members and associates of the Grenada Creole Society

DL (Visitor)	AC	JL	JT	CSL	MJJ
Concord St. John’s	Black Bay St. John’s	Concord St. John’s	Black Bay St. John’s	St. David’s	St. George St. George’s
BA	Ba	Ba	Ba	Ba	Ba
Convicted usage*	Usage	Memory**	Memory**	Memory**	Memory**

Table 2 summarizes the data gathered that attests to the use of the preverbal negative marker /ba/ in Grenadian French lexifier Creole by ten students in a class at the Grenada National Museum in 2008. In Table 2, the identity code assigned to each interviewee and their profession can be found in row 1 and the region of origin of each interviewee can be found below their code in row 2. ‘Ba’ in row 3 indicates that the interviewee

reported the knowledge of /ba/ as a preverbal negative marker. In row 4, ‘Ba konnèt’ indicates an example of the use of /ba/ and a person who confirmed to them the use of /ba/ listed below.

Table 2 Testimony to the use of the preverbal negative marker /ba/in Grenadian French lexifier Creole by a class of ten students at the Grenada National Museum in 2008

PA Retired Nurse	LI Homemaker	BH Engineer	AM Technician
St. Andrew’s	St. Andrew’s	St. David’s	St. George’s
Ba	Ba	Ba	Ba
Ba konnèt Discussion with seniors	Ba konnèt Discussion with relative	Ba konnèt Discussion with senior neighbour	Ba konnèt Discussion with relative

Table 3 summarizes the data gathered that attests to the use of the preverbal negative marker /ba/in Grenadian French lexifier Creole in a class of thirty students sponsored by University of the West Indies Open Campus in 2010-2012. In Table 3, the identity code assigned to each interviewee and their profession can be found in row 1 and the region of origin of each interviewee can be found below their code in row 2. ‘Ba’ in row 3 indicates that the interviewee reported the knowledge of /ba/ as a preverbal negative marker. In row 4, ‘Ba konnèt’ indicates an example of the use of /ba/ and if they confirmed the use of /ba/ the person consulted is listed below.

153

Table 3 Testimony to the use of the preverbal negative marker /ba/in Grenadian French lexifier Creole by in a class of thirty students sponsored by University of the West Indies Open Campus in 2010-2012

V N Police man	S M I Police Officer	TF Small businessman	TH Teacher	V M Q Retired Teacher
Chantimel St. Patrick	Perdmontemps St. David’s	Tivoli St. Andrews	Vendoôme St George’s	Munich St. Andrews
Ba	Ba	Ba	Ba	Ba
Ba konnèt	Ba konnèt	Ba konnèt Discussion with senior neighbour	Ba konnèt	Ba konnèt Discussion with a relative

In the video recorded interviews, all of the subjects, including Mrs. Dora Lewis, Mrs. Doril Romain, Mr. McLeish Langiane, and Ms. May Henry attested to the existence

of /ba/ as a preverbal negative marker in Grenadian French lexifier Creole. All translated the sentence “Don’t give him anything!” as “Ba ba’y ayen!” in Grenadian French lexifier Creole. Figure 1 indicates the areas of origin on the island of all persons in the study who reported the use of /ba/ as a preverbal negative marker in Grenadian French lexifier Creole.

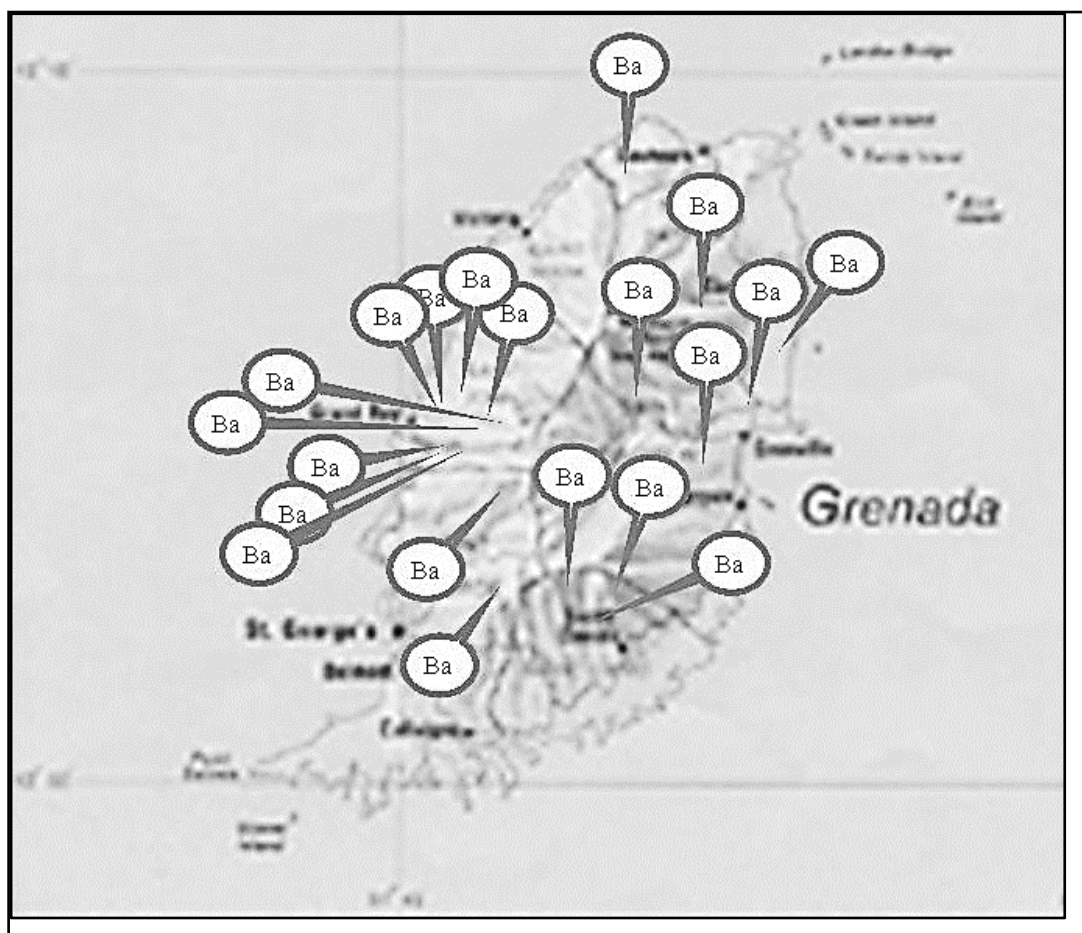


Figure 1 Areas of origin on Grenada of all persons in the study who reported the use of /ba/ as a preverbal negative marker in Grenadian French lexifier Creole

Discussion

Ferreira (2001) highlights the scarcity of linguistic work done on Grenadian French lexifier Creole. In one of the only formal studies of the verb in the language, Roberts (1971) found preverbal /ba/ to be the primary marker of negation. The work of Roberts and our own results are confirmed in the few documented sources of Grenadian French lexifier Creole in actual use, which include those listed in Table 4. In Table 4, the first column lists the name of the speaker or writer, the second column lists the name of the medium in which their speech is recorded, and column three lists the date of recording with an example of their recorded use of /ba/ as a preverbal negative marker.

Table 4 Documented sources of Grenadian French lexifier Creole in actual use

Speaker/Writer	Document/Presentation	Year/Example
Alister Hughes	Presentation on Patois, UWI	1989/ba konnèt, bazoudi
Lorna McDaniel	Big Drum Ritual of Carriacou	1998/u mwê ba filé
Merle Collins	Documentary: Saracca and Nation	2008/ba oubliye lajan'w
Chase & Chase	Dictionary of English Creole	2011/ba konnèt, sa ba bon

Having ascertained that there was little information that the Society could draw on about Grenadian French lexifier Creole except that found in our community, we decided, that being a part of the community we elected to study, it would be useful to first explore our own collective memory in an initial process of reassembly and documentation. This was facilitated by several community groups, including the Young Leaders of The Grenada Boys' Secondary School, Iola Initiative Industries and the Grenada Creole Society (Joseph, 2012a).

The teaching of Grenadian French lexifier Creole to interested members of the community was piloted in 2008 at the Grenada National Museum. Instruction in the language started in earnest in 2010 at the UWI Open Campus Grenada, and continued at that venue for three years, while, La Castaigne, a historic family home built in 1880 which was intended to become the home of The Grenada Creole Society, was being restored. Classes have been held at La Castaigne since 2014. As attested by our results, students in these classes have played a key role as co-researchers in the present study.

The present investigation itself was inspired by a presentation given to the Grenada Creole Society by creolophone community member Mrs. Dora Lewis, who was concerned that we were being taught /pa/ instead of Grenadian /ba/ as the preverbal negative marker in our Grenadian French lexifier Creole classes. Once Mrs. Lewis' observation that /ba/ is indeed the preverbal negative marker in our Grenadian French lexifier Creole was confirmed, we began to ask ourselves why this should be so. Of course, a simple phonetic change in voicing of the initial consonant from the /p/ found in Standard varieties of French and other Lesser Antillean French lexifier Creole varieties to /b/ in Grenadian might be explained purely by language internal factors, but this explanation did not seem sufficient to us. We were curious as to what other might have motivated this change.

In our quest for answers, we took a closer look at the historical and social factors that serve to differentiate Grenada from the rest of the Lesser Antilles. We found that French speakers from Wallonia, the region that today constitutes the north of France and the south of Belgium, played a more important role Grenadian history than elsewhere in the Caribbean (Joseph, 2012b). In the critical foundational years of the mid-17th century,

DuParquet, the Lieutenant Governor of the French Antilles, found it politically expedient to dispatch a large number of Walloons into Grenada from the Lieutenant Governorship of Martinique (Brizan, 1998). In our review of three of the oldest existing dictionaries of Walloon; the non-standard dialect of French spoken in Wallonia, (Cambresier, 1787; Remacle, 1839; and Forir, 1866), we found preverbal /ba/ to be a marker of negation. We therefore concluded that besides language internal voicing of /p/ to /b/, a non-standard French influence had to be taken into consideration in the emergence of /ba/ in Grenadian French lexifier Creole.

We were still not satisfied, however, because, as is too often the case with the work of those who study the Atlantic Creoles that emerged during the colonial era, we had not yet taken into account possible influences from African languages. David Frank (2007) has established both structural and lexical connections between West African languages and St. Lucian French lexifier Creole, a sister variety to Grenadian within the Lesser Antillean French lexifier Creole group. Based on the strong links between Grenada and West Africa reported by Collins (2008), we found that the preverbal (and postverbal) negative marker in Hausa, one of the most widely spoken languages of West Africa is in fact /ba/. Hausa is today spoken by more than 70 million people spread across all of West Africa and even those who speak other languages are often familiar with Hausa as a trade language commonly used in markets from Senegal to Sudan. For many centuries the Hausa and their language have been integrally woven into the West African cultural landscape. A related preverbal marker /mba/ is also widespread in some varieties of Igbo and other languages spoken today in southeastern Nigeria, one of the most populous zones along the West African coast and the region of origin of a very large proportion of the Africans who were enslaved and transported to the Americas.

This information was confirmed by Nigerians resident in Grenada at the time of this study. For example, Catholic Parish Priest Father Isek of the Missionaries of St. Paul of Nigeria is a member of the Mbembe ethnic group, and even though he does not speak Hausa fluently, just from his contacts with Hausa people and their language in markets and other venues, he was able to confirm in that in Hausa, negative sentences begin with /ba/. He gave the following examples:

- *ina sonki* I love you
- *ba na sonki* I don't love you

Optometrist Franklyn Mgbemere a member of the Igbo ethnic group, confirmed that in his own understanding, when a Hausa person says /ba/ at the beginning of a remark, whatever follows is negative. In addition, he stated that in his own language the way to negate a sentence is to use /mba/ before the verb. Therefore, alongside language internal voicing of /pa/ to /ba/ and the influence of the Walloon preverbal negative marker /ba/, we need to include influences from West African languages with which many of the

enslaved who arrived in the Caribbean were familiar, including Hausa and Igbo, which also use preverbal /ba/ or /mba/ as a negative marker.

In our account of the factors that gave rise to the preverbal negative marker /ba/ in Grenadian French lexifier Creole, we adopt a multi-causal approach that sees /ba/ emerging, not from a single source, such as a European language or an African language, but instead as part of the dynamic interaction of language internal voicing of Standard French /pa/, non-standard Walloon French /ba/, Hausa /ba/, Igbo /mba/ and probably other factors as well, which will be revealed by further research. In other words, we see Grenadian French lexifier Creole and the other Atlantic Creoles that emerged during the colonial era as being as fascinatingly complex as the people of the Caribbean themselves.

REFERENCES

- Brizan George (1998, [1984]). *Grenada island of conflict*. London: MacMillan.
- Cambresier, M.R.H.J. (1787). *Dictionnaire walon-françois ou Recueil de mots et de proverbes françois*. Liège: Bassompierre.
- Chase Thomas R. & Zarah A. Chase (2011). *Abridged handbook of Grenadian Creole English and French names: a dictionary of Grenadian Creole English with grammar and syntax*. St. George: Academic Communications Linguistic and Integrated Media Services.
- Collins, M.; Bini Teclé (Ed.) (2008). *Saramacca and nation, following in the footsteps of our ancestors*. Video Documentary. College Park: Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities.
- Dryer, Matthew S. & Martin Haspelmath (Eds.) 2013. The world atlas of language structures online. Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. Available online at <http://wals.info> (Accessed December 2013).
- Ethnologue (2013). See Lewis et al.
- Fábùnmi, F. A. (2013). Negation in sixteen Yorùbá dialects. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*, 3, 1, 1-8.
- Ferreira, Jo-Anne S. & David J. Holbrook (2001). Are they dying? The case of some French-lexifier Creoles. *Paper presented at the 4th Annual Islands in Between Conference*, St. Lucia, 8-10 November.
- Forir, Henri Joseph (1866). *Dictionnaire liégeois-français*. Liège: Severeys & Faust.
- Frank, David B. (2007). Sources of St. Lucian creole vocabulary. *Paper presented at The Summer Meeting of the Society for Pidgin and Creole Languages*, June 19, University of Amsterdam.
- Hughes, Alister (1989). Influences of French Creole on the Grenadian “language”. *Lecture presented at The University of the West Indies Extramural Centre, St. George’s, Grenada, during “French Week”*, May 11.

- Isek, A.F. (2014). Personal Communication, Parish Priest, Missionary Society of St. Paul of Nigeria, Sauteurs, St. Patrick, Grenada.
- Joseph, Marguerite-Joan (2012a). Preserving and revitalizing the French-lexifier Creole. In Nicholas Faraclas et al. (Eds.), *Double voicing and multiplex identities* (pp. 217-227). Curaçao/Puerto Rico: FPI; UoC/UPR.
- Joseph, Marguerite-Joan (2012b). *Lingering effects of an ancient Afro-Romance language on common speech in the Caribbean island of Grenada*. St. Georges: Iola Initiative Industries.
- Joseph, Marguerite-Joan. Unpublished Video Documents: How do you say ‘don’t give him’ in Patois? The Grenada Creole Society, La Castaigne, Concord, St. John’s, Grenada. October 24, 2013
- Lewis, M. Paul, Gary F. Simons & Charles D. Fennig (Eds.) (2013). *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (17th ed.). Dallas: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com>
- Mgberrere, F. (2014) Personal Communication, Optometrist, Wade’s Optical Ltd., Scott’s Street, St. George’s, Grenada.
- Mondesir, Jones E. & Lawrence D. Carrington (Eds.) (1992). *Dictionary of St. Lucian Creole*. Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter
- Remacle, Laurent (1839). *Dictionnaire wallon-français dans lequel on trouve la correction de nos idiotismes vicieux et de nos wallonismes, par Laurent Remacle*. Google Books: www.lexilogos.com/wallon_langue_dictionnaire-France (Accessed December 2013).
- Roberts, Peter A. (1971). *The verb in Grenadian French Creole*. Master’s thesis, University of the West Indies.

A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY OF LANGUAGE VARIATION IN THE ENGLISH SPOKEN IN GHANA: A CASE STUDY OF THE SCHWA VOWEL

CHARLES DJORBUA

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON

Introduction

Globalization has fostered a “tidal wave of English that is moving into almost every sociolinguistic repertoire” (Spolsky, 2004: 220). “That the world is now at its most globalized, and English the language of that globalization, is rarely contested” (Bamgbose, 2001: 357). The quotes above reinforce the pervasiveness of the spread of the English language. This pervasiveness has led to the emergence of a number of local varieties of English. The term “Englishes” is used to describe the proliferation of varieties of English spoken in the non-native English-speaking countries. The realization of some consonant and vowel sounds in Ghanaian English differs from that of Standard British English in diverse ways. There are specific Received Pronunciation (RP) vowels that are non-existent in Ghanaian English. The pronunciations of some vowel sounds in Ghanaian English have some similarities to the vowel inventory of some of the indigenous languages of the country. The Ghanaian pronunciation standard is in existence at all levels, given that the majority of segmental features in pupils’ pronunciations can be identified as Ghanaian (Ofori, Duah & Mintah, 2014). Linguistic interference takes place as languages come into contact because one linguistic form is bound to influence the other (Montgomery, 2006). Linguistic and social variables are pivotal to this kind of variation in any language. Botha (2011) indicates that variationist sociolinguistics is based on the idea that language has an overall structure which varies in correlation with variables like gender, age, social class, ethnicity, etc.

The English spoken in Ghana is classified under the Middle or Outer Circle of the three Concentric Circles identified by Kachru with the other two being the Inner Circle and the Expanding Circle (Kachru, 1982; McArthur, 1998). The Inner Circle includes the countries whose populations are traditionally native speakers of English such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom, the Outer Circle includes countries where English has traditionally had official status or has been spoken as a second language by a substantial proportion of the population such as the former colonies of the

United Kingdom, while the Expanding Circle includes countries like Israel, Korea, Japan, and China, where English is fast becoming an important second language.

The present research investigates whether the alternative pronunciations of the schwa vowel in Ghanaian English are determined by educational levels or by influence from indigenous languages. The study therefore was designed to answer the following questions:

- What are the alternative realizations of the schwa vowel in the English spoken in Ghana?
- How do factors such as education level and L1 influence the alternative realizations of the schwa sound in the English spoken in Ghana?

Adjaye (2005) and Quartey (2009) have explored language variation with regard to social variables like age, level of education, gender and linguistic background in the English spoken in Ghana. Ghanaians are said to be very proud of the English they speak and boldly associate it with RP (Sey, 1973: 10). Bobda (2000) found differences not only between the pronunciations of English in Ghana and RP, but also between Ghanaian English and the English spoken in other West African countries with similar colonial and sociolinguistic histories. Dolphyne (1995), Owusu-Ansah (1994 and 1992) and Dako (1991) (all quoted in Appartaim, 2009) have done notable linguistic work on Ghanaian English. Dolphyne (1995) for example, believes that there is an accent that can be associated with Ghanaian English due to factors such as nativization.

Ahulu (1994) identifies three different points of view on the notion of Ghanaian English:

- That of educated Ghanaians who do not accept the notion of Ghanaian English
- That of those who are against the use of English in Ghana and see language as a question of identity and want the adoption of a national indigenous language
- That of those who believe that there is a variety which should be identified as Ghanaian English

While RP can be considered to have 20 vowels: twelve monophthongs [ɪ, e, æ, ʌ, ɒ, ʊ, ə, i:, u:, ɔ:, a:, ɜ:], and eight diphthongs (aɪ, aʊ, ɔɪ, ɪə, ʊə, eɪ, eə, əʊ), Ghanaian English has been identified as having 12 vowels: seven monophthongs (i, e, ɛ, a, ɔ, o, u) and five spelling corrected diphthongs (ai, au, ɔi, iɛ, ua) (Koranteng, 2006). Huber (2008) identifies only five monophthongs in Ghanaian English: (i, ɔ, u, a, ɛ). Ngula (2011) observes that many Ghanaians are prone to pronouncing words by the way they are written. In other words, the orthography of the words influences their phonetic realizations. Even though Adjaye (2005) also touched on spelling pronunciation, she only treated it on the peripheral. Ofori, Duah and Mintah (2014) and Koranteng (2006) have advanced the idea that the variety of English which Ghanaian tertiary students speak should be accepted as the standard for Ghanaian English pronunciation for teaching and

learning. Okyere (2013) investigated the realizations of affricate and fricative consonants in Ghanaian English. He concluded that all the educational levels he studied were consistent in their realization of the affricates but some of these realizations were at variance with the RP.

One of the key theoretical bases for this paper is the notion of nativization. Kachru (1992) concord defines nativization as “the processes which creates a localised linguistic identity of a variety”. When languages come into contact, they influence each other and changes occur as a result. Local linguistic influence is brought to bear on the English language wherever it is used for communication and leads to its indigenization (nativization). of the English language. Nativization of English has brought about a number of varieties of English spoken across the world. Another important theoretical framework that underpins the present study is variationist sociolinguistics (Baylay et al., 2013; Wells, 1982).

Research design and results

The population for the research was students from two different schools – Presbyterian Senior High Technical School (SHS), Adukrom-Akuapem and Presbyterian College of Education, Akropong-Akuapem, both on the Akuapem Ridge in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Even though the dominant indigenous language spoken by the natives is Twi, the population of the schools includes students of diverse ethnolinguistic background from across the country. A sample of twenty students was used for the study; ten students from each institution, including five boys and five girls from the SHS and five men and five women from the College of Education. The SHS students that were chosen were those who were fully prepared for the oral aspect of their impending West Africa Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE). In the case of the college of education, second year students were selected, due to the fact that the third year students were on external teaching practice and so were not available.

A questionnaire was used to collect bio-data of the respondents, including their personal, educational, social and linguistic backgrounds (Creswell, 1998). Completion of the questionnaire was followed by individual respondents reading a text, sentences and isolated words. These readings were recorded, transcribed and then analyzed to ascertain the different realizations of the schwa sound wherever it occurred in the RP version of the text. The transcription was phonemic and the symbols were taken from the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The results are listed in the tables below:

Table 1 Realizations of the RP schwa sound by secondary level students

Word	Respondents									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<u>a</u> go	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε
<u>a</u> bout	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	e	a	e
<u>o</u> bserve	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ
fam <u>o</u> us	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ
col <u>o</u> urful	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
photo- graph	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
rum <u>o</u> ured	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	o	o	ɔ	o	ɔ	ɔ
farmer <u>er</u>	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
worker <u>er</u>	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
doctor <u>or</u>	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a

Table 2 Percentages of the different realizations of the RP schwa by secondary level students

Realization	Percentage
ε	10%
a	48%
ɔ	27%
o	13%
e	2%

Table 3 Realizations of the RP schwa sound by tertiary level students

Word	Respondents									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<u>a</u> go	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε	ε
<u>a</u> bout	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
<u>o</u> bserve	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ
fam <u>o</u> us	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ
col <u>o</u> urful	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
photo- graph	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o
rum <u>o</u> ured	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	o	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ	ɔ
farmer <u>er</u>	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
worker <u>er</u>	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a
doctor <u>or</u>	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a	a

Table 4 Percentages of the different realizations of the RP schwa by tertiary level students

Realization	Percentage
ɛ	10%
a	50%
ɔ	29%
o	11%

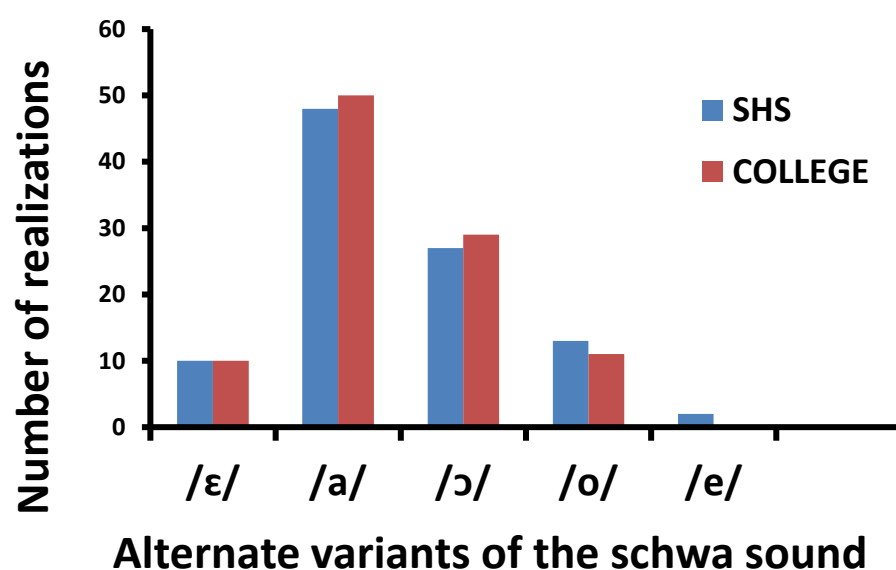


Figure 1 Comparison of secondary (SHS) and tertiary (College) students' realizations of the RP schwa

Analysis and conclusion

As attested in previous studies (Koranteng, 2006; Huber 2008), none of the students used the RP schwa [ə] sound anywhere in the data collected. Instead, a number of different variants were used instead of the schwa. The results show a very high degree of consistency both among and between secondary and tertiary level students as to which variant they selected for their realizations of RP schwa, which strongly suggests that there is in fact an identifiable pattern of the realization of RP schwa that constitutes a fairly regular feature of Ghanaian English spoken by this population. While there was a small amount of variability in the realizations of a few items at the secondary level, this limited variability seemed to disappear among tertiary level students, among whom the patterns for the realization of the RP schwa became completely regularized. This

further suggests that regardless of education level and linguistic background, the realization of the RP schwa in the Ghanaian English used by students seems to follow the same patterns.

Confirming the findings of Ngula (2011) the data suggest that one factor that may be conditioning these different patterns in the Ghanaian English realization of the RP schwa is spelling, with [ɔ] and [ʊ] occurring only where the grapheme used for the RP schwa contains the symbol <o> (*observe, famous, photograph, rumoured*), [a] and [ɛ] occurring wherever the grapheme used for the RP schwa is the symbol <a>, and [ə] occurring elsewhere, especially for the agentive suffixes symbolized by the graphemes <-er> and <-or> (*farmer, worker, doctor*). The grapheme <r> following the vowel or vowels that represent the schwa in RP favors the realization [a] (*colour, farmer, worker, doctor*), but this is not always the case, given that the realization of the RP schwa in *rumoured* is [ʊ].

REFERENCES

- Adjaye, Sophia A. (2005). *Ghanaian English pronunciation*. Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Ahulu, Samuel (1994). How Ghanaian is Ghanaian English? *English Today*, 10, 2, 25-29.
- Appartaim, Anita B. (2009). *Prominence and rhythm of Ghanaian English speech: a case study of parliamentary discourse*. Master's thesis, University of Cape Coast.
- Bamgbose, Ayo (2001). World Englishes and globalization. *World Englishes*, 20, 3, 357-363.
- Baylay, Robert, Richard Cameron & Ceil Lucas (Eds.) (2013). *The Oxford handbook of sociolinguistics*. (Online publication).
- Bobda, Augustin S. (2000). The uniqueness of Ghanaian English pronunciation in West Africa. *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences*, 30, 2, 185-198.
- Botha, Werner (2011). *Dimensions in variationist sociolinguistics: a sociolinguistic investigation of language variation in Macau*. Master's thesis, University of South Africa.
- Creswell, John W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Dolphyne, Florence (1995). A note on the English language in Ghana. In Ayo Bamgbose, L. Ayo Banjo & Andrew Thomas (Eds.), *New Englishes: a West African perspective* (pp. 27-33). Ibadan: Mosuro Publishers.
- Huber, Magnus (2008). Ghanaian English: phonology. In Rajend Mesthrie (Ed.), *Varieties of English: Africa, South and Southeast Asia* (pp. 67-91). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

- Kachru, Braj B. (1982). *The other tongue*. Urbana: University of Illinois.
- Kachru, Braj. B (1992). Teaching World Englishes. In Braj B. Kachru (Ed.). *The other tongue: English across cultures*. Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois.
- Koranteng, Louisa A. (2006). *Ghanaian English: a description of its sound system and phonological features*. PhD dissertation, University of Ghana.
- McArthur, Tom (1998). *The English languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Montgomery, Martin (2006, [1985]). *An introduction to language and society*. London: Routledge.
- Ngula, Richmond S. (2011). Ghanaian English: spelling pronunciation in focus. *Language in India*, 11, 2, 22-36.
- Ofori, Stephen G., Ishmeal Duah & Kingsley C. Mintah (2014). Exploring the feasibility of a proposed Ghanaian English pronunciation standard. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 5, 22, 49-53.
- Okyere, George J. (2013). *A sociolinguistic study of language variation in the English spoken in Ghana: a case study of some selected consonants*. Master's thesis, University of Ghana.
- Quartey, Elizabeth (2009). "Phonological features of English as spoken by some final year Senior high students". Master's thesis, University of Ghana.
- Sey, Kofi A. (1973). *Ghanaian English: an exploratory survey*. London: Macmillan.
- Spolsky, Bernard (2004). *Language Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wells, John C. (1982). *Accents of English*. (3 vols.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF
IDENTITY AND CULTURE IN THE
GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND**

LA RAZA: THE SEARCH FOR IDENTITY

WILFREDO A. GEIGEL, UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, ST. CROIX

ALMA SIMOUNET-GEIGEL, UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, RIO PIEDRAS

In the 1990s, at an Annual Conference of the Speech Communication Association¹, the authors were asked by some of the non-Mexican members of the newly-created *La Raza* Interest Group to explain the term “*La Raza*” (The Race²) and its strong connection to people of Mexican ancestry in the United States (US). We were also prompted by others in the group to bring the terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” into the discussion³. The following year we presented our findings at the same Annual Conference and this paper is a revised version of that original one. It addresses the presentation of self in terms of group naming and the question of identity among the Spanish-speaking diaspora from the Caribbean islands of Cuba, Hispaniola (the Dominican Republic) and Puerto Rico. In order to understand much of the discussion, we believe it is imperative to first explain the historical origin of the term *La Raza* and its connection to the feast known in the US as *Columbus Day* or *Discovery Day*. In Hispanic American countries, this day is referred to as *El Día de La Raza* (The Day of The Race). Reference to *La Raza* in this context embodies a rallying call in commemoration of the glorious past of the Spanish Empire which grew in large part from the invasion of the Americas by Spanish Conquistadors led by Christopher Columbus at the end of the fifteenth century. *La Raza* became synonymous with *Hispanidad* or Hispanicity, a concept that recalled the Spanish values of religion, virtue and politics which Abbot Don Juan Nuix so intensely defended in his exposé of Spanish rule in the Americas (1782:314). According to exponents of Hispanicity, this ethnicity was protected by laws which made racial assimilation possible through the promotion of Catholicism, the Spanish language and the ideology of a unified “Spanish Race” (*La Raza*, 1943; Mugueta, 1938; Santillán, 1973). At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was a movement promoted throughout Spanish speaking countries to make *La Raza* an official celebration. It was initiated by the president of Argentina, Hipólito Irigoyen, and resulted in October 12th becoming known as *La Fiesta* (The Party) or *El Día de La Raza* (The Day of The Race). This date

¹ Now known as the National Communication Association

² The translation “Race” refers to genetics only and has no suggestion of competition as the word for these two concepts is not the same in Spanish.

³ Despite significant overlap, the terms are not synonymous: “Hispanic” refers to Spanish-speaking people and “Latino/a” refers to the geographic region of Latin America.

was chosen specifically to coincide with the celebration of what is known in the US as the Discovery of America. Many Latin American republics, Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries, and some 20 states of the US approved resolutions to commemorate the solemnity of the event. In Puerto Rico, the Legislative Assembly approved a Joint Resolution on August 18, 1913, which read in part:

As a result of the joyous realization of this notable enterprise, humanity acquired knowledge of the form and composition of the planet we live in... The day of this event, one of such great transcendence for the progress of humanity, must be celebrated annually in every country of this hemisphere, and we must take the opportunity to analyze the deeds of our life... so that we may be able to guide ourselves more in harmony with our humanitarian ideals and those of liberty.

Spain had one of the largest and longest-held empires in the history of humankind that was rapidly and entirely lost, mainly as the result of uprisings, revolutions and wars, against many of the ideologies that *La Raza* encompassed. Once the ill feeling between the *Peninsulares* (native-born Spaniards) and the *Criollos* (American-born Spaniards), which fed those uprisings was forgotten, those with a strong sense of Eurocentric identity associated with Spain began the re-vindication of *La Raza*. They wanted to re-establish a shared sense of the past in an attempt to structure a self-image and to communicate a common identity with a glorious past. Seemingly, even after conflict and separation from Spain, there was a sense of attachment to some aspects of *La Raza*.

Simón Bolívar (1783-1830), who was probably considered one of the most anti-Spanish patriots in the Hispanic Americas, professed great pride in his native language. He considered the Spanish language one of the greatest gifts received and treasured by all Hispanic people. This did not prevent him from leading the fight against the imperial and colonial power of Spain in Colombia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru, in one of the most extensive revolutions ever fought. However, at the beginning of the 20th century, a re-emergent Spanish “Spirit” took hold. Certain groups and individuals came out in defense of everything Spanish without regard for local or regional cultural distinctions. This movement prompted an ideology of “The Race” that encompassed all the social and ethnic groups connected by the former colonial power through the Catholic faith and a humanist tradition with roots in medieval theology (Belaval, 1966). Some claimed that as a people, they grew within the spiritual structure of Spain, seeing the Spanish language as a golden thread that bound them together under a common history (Tió, 1992). They furthermore claimed that Hispanic America was the ‘cauldron of humanity’ stabilized by what Tió called the homogeneous ‘Cosmic race’⁴ that brings together diverse languages and ethnicities. It is thus clear that *La Raza* was in its inception a term that embodied an ethnicity constituted by the binding together of many languages and so-called ‘races.’ The members of this constructed new ‘race’ saw themselves as the product of the cosmos with an ethnicity whose origin was supernatural.

⁴ The term ‘Cosmic race’ makes reference to a publication by José Vasconcelos (1948: 47-51).

The concept of *La Raza* became ingrained in the social circles of the elites in the South American republics who had control in political affairs. Vast populations within these South American republics are made up of indigenous peoples who did not possess, or rather, were prevented from acquiring any political or economic power in the post-colonial systems of government. Consequently, the property-owning classes considered themselves the only respectable group since they alone had the social and ethnic prerequisites to gain political prestige. At times, even the wealthy *Criollos* (offspring of Spaniards born in the Americas) had difficulty breaking into elite social circles. It became an established rule in the Spanish colonies to grant no civil or military employment above a certain grade to anyone but *Peninsulares* (people born on the Iberian Peninsula) or their descendants who were considered to be of 'pure blood.' It became necessary for any candidate applying for certain positions to present documentary evidence that he/she did not have indigenous or African blood. The practice of requesting *expedientes de sangre* (blood records) was widespread until the 1870s. An elitist sense of superiority was expounded in such racially-charged terms that Hispanicity was defined as "a road as wide as the ocean and as full of light as the horizon opened by the swords of the Conquistadors and the crosses of missionaries, in order to take Christ to the Indians and the Indians to Christ" (Mugueta, 1938: 50). Mugueta goes on to describe how the movement embodied by the term *La Raza* made clear reference to Catholic and colonial ideology:

It is the bundle of exalting qualities which are natural and autochthonous, that have been tempered and raised to burning red in the volcanic forge of religious sentiment. It is the racial thrust which is universal and ascending, since only from the heights will the width of the horizon be dominated... That new Hispanicity of superlative values is characterized by the imperialism which is revived in the glory of a new sunrise. Such imperialism cannot incite jealousy from anyone, much less from the brothers overseas. It does not represent the conquest of territories, but a sublime ambition to conquer souls, hearts, people and races in order to impose on their world, by the power of redemption, the Catholic and ecumenical culture of Spain. (Mugueta: 51-52)

To further demonstrate ideologies underpinning *La Raza*, we make reference to three excerpts from a 1943 publication entitled *La Raza: exaltación iberoamericana* (The Race: Ibero-American exaltation) which brings together the words of some of the extollers of Hispanicity:

The event of the Indies is the greatest human enterprise in history. It was a gigantic mission that could only be accomplished by exceptional individuals supported by a collectivity, and its social and political being (Eduardo Alastrue).

We Spaniards do not pay any attention to blood or color of skin, because what we call race is not made up of characteristics which are transmitted through obscure protoplasm, but through the light of the spirit, such as speech and creed (Ramiro de Maeztu).

Spaniards gave America their language, their religion, their laws, and they did so without any limitations or strictures, but totally free and with much generosity.

And, as if this were not enough, they mixed their blood of fine and superior race with the copper-colored American blood, thus whitening that world (M. Siurot)

In Puerto Rico, intellectual and revolutionary Afro-Caribbean activist Pedro Albizu Campos modified such common perceptions of *La Raza* in order to erase any connotation of racism and to accommodate a Puerto Rican context. In his October 12, 1933 *Día de la Raza* speech, he stated that “this celebration defines our character... not the skin... The unity that emanates from within individuals depends on that which they carry in the spirit and soul” (Ferri, 1988: 132). This was obviously an attempt at removing what, to him, would have been an unacceptable direct reference to the ill-defined but popular concept of ‘race’ on the island.

In the 1960s, a movement got underway in the southwestern US in an effort to give a sense of cohesion to the varied populations of Mexican origin residing in that part of the country. That movement gave birth to *La Raza Unida* (The United Race) Party under the auspices of the first Chicano National Youth Congress (García & De La Garza, 1977). It is our impression that either the organizers of the movement were not aware of the racist implications that the concept of *La Raza* could project or, if they were aware of it, they must have seen it from a different perspective. *La Raza Unida* did not promote assimilation to the mainstream United States society but provided a safeguard for the uniqueness of Mexicans who were both bilingual and bicultural (Meier & Rivera, 1972). The party’s formation was an effort to establish an alternative to the Republican and Democratic parties which had ignored the needs of Mexican-Americans (Santillán, 1973). Irrespective of the alternative promulgated by *La Raza Unida* Party, the concept of *La Raza*, viewed in light of the ‘Discovery of America’, is a rather polemic theme from the standpoint of the *Americanistas*, that is, those historians in the Americas who do not view the voyages of Columbus as glorious and magnanimous events.

An alternative interpretation of Columbus’s “discovery” which has been gathering strength in the last few years, is illustrated by the discourse in the Americas that contextualized the 500th commemoration of the voyages of Columbus. During the planning stages for the commemoration, there was a more generalized approach to the theme of “discovery” and there was a trend to avoid the nomenclature of “celebration”. In an article published in *Newsweek* (June 24, 1991) entitled “Columbus, stay home!” the executive director of the Jubilee Committee was quoted as choosing his words with care:

We don't call it a celebration... we call it a commemoration...specifically the 500th anniversary of the voyages to the New World... I refer to it as an 'encounter.' I may have even said discovery in the past, but now I refer to it as an encounter.

Scholars engaged in the story of Columbus and the enterprise he undertook are now reinterpreting the historical sources in terms no longer so favorable to Columbus or Spain, for they have realized that it is inconceivable to speak about the encounter as a discovery of the Americas 500 years ago, when the region had been inhabited for more than 10,000 years. At the time Columbus crossed the ocean, other nations' exploratory endeavors had already encountered the Americas and there were indigenous peoples inhabiting these lands. Native Americans from the US and the rest of the Americas challenged the celebration of Columbus Day because to them it was an attack on their culture and identity. As part of this challenge to the traditional celebrations, there was a counter commemoration which promoted the idea of staging mock trials of Columbus for war crimes against the indigenous population and erecting a memorial to the Indian nations which began to disappear in 1492. One example of how proponents of this counter commemoration voiced their dissent was by erecting a gypsum board representation of Columbus as an *esclavista* (slave promoter) in the *Plaza de Colón* (Columbus Square) of Puerto Rico's capital city of Old San Juan during the early hours of the morning of October 12, 1992.

There are, indeed, very few Hispanic indigenous peoples in the Americas who today feel part of *La Raza*, in spite of the thread of a common language. In fact, Hispanists would also claim that the Catholic Church of Spanish origin is not the same Church which today looks after the spiritual welfare of those dwelling in the Americas. The "new" church is perceived as against the cultural and political hegemony of elite groups and in favor of the indigenous populations. There is also a movement within the Catholic faith in Latin America known as the *Evangelio de la Liberación* or the Gospel of Liberation that views the Christian Biblical Gospels as a means to free indigenous-descended populations from the abuses of local hegemonies. We may easily conclude that the "discovery" of the Americas and Spain's empire building that were hailed as transcendental for the progress of humanity 100 years ago are no longer viewed in the same light.

The concept of *La Raza* disregards the fact that not all the Spanish speakers in the Western hemisphere are culturally homogenous. Indeed, the majority of English speaking North Americans in the United States do not realize that these Spanish speaking peoples are not culturally or socially the same. It is for this reason that the umbrella designation of Hispanic is a misnomer. For example, Lustig and Koester (2013:60) explain that the term *Hispanic* refers to the "dominant influences of Spain and the Spanish language", but it is a contested term because "it tends to homogenize all groups of people who have Spanish surnames and who use the Spanish language".

The examples that can be provided in order to illustrate cultural differences among Hispanic peoples are endless. We shall limit ourselves to those few which poignantly mark distinction. Gutiérrez (1995) and particularly Lustig and Koester (2013:59-61) discuss some of the self-given names with which Mexican Americans identify themselves, e.g., *Californios*, *Nuevo Mejicanos*, *Tejanos*, *Mestizos*, *Pochos*, and *Chicanos* in response to political, geographical, socio-economic, ethnic and elitist agendas. Exiled Cubans in the United States brought with them the divisions which characterized their community in pre-Castro Cuba: for example, Jewish Cubans still move in different social circles from other Cuban emigres (personal interviews), and the *Marielitos* (Cubans that left the island from the port of Mariel) are still ostracized by Miami Cuban society because they were prisoners that Castro himself selected to be sent to the US. In addition, pre-Revolutionary Cuban society displayed a racially-divided community in which Afro-Cubans were denied socioeconomic mobility. It is therefore no wonder that the majority of early Cuban emigres belonged to the European-descended property-owning groups (Shorris, 1992). Comparatively, Puerto Ricans and Dominicans constitute a more markedly interracial social group (Alleyne, 2002), in which Afro-Caribbean people are not so explicitly discriminated against or socially segregated by fierce anti-interracial attitudes. The clear majority of Puerto Ricans and Dominican migrants to the United States have come from non property-owning groups in search for better living conditions. The political and historical links of the Dominican Republic to Haiti made it possible for them to be more racially mixed. Dominicans additionally share many linguistic and cultural characteristics with Puerto Ricans, but the US citizenship granted to Puerto Ricans in 1917 contributed to economic and cultural distinctions from the Dominican Republic. In comparison to Puerto Ricans, Dominican migrants have a greater challenge adapting to the US culture and economy in ways that highlight their previous lack of access to technology and services considered essential to many modern populations in the US (Shorris, 1992). However, this economic distinction has changed since the beginning of the 21st century given the financial struggles of Puerto Rico and the ‘boom’ experienced by the Dominican Republic, its island neighbor.

The immigrants from Central America (Nicaragua, El Salvador, etc.) constitute another group in the US which has found refuge from extremist revolutionary movements in each of their countries. Political and social unrest in many of these countries brought waves of immigrants to the US from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds, and in addition to their socio-economic distinctions, many of these people have unique indigenous descentance. Indian populations who survived in the Americas left an indelible mark in their descendants’ culture and physiological features. Yet individuals from the different countries of Central America with their distinct ethnic backgrounds are lumped together under the umbrella of the term Hispanic, without any acknowledgement of distinct countries of origin or ethnic differences.

If Spanish-speaking Colombians, Argentines, and Chileans were to be considered alongside other Hispanic immigrants in the US, they would present a group that is totally different from the ones discussed above, regarding their culture, physiognomy, ethnicity and socio-cultural makeup. People from these countries, regardless of whether they are of European or mixed Indian and European descent, display cultural behaviors that mark them as a different people or aligning with groups from other countries in the Americas. For example, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Cubans, and Venezuelans share more cultural characteristics with Portuguese-speaking Brazilians than with Spanish-speaking Argentines.

Recent studies carried out among Hispanics in the US have magnified the cultural diversity of this group. According to the Census Bureau, the Hispanic population in the United States, often referred to as Latino/a given the close association with migrants from Latin America, has grown more diverse during the last decade (Eskey, 1991; US Census Bureau, 2000; 2010; Duany, 2002). Reports have stated that there has been an enormous increase in the number of Hispanics from South and Central America who don't fall into any of the three traditional groups: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and Cubans. The US Census Bureau data does not show breakdowns of ethnic identity among new arrivals however, and the difficulty of identification was handled very 'efficiently' from an administrative perspective: this new group was simply denominated 'other.' Yet it accounts for a quarter of the Hispanic population in the United States. The 'other' group also adds further complexity as it has proved to be particularly attractive to Puerto Ricans in the States because of the difficulty they have in placing themselves in the conventional white/black dichotomy of "the hegemonic discourse on race and ethnicity" from a United States perspective (Duany: 238).

Another study carried out by the Latino National Political Survey and presented at an annual meeting of the American Political Science Association Convention in Washington, D. C. (Turner, 1991) stated that there was a marked difference in the attitudes of Hispanic groups. This scientific finding formalizes and brings into academic discourse something that Hispano-Americans have always known; we differ in many respects. This diversity resonates with other groups in the United States who identify with a complex interracial and interethnic heritage. The Multi-Ethnic Interracial Student Coalition (MISC) is an organization formed in 1989 at the University of Michigan which connects and serves multiracial students. This and other organizations at various other universities have become safe havens where students are able to define themselves without social pressure (Atkins: 1991). Unfortunately, at the Census Bureau, these young people continue to be categorized as 'other'.

Hispano-Americans are not unique in our diversity. Differences, whether ethnic, linguistic, racial, religious, socioeconomic, or political characterize most nations and societies. For example, the United States of America, Canada, Ireland, Lebanon, China, Japan, and Spain are all composed of heterogeneous populations despite their singular

national classification. Compared to these other groups, whose diversity is considered as part of their national classification, what brings Hispano-Americans together as a group besides their colonial history and the associated Spanish language? Seen in this perspective, colonial ideology still predominates in the classification process albeit under the guise of a unified speech community.

Sociolinguists contend that a diverse array of speech communities are to be found within any major speech community. Gumperz defines a speech community as “any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage” (1972: 219). Thus, while individuals may belong to a number of different speech communities which possess their own cultural knowledge and behavior, they may also belong to the same speech community which embodies a number of common historical traditions and cultural experiences. These experiences, which are the result of shared values and beliefs, encompass a series of characteristics according to Marín and VanOss Marín (1991: 11-17). DeVito (2015) supports the indexing of characteristics and explains seven features of the Latino/a speech community:

1. **Allocentrism or collectivism** – a value characterized by personal interdependence, field sensitivity, conformity, readiness to be influenced by others, mutual empathy, willingness to sacrifice for the welfare of the in-group members and trust of the members of the in-group
2. **Simpatia** – a value that emphasizes the need for behaviors that promote smooth and pleasant social relationships
3. **Familialism** – a value which entails individuals’ strong identification with and attachment to their nuclear and extended families with strong feelings of loyalty, reciprocity, and solidarity among members of the same family
4. **Power Distance** – a value in which members of the community tend to promote deference and respect toward certain powerful groups or individuals, depending on the importance placed on the influence of these groups within the community
5. **Close Personal Space** – a preference for shorter distance from others when interacting
6. **Present-Time Orientation** – a value that emphasizes immediacy, the inability to delay gratification or plan for the future, and the lack of importance placed on punctuality
7. **Distinct Gender Roles** – a principle that emphasizes well-defined views of gender-related behaviors, some of which have incorporated marked changes in the 21st century

We believe, first, that these features have not been fully documented and second, that subgroups share some characteristics more than others. We strongly agree with De-

Vito's idea of collectivism as the most basic to the cultural makeup of so-called Hispanics, which also encompasses family orientation, close personal space, present-time orientation, and well-defined gender roles. In addition to these seven features, Hispano-Americans share mutually-intelligible varieties of language and deeply-felt beliefs that our stifled voices need to articulate more forcefully in US society, so that they may be headed rather than ignored, as has so often been the case in the past.

While we firmly advocate for the formation of groups which give voice to all marginalized peoples, we also steadfastly believe in the move to transcend race, ethnicity and culture. The last two are inextricably linked to identity formation, but all three have wrought destruction and genocide as the historical events of the former Yugoslavia attest. We firmly believe that the promotion of hatred towards ethnic groups must be continuously arrested and instead we must advocate for respect and tolerance. Difference is what enriches cultures in close contact, and paradoxically, these same differences can either be a source of conflict and division or a means to build a more understanding and humane world.

REFERENCES

- Alleyne, Mervyn (2002). *The construction and representation of race and ethnicity in the Caribbean and the world*. Barbados: University of the West Indies Press.
- Atkins, E. (June 10, 1991). People of mixed race seek identity and unity. *San Juan Star*. *Aztlan*, 17, 1 (1987).
- Belaval, Emilio (1966). Prólogo. In J.E. De Diego *El Plebiscito*. San Juan: Editorial Cordillera.
- Cifre de Loubriel, Esther (1962). *Catálogo de extranjeros residentes en Puerto Rico en el siglo XIX*. Río Piedras: Universidad de Puerto Rico Press.
- DeVito, Joseph A. (2015, [1976]). *The interpersonal communication book*. New York: Pearson.
- Duany, Jorge (2002). *The Puerto Rican nation on the move: identities on the island and the United States*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- Eskey, K. (June 12, 1991). Hispanic population in U.S. grew diverse during the last decade. *The San Juan Star*.
- Ferri, Joseph M. (1988). *Pedro Albizu Campos' El Día de la Raza: a rhetorical inquiry*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Speech Communication Association.
- García, F. Chris & Rodolfo O. De la Garza (1977). *The Chicano political experience*. North Scituate: Duxbury Press.
- Gray, Paul (October 7, 1991). The trouble with Columbus. *Time Magazine*, 52-56.
- Gumperz, John J. (1972). The speech community. In Pier P. Giglioli (Ed.), *Language and social context* (pp. 43-52). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

- Gutiérrez, David (1995). *Walls and mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican immigrations and the politics of ethnicity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- La Raza: exaltación iberoamericana* (1943). Huelva: Imprenta Bernárdez.
- Lustig, Myron & Jolene Koester (2013). *Intercultural Competence*. 7th Ed. New York: Pearson.
- Marín, Gerardo & Barbara VanOss Marín (1991). *Research with Hispanic populations*. (Applied Social Research Methods Series: v. 23). Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Meier, Matt S. & Feliciano Rivera (1972). *The Chicanos*. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Mugueta, Juan (1938). *Los valores de La Raza*. San Sebastian: Navarro & Del Teso.
- Newsweek (June 24, 1991). Columbus stay home. *Newsweek*.
- Nieto, Sonia (2000, [1992]). *Affirming diversity*. New York: Longman.
- Nuix, Abbott Don Juan (1782). *Reflexiones imparciales sobre la humanidad de los españoles en las Indias*. Pedro Varela y Ulloa, translator. Madrid: impresor de cámara de S.M.
- Santillán, Richard (1973). *La Raza Unida*. Los Angeles: Tlaquilo Publications.
- Shorris, Earl (1992). *Latinos: a biography of the people*. New York: Norton.
- Time Magazine (April 9, 1990). America's changing colors. *Time Magazine*.
- Tiό, Salvador (1992, [1977]). *Desde el Tuétano*. [Book and Newspaper; all articles have been published in the form of a book by the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture.] San Juan: Editorial Cultural.
- Turner, H. (September 3, 1991). Study shows attitudes differ among Hispanic groups. *The San Juan Star*.
- U.S. Census Bureau. 1990, 2000, 2010.
- Vasconcelos, José (1948). *La Raza Cósmica*. México: Espasa Calpe.
- Who are we? (July 8, 1991). *Time Magazine*.

LA IDENTIDAD LINGÜÍSTICA PUERTORRIQUEÑA EN LOS BILLBOARDS DE SAN JUAN Y CAROLINA

GABRIEL E. SUÁREZ

UNIVERSIDAD DE PUERTO RICO, RÍO PIEDRAS

Entre los indicadores del uso y frecuencia de una lengua está el paisaje lingüístico. Actualmente, el estudio de paisajes lingüísticos contribuye a reconocer la vitalidad de variedades lingüísticas, y la función de las lenguas en ámbitos administrativos, comerciales y públicos. En este trabajo se estudia el lenguaje utilizado en los *billboards* alrededor de la Avenida Baldorioty de Castro, en la zona metropolitana de Puerto Rico. De esta forma, se investiga la relación entre lenguaje e identidad lingüística asociada a los anuncios o la publicidad.

Peter Garrett (2010) define el paisaje lingüístico (LL, por sus siglas en inglés) basado en la investigación de Landry y Bourhis (1997). La unión de observaciones alrededor de la comunidad lingüística en la Avenida Baldorioty de Castro, y la inclusión de anuncios como integrantes del paisaje lingüístico a la que alude Garrett, genera interrogantes acerca del uso de las lenguas en esta zona. Landry y Bourhis establecen que cualquier lenguaje visible y notable, en anuncios públicos y comerciales, comprende el paisaje lingüístico. Al revisar la investigación de estos, se observa relación entre el poder social y la lengua utilizada en anuncios. También, es notable en este estudio, el bilingüismo y el efecto que el LL pueda tener en el desarrollo del mismo.

Landry y Bourhis dividen el propósito de su estudio en tres partes: primero, examinan los aspectos sociolingüísticos asociados al estudio del LL; segundo, relacionan el LL con la vitalidad etnolingüística (EV, por sus siglas en inglés); y, por último, exploran la experiencia con el LL en relación con las percepciones de vitalidad y el comportamiento del lenguaje. Para su desarrollo, utilizan comunidades minoritarias del francés canadiense en Canadá. Los resultados obtenidos permiten posicionar el estudio del LL como factor característico, entre grupos etnolingüísticos que compiten bajo contextos multilingües.

Antes de comenzar su estudio, los investigadores ofrecen datos acerca de otros estudios del LL. Mencionan los ejemplos de Bélgica y de Quebec, como primeras instancias de regulaciones dirigidas al uso del lenguaje en el LL. También incluyen como estadística a Leclerc (1994), quien confirma más de 30 países en los cuales se regula LL. Destacan que en 1992, Bourhis estableció al LL como un marcador de la comunidad lingüística.

Otro de los datos que incluyen Landry y Bourhis, es acerca del lenguaje expuesto en el paisaje, el cual proviene de una mayoría poblacional y administrativa. Nuevamente, basados en Leclerc (1989) distinguen entre anuncios privados y gubernamentales, y cómo ambos delinear el paisaje LL en una zona. Luego, incluyen otro estudio de Bourhis (1996), en donde se identifica la función simbólica del LL sobre la vitalidad etnolingüística de los grupos. Es decir, cuando dos o más grupos étnicos conviven en una comunidad determinada, el grupo dominante y su lengua, influyen en la selección de una variedad lingüística para la creación de billboards. A su vez, esta será la lengua utilizada en procesos administrativos, escolares, aspectos relacionados a la salud y a la economía de la zona en que se encuentran.

Enumeran tres hipótesis. La primera, distingue el LL como factor independiente de la red individual de contacto de lenguas. Como segunda hipótesis, relacionan el LL con las creencias de vitalidad exocéntricas y con el comportamiento del lenguaje, y no con las creencias egocéntricas y de identidad étnica. O sea, el paisaje lingüístico tendrá mayor influencia en creencias de grupo asociadas con el lenguaje y no a las creencias individuales. Por último, predicen que a mayor uso de una lengua en los anuncios, mayor uso del mismo en instituciones comerciales y públicas.

Un breve recuento cronológico basado en estudios de LLs, se inicia Italia con la investigación de Griffin (2004). El estudio de los anuncios en las calles de Roma advierte el uso de inglés, por lo cual comienza con la descripción de esta lengua, y menciona su prestigio y algunas de sus características morfológicas, como la brevedad, flexibilidad fonética y similitud con el italiano. También, destaca el uso de inglés en el mercadeo y comercio. Griffin analiza el lenguaje en anuncios en 17 calles de Roma, las cuales han sido identificadas bajo 14 códigos. De inmediato, resalta el uso breve del inglés, y destaca palabras como *American*, *express*, *visa*, *international*, y *club*, entre las más utilizadas. En este caso, el lenguaje del paisaje no necesariamente es el utilizado por la población habita alrededor del LL.

Otro estudio acerca del paisaje lingüístico se encuentra en Backhaus (2005). Aquí, el describe el espacio público y urbano de Japón. Entre sus anotaciones, alude a “throw away roadside billboards” (p. 103); y afirma que se acerca a las implicaciones diacrónicas del paisajismo lingüístico. Bajo 23 áreas, Backhaus trabaja con 51 “block signs”, y confirma la proliferación de uso de bilingüismo y/o multilingüismo en la compañía de trenes de Japón -JR. Otro ejemplo, está relacionado con la compañía de basura, la cual ha cambiado de monolingüe hasta los años ‘90, a bilingüe (japonés-inglés), y casos de multilingüismo en los que los letreros contienen chino y coreano.

Tres años más tarde, en el 2008, Patrick Shaou-Whea Dodge y Elizabeth Suter estudian las percepciones de los ciudadanos en China, con respecto a las imágenes de infantes del género femenino. El trabajo contiene varias estadísticas que muestran al sexo masculino como predominante en las familias. Por esta razón, el gobierno y sus nuevas políticas de concepción, intentan recrear una imagen positiva del género femenino como

componente de la familia china actual. Tanto la primera criatura de la familia, como la segunda, tiene mayor probabilidad a ser varón. No obstante, el crecimiento poblacional durante diez años en este país, según datos del censo en el año 2000, sobrepasa el de los Estados Unidos. En aquel momento la cifra total fue de (1.266) billones de habitantes. Históricamente, la tradición relacionada a la natalidad en China es patriarcal. Por esta razón, las familias acuden a diferentes alternativas que promuevan la regeneración del apellido del padre. Sin embargo, las nuevas políticas institucionales intentan fomentar la permanencia de infantes féminas en la sociedad. A pesar de la gran cantidad de abortos, los cuales se practican aun avanzados los embarazos, más de un 70% de estos, son causados por la presencia del sexo femenino.

Así, el gobierno en este país, utiliza billboards como medio influyente en las percepciones de su sociedad acerca de la permanencia de una niña en la familia. En este estudio se destaca cómo la ideología tradicional patriarcal domina, y concluye que conllevará un largo proceso cambiar este sistema. Además, resalta las imágenes de niñas utilizadas en dichos billboards como mecanismo útil de propaganda gubernamental.

Otro estudio que relaciona aspectos socioeconómicos del uso de billboards, aparece en el 2008. Sabine Marschall explora la ciudad de Johannesburgo en África del Sur. Según Marschall, el arte expuesto en estos sùper tablones contrasta la ideología del apartheid. Ahora, aparecen figuras humanas negras con vestimentas distintivas de la región como texto simbólico. En este trabajo se menciona además el ejemplo de un texto escrito que aboga por los derechos humanos.

De regreso al continente europeo, Brúyel-Olmedo y Garau (2009) entrevistan a 224 informantes, vacacionistas en S'Arenal, un resorte turístico en Mallorca. En este estudio, se califica el inglés como lengua franca, y se destacan las interacciones entre diferentes lenguas bajo el contexto determinado. Así mismo, se cuantifica el uso de inglés en el paisaje lingüístico observado. Entre sus advertencias, los autores mencionan la presencia del inglés como lengua de la milicia, y enfatizan el acercamiento de House (2003), quien sostiene que esta lengua es una herramienta de comunicación, y no de identidad (p. 387).

Entre los hallazgos iniciales, Brúyel-Olmedo y Garau, mencionan el inglés como una lengua internacional que aparece frecuentemente en los letreros bilingües y plurilingües de los estudios sobre el LL. El propósito del trabajo de estos investigadores tiene cuatro partes: primero, descubrir el bagaje lingüístico de los visitantes del resorte; segundo, identificar las percepciones y expectativas de los visitantes con respecto al uso de inglés en el LL; tercero, establecer relación entre el inglés y otras lenguas en el resorte; y, por último, determinar la presencia de errores gramaticales en los anuncios.

Se entrevistó a los 224 informantes en inglés. De estos, 104 son mujeres, y 120 son hombres, mayormente menores de 40 años que han completado la escuela secundaria. Un 71.9% declaró el uso del inglés como segunda lengua (L2); 6.3%, el alemán; y un

4.5% indica el francés. Por otro lado, en este estudio se reporta un uso de inglés en el 61.82% de los anuncios, dato que supera el uso del español, y del catalán, y del alemán. De 372 anuncios o rótulos analizados, 231 contienen información en inglés. De estas 231 muestras fotografiadas, 42% contienen errores lingüísticos. No obstante, el inglés es la L2 más utilizada en el resorte. Sin embargo, este no se incluye dentro de las expectativas de los visitantes con respecto al lenguaje utilizado en la transportación pública, ni en los anuncios del gobierno. Los investigadores concluyen que los visitantes tienen expectativas más altas de uso del inglés en el LL paisaje lingüístico, y que califican la descripción del LL en S'Arenal, Mallorca por debajo de un estándar justo. Según ellos, una tercera parte de los visitantes del resorte esperan mayor uso de inglés en el LL. También informan que la calidad de los textos escritos no es la esperada, ya que contienen muchos errores.

Para continuar la mención de estudios relacionados con el LL, ahora se incluye el trabajo de Juffermans (2013). Este lingüista observa el paisaje en Gambia, con el fin último de estudiar la lengua con un acercamiento contextualizado, documentado históricamente y semiótico. Por lo tanto, propone el estudio LL urbano en Gambia, en relación con su diversidad social y etnolingüística. E investiga la creación de los autores de los LLs que necesitan deben ser inclusivos, y considerar el contacto visual con analfabetos. De entrada, describe el LL bajo estudio como rara vez monolingüe. Menciona el “gamblish”, que consiste en la alternancia de códigos entre la lengua dominante de Gambia y el inglés. Juffermans, también señala la posibilidad de lectura de imágenes como textos escritos, a la vez que se visualiza el texto escrito como técnica estilística del anuncio. Alude al trabajo de Kress y van Leeuwen (2001), en donde el que se compara el LL con la concepción wagneriana de *Gesamtkunstwerk*, o todo en la obra de arte. Son importantes los materiales utilizados para la producción de billboards, los colores, tamaño y forma de las letras, posición de las mismas y de las imágenes en los anuncios, hasta el entorno en que se encuentran, deben considerarse al momento de estudio del LL.

En el trabajo de Juffermans se alude a Backhaus (2009) como ejemplo de poco interés de cumplimiento de política lingüística por parte de los productores de comerciales. Entonces, este investigador confirma que las intenciones comerciales subyacen en los billboards, los cuales no necesariamente reproducen identidades lingüísticas. Como una de las funciones de los mencionados billboards, confirma la reproducción quasi real de imágenes de productos.

Por ejemplo, si se anuncia un comestible, se proyecta la imagen del mismo tal y cual sea su apariencia física. También se informa que en Gambia, los creadores de billboards, encuentran maneras prácticas y efectivas de enfrentarse al analfabetismo, al crear “textos legibles” para todos, aunque exista en la comunidad la inequidad socio-educativa y la diversidad etnolingüística (p. 278).

Desde San Antonio, Hult (2014) estudia el paisaje lingüístico en esta localidad. Por un lado, Hult analiza la distribución de las lenguas en el LL, a través de la autopista de esta

región y, por otro, interpreta los anuncios que utilizan el español en el paisaje, desde una perspectiva semiótica. La investigación de Hult se justifica con argumentos sociológicos. Primero, alude al acto comunicativo del LL, y a la relación entre el individuo y el mundo material; luego, menciona la realidad social que se pretende proyectar en los anuncios. Hult adjudica el uso de inglés en el contexto estudiado, a la promoción de una determinada ideología asociada con el sentido de localidad.

Hult contrasta el alto porcentaje de integrantes de una comunidad lingüística hispana, con el uso de inglés en los anuncios que comprenden su ambiente. De esta forma, en el estudio de este investigador, se propone que en los billboards subyace la creación de un contexto urbano contemporáneo, en el cual se impone la lengua de la mayoría en poder. Ahora, se promueven estilos de vida que contrasten con la comunidad hispana que le rodea, la cual es vista como inferior a la mayoría poblacional estadounidense.

Estudios más recientes, como el de Mensah y Ndimele (2014), investigan el uso del pidgin nigeriano (o NP, por sus siglas en inglés), como estrategia publicitaria en billboards, los cuales resaltan la transmisión de ideas, bienes y servicios por un determinado auspiciador (Kotler, 1999). Además, en este artículo se menciona el empleo de la alternancia de códigos, y se distingue entre el texto impreso y el texto electrónico. En su investigación Mensah y Ndimele analizan el texto electrónico, y el uso del mismo como herramienta publicitaria. A través de este estudio, se comprueba además, el uso de NP como factor publicitario efectivo en Nigeria. Contrario al inglés nigeriano, el NP no ha sido oficializado. No obstante, esta variante posee mayor prestigio en la población que la primera.

Durante seis meses, los investigadores trabajaron con 170 individuos, entre los que se encuentra un total de 30 diseñadores, artistas gráficos y comerciantes. Entre dos zonas de este país, principalmente ciudades, dividieron sus muestras entre ancianos, adultos y jóvenes, y se consultó sus edades y sexo. El último grupo (de 25 a 39 años) recibió mayor importancia, ya que se considera más conocedor de los billboards. Entre los participantes del estudio, se encuentran estudiantes de la Universidad de Calabar. Para su análisis, Mensah y Ndimele trabajaron con 53 billboards, el cual comienza con la noción de que el inglés promueve prestigio social, mientras que las lenguas indígenas promueven necesidades y estereotipos asociados con las personas que las utilizan. Así, el uso de NP se convierte en intermedio de variantes lingüísticas, a la vez que resume prestigio y necesidades de la población nigeriana.

En primer lugar, estos investigadores asocian el contenido visual de los anuncios o billboards con la cultura de Nigeria. Por medio de sus observaciones, interpretan que en cada uno de estos, los productores toman en consideración aspectos culturales del país como estrategia publicitaria. Luego, analizan el contenido lingüístico en dichos billboards, basados en Crystal (1987), quien asegura que el texto escrito se impone en el mensaje de estos. De esta forma, estudian el léxico: innovaciones léxicas, ausencia de verbos, y presencia de proverbios. También incluyen alternancia de códigos, monólogos

dramáticos, humor, reduplicación de textos conocidos entre la población, y uso de modificadores en el texto escrito. Así, concluyen que el uso de NP es favorablemente pragmático y se dirige un mayor número de integrantes de la población en Nigeria.

Desde una perspectiva ideológica, Abongdia y Foncha (2015) interpretan el uso de variantes lingüísticas en un contexto educativo. Los investigadores señalan que el paisaje LL institucional reflejará la política lingüística de la Universidad de África del Sur. Es pertinente incluir de dicha política, la alusión al desarrollo social, y el respeto por la herencia multilingüe de África del Sur. Si bien parten de los principios de Landry y Bourhis (1997) y su definición de LL, aquí se refieren a otros trabajos para adjudicar el uso de un lenguaje en contextos publicitarios, a determinado grupo y su ideología, y a los legisladores. O sea, establecen la probabilidad de contenido en los billboards asociado con las élites en poder.

Para conducir su investigación, realizaron entrevistas en los departamentos de Lingüística, Afrikaans, Inglés, e isiXhosa. Además, se observó el paisaje LL, en particular los billboards en la Universidad y fuera de esta. En su análisis, validan la contradicción entre política lingüística institucional, y el lenguaje utilizado en los billboards. Así, el inglés se utiliza como lenguaje académico, y los anuncios administrativos y de correo institucional son esta lengua. No obstante, el Afrikaans prevalece en el paisaje dentro del contexto universitario, y el lenguaje isiXhosa está en desventaja respecto al resto de las variantes.

184 Abongdia y Foncha concluyen que el inglés es el idioma con mayor prestigio en la Universidad de África del Sur, aunque el número de sus hablantes como lengua materna (L1) sea insignificante. En este estudio no se valida la relación entre la política lingüística, y la práctica en los billboards que comprenden el campus y el entorno universitarios. Este dato que revela la probabilidad de una imposición de una ideología lingüística asociada con los productores de los billboards. Junto con estas conclusiones, mencionan la denominación del inglés como lengua franca, razón por la que la administración de la Universidad insista en el uso de esta lengua.

Como ejemplos más cercanos al 2018, están las investigaciones de Mnamdi-Eruchalu (2015), y de Hassen (2016). La primera de estas investigaciones, realizado también en Nigeria, contiene datos para exponer la deliberación discursiva por parte de quienes crean los billboards, quienes eligen el uso del inglés como lengua principal. Mnamdi-Eruchalu identifica el uso de frases y de oraciones imperativas en la lengua mencionada, y oraciones imperativas. Además, afirma que en los anuncios se intenta cuidar el lenguaje, aunque esto no represente una adhesión a la norma gramatical. En la ciudad Addis Ababa, Hassen se une al listado de investigadores que analizan los LLs en África. En este artículo se redefine de forma concisa este tipo de paisaje, y se denomina como discurso escrito en el espacio público. En Addis Ababa, se observa que el LL es un mecanismo de política lingüística, y que el lenguaje expuesto en público representa los estándares de ciertos grupos.

Al igual que Abongdia y Foncha (2015), Haynes (2012) estudia la relación entre política lingüística institucional, y la práctica reflejada en los billboards. Esta tesis de Haynes se inicia con el dato del inglés como lengua prevaleciente y dominante en Gales. No obstante, la nueva política lingüística de la zona, intenta validar el uso del galés e igualar su prestigio con el inglés. En esta investigación, se analiza el paisaje LL de la Universidad de Cardiff, y se valida la práctica de la política lingüística en el dominio público. Haynes redefine qué es LL, y le presta importancia a la vitalidad y supremacía de las lenguas expuestas en determinado paisaje. Tanto las preguntas de investigación, como la justificación de su proyecto sirven de base a futuros estudios de LLs, ya que confirma el crecimiento de esta subdivisión como disciplina lingüística. Además, Haynes investiga quiénes son responsables de la política lingüística del país, ausculta la posición del sistema universitario bajo estudio, respecto a dicha política. También, determina el orden de presentación de los idiomas utilizados en y fuera de la Universidad de Cardiff. En diálogo con los LLs, se encuentra el concepto de la identidad la cual es individual o social. En cuanto a la identidad social, se afirma que incluye marcadores que ubican a una persona dentro de un grupo (clase social, etnicidad, religión, identidad sexual, género, identidad del ciberespacio y de la cultura popular, y nacionalidad). Para continuar bajo este tema, Restad (2014) se refiere al consumismo como metonimia de la población estadounidense. Según este investigador, el comercio requiere de publicidad, la cual, a su vez, reproduce una determinada imagen del consumidor. Restad asocia el término *sinthomosexual*, con la vitalidad del consumismo, puesto que el primero es performance de la psicología o sociología de la condición. En su investigación, incluye la siguiente postura respecto a la identidad: “‘Identity’, as we now know, demands appreciation as a summation and interrelation of both discrete and collective experiences, as they have been lived in recent and far past, and as they exist within changing social contexts. It also requires giving special consideration to ways in which identity has been deployed to cast an ‘other’” (p. 770).

El estudio de los billboards en San Juan y Carolina servirá de herramienta para auscultar dicha identidad. Las descripciones de los paisajes LLs hasta aquí mencionados, se asemejan a las percepciones que se puedan tener con respecto al uso de lenguaje las lenguas en los billboards de la Avenida Baldorioty de Castro. En varios de los contextos, el uso del inglés es una característica lingüística de la zona. Además, el estudio de las imágenes provee información respecto sobre la ideología que subyace en los anuncios. Por último, el análisis de estos billboards validará la política lingüística del país con la práctica publicitaria ejercida.

Existen otros estudios en los que se analiza el uso de lenguas e imágenes en los medios sociales. Por ejemplo, la investigación de Carroll (2008) sustenta el uso del inglés como predominante en la plataforma *myspace*. Años más tarde, Carroll y Mari (2017) ofrecen un trabajo que contradice el primer trabajo de Carroll. A través del análisis del lenguaje utilizado en Facebook, concluyen que el idioma de mayor uso en esta plataforma es el

español. Además, en el trabajo de Carroll y Mari, se ofrece evidencia de que el lenguaje utilizado es mayormente formal, con muy poco uso de netspeak (uso de lenguaje informal en las redes). También, Carroll y Mari destacan el uso de inglés en contextos profesionales y federales. Como uno de los apartados en su metodología, se encuentra el estudio a páginas cibernéticas por género y edad.

Antes de pasar a los objetivos del estudio de billboards en la avenida Baldorioty de Castro, cabe mencionar brevemente las aportaciones de algunos investigadores acerca del uso de lenguas en Puerto Rico. Los artículos de Mazak (2008) y de Pousada (2008) apuntan algunas de las ideas de Bahktin respecto al lenguaje. Mazak incluye el aspecto heteroglósico del lenguaje, y Pousada destaca el contexto social en que se desarrolla el intercambio lingüístico y la apropiación activa de sus usuarios. De esta última, cabe destacar la mención que hace de Bakhtin (1981), para dar importancia a la función de los practicantes de una variedad de lenguas en una comunidad determinada.

Por último, Villaronga (2008) expone el discurso empleado durante el establecimiento de la compañía Fomento en Puerto Rico. Este investigador relaciona algunos aspectos de la identidad puertorriqueña, promovida en aquel momento, y el lenguaje empleado por sus propulsores. Si bien este investigador trabaja con la prensa escrita, puede observarse cómo las imágenes tienen influencia en las percepciones de sus receptores. Esta idea se desarrollará, más adelante, como una de las hipótesis en el presente estudio. Resta mencionar el texto de Hoff y Martínez Oquendo (2017), el cual incluye ensayos que se concentran en el análisis del discurso en América Latina.

La presente propuesta tiene como primer objetivo la exploración de los rasgos o las características del paisaje LL alrededor de la Avenida Baldorioty de Castro. Además, se analizará la(s) lengua(s) y las imágenes que comprenden los billboards de dicha zona. También se determinará si existe relación entre la(s) lengua(s) utilizada(s) en estos billboards, y la identidad puertorriqueña. Ambas tareas no aparecen documentadas en estudios lingüísticos acerca de las variedades lingüísticas de Puerto Rico. Por lo tanto, se contribuye al estudio sincrónico de uso de las lenguas en relación con la identidad puertorriqueña.

Será interesante investigar la influencia que puedan tener estos billboards en aquellas personas que los observan. Además, este estudio servirá de piloto para futuras investigaciones, y determinará si el uso de billboards responde a la oficialización de lenguaje (español e inglés) en Puerto Rico, o si responde a la identidad lingüística de determinados grupos poblacionales. También, servirá como inicio al estudio del LL en y fuera de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Al igual que Haynes, el estudio de billboards en San Juan, contribuirá a la expansión del campo de la lingüística que se fundamenta en el análisis del paisaje en una comunidad.

Las preguntas de investigación son las siguientes:

1. ¿Cuáles son los rasgos o características que conforman los billboards en la Avenida Baldorioty de Castro?

2. ¿Qué ideologías e identidades se proyectan en los billboards de la Avenida Baldorioty de Castro?

3. ¿Es el contenido en estos billboards reflejo de la identidad puertorriqueña?

En respuesta a las interrogantes anteriores, se proponen tres hipótesis:

H1: El contenido lingüístico, en los billboards (avenida Baldorioty de Castro) más cercanos al Aeropuerto Internacional Luis Muñoz Marín, será en inglés.

H2: El contenido de las imágenes, en los billboards (avenida Baldorioty de Castro) más cercanos al Aeropuerto Internacional Luis Muñoz Marín, refleja una identidad de consumidor.

H3: Las imágenes en los billboards (avenida Baldorioty de Castro) más cercanos al Aeropuerto Internacional Luis Muñoz Marín, no corresponden a la identidad social de la comunidad en que se encuentran.

Metodología:

1. Espacio para la recopilación de datos: Para validar las tres hipótesis se observarán las características generales del LL en la avenida Baldorioty de Castro. En primer lugar, se recopilarán fotos de varios billboards. Para este estudio, se considerarán tanto billboards estáticos (permanentes por tiempo indefinido), electrónicos (usualmente más de un anuncio que rota automáticamente en la base en que se encuentran), y aquellos que asemejan pantallas gigantes de un computador (también cambian, pero a mayor velocidad, y con mayor número de anuncios que los anteriores).
2. Procedimiento para la generación del corpus: En esta investigación se incluirán billboards cercanos al Aeropuerto Internacional Luis Muñoz Marín, puesto que se ha hipotetizado que en esta zona el uso del inglés será mayor. Además, las comunidades alrededor de dicha avenida están compuestas por mujeres y hombres de diferentes clases sociales, educación y religión. Consecuentemente, el entorno de dicha avenida urbano, y lo comprenden viviendas individuales, edificios con apartamentos, iglesias, escuelas, comercios, restaurantes y edificios gubernamentales. En este estudio se describirá, analizará e interpretará el contenido de la mayoría de billboards alrededor de la Avenida Baldorioty de Castro. Para esto, se obtendrán fotos con una Hard Disc Camcorder JVC, GZ MG330HU. La recopilación de estas imágenes digitales se efectuará tanto durante el día, como en horas nocturnas, para lograr precisión en los resultados. Luego, se transportarán dichas fotos a una computadora, y lograr su análisis.
3. Análisis del corpus: Van Dijk (2008) propone la intervención activa de los lectores ante el texto, y advierte la posibilidad de subtexto en el discurso. De esta forma, se expondrán varios aspectos del mensaje en 100 billboards de la Baldorioty de Castro. Primero, se calculará la cantidad de billboards cercanos al centro

Minillas, versus la cantidad de aquellos cercanos al Aeropuerto Internacional Luis Muñoz Marín. Luego, se identificará cuáles de estos pertenecen a las siguientes categorías: estáticos, cambiantes, y en pantallas gigantes. Además, se cuantificará cuáles de estos contienen imágenes animadas o inanimadas. Para cada factor considerado, se determinará qué porcentaje del total de billboards representan; y se destacará si se repiten. Cuando se repitan, su porcentaje será mayor, por lo cual deben ser más influyentes en la población. Además, se analizará la lengua utilizada -su ubicación en el anuncio, el tamaño y color de letra, las estructuras lingüísticas, el vocabulario y la variedad de lengua en uso. En cuanto a la imagen, se interpretará el contexto -expuesto en el billboard, y su entorno-, y la etnia que se proyecta. También se observarán los colores y su configuración en el billboard. Los resultados cuantificables serán expuestos en tablas; y algunas de las fotos tomadas, aparecerán en el apéndice (aquellas que validen o no las hipótesis del estudio).

REFERENCIAS

- Abongdia, Jane-Francis A. & John W. Foncha (2014). Language ideologies in the linguistic landscape of one university in South Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5, 7, 623-630.
- Backhaus, Peter (2005). Signs of multilingualism in Tokyo: a diachronic look at the linguistic landscape. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*. 175/176, 103-121.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Brúyel-Olmedo, Antonio & Maria J. Garau (2009). English as a lingua franca in the linguistic landscape of the multilingual resort of S'Arsenal in Mallorca. *International Journal of Multilingualism*, 6, 4, 386-411.
- Carroll, Kevin (2008). Puerto Rican language use on Myspace.com. *Centro Journal*, 20, 1, 96-111.
- Carroll, Kevin S. & Vanessa Z. Mari (2017). Puerto Rican language use on Facebook. *Centro Journal*, 29, 2, 38-61.
- Crystal, David (1987). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dodge, Patrick & Elisabeth A. Suter (2008). "It's okay to have a girl": patronymy and China's one child policy. *Women and Language*, 31, 1, 13-22.
- Edwards, John (2009). Identity, the individual and the group. En *Language and identity* (pp. 15-33). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Garrett, Peter (2010). *Attitudes to language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Griffin, Jeffrey L. (2004). The presence of written English on the streets of Rome. *English Today*, 20, 2, 3-8.
- Hassen, Rukya (2016). Advertisement signs in the multilingual city scope of Addis Ababa. *Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics*, 25, 49, 49-57.
- Haynes, Philip (2012). *Welsh language policy: a study of the linguistic landscape at Cardiff University*. Master's thesis, University of Birmingham.
- Hoff, Tânia & Doris E. Martínez Oquendo (2017) *Discursos mediáticos sobre la diferencia en América Latina y el Caribe*. Barcelona: Editorial UOC.
- House, Juliane (2003). English as lingua franca: a threat to multilingualism? *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 7, 4, 556-578.
- Hult, Francis M. (2014). Drive-thru linguistic landscaping: constructing a linguistically dominant place in a bilingual space. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 18, 5, 507-523.
- Juffermans, Kasper (2013). Multimodality and audiences: local languaging in the Gambian linguistic landscape. *Sociolinguistic Studies*, 6, 2, 259-284.
- Kotler, Philip T. (1999). *Principles of marketing*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall Press.
- Kress, Gunther & Theo van Leeuwen (2001). *Multimodal discourse: the modes and media of contemporary communication*. London: Arnold.
- Landry, Rodrigue & Richard Y. Bourhis (1997). Linguistic landscape and ethnolinguistic vitality: an empirical study. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 16, 1, 23-49.
- Marschall, Sabine (2008). Transforming symbolic identity: wall art and the South African city. *African Arts*, 41, 2, 12-23.
- Mazak, Catherine (2008). Negotiating el difícil: uses of English text in a rural Puerto Rican community. *Centro Journal*, 20, 1, 51-71.
- Mensah, Eyo & Roseline Ndimele (2014). Linguistic creativity in Nigerian Pidgin advertising. *Sociolinguistic Studies*, 7, 3, 321-344.
- Meyerhoff, Miriam (2006). *Introducing sociolinguistics*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Mnamdi-Eruchalu, Geraldine Ifesinachi (2015). An analysis of the linguistic features of billboard advertising in Nigeria. *Journal of Modern European Languages and Literatures*, 4, 16-31.
- Pousada, Alicia (2008). Functions and valorization of language in Puerto Rico: introduction. *Centro Journal*, 20, 1, 4-11.
- Restad, Penne (2014). The third sex: historians, consumer society, and the idea of the American consumer. *Journal of Social History*, 47, 3, 769-786.
- Van Dijk, Teun A. (2008). Semántica del discurso e ideología. *Discurso & Sociedad*, 2, 1, 201-226.

Villaronga, Gabriel (2007). Un “pequeño Pittsburgh” borincano: la ciudad imaginada del discurso desarrollista de Fomento. *Centro Journal*, 19, 2, 183-205.

HUMOR AND OPTIMISM FOLLOWING THE 2017 HURRICANE DISASTERS IN DOMINICA AND PUERTO RICO

ILSA LÓPEZ-VALLÉS

INTER AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, FAJARDO CAMPUS

The Caribbean islands of Dominica and Puerto Rico have paid homage to the popular expression: “When the going gets tough, the tough get going” and its Spanish equivalent: “*A mal tiempo, buena cara.*” That is the slogan these islanders have lived by following the devastation left behind by cyclones Irma and María. My main objective in this article is to present the original and culturally-based humor and reconstructive efforts that the people of Dominica and Puerto Rico have employed to deal with the wreckage caused by two consecutive hurricanes: Irma and María. Although several of the other Antilles islands fell prey to these monster storms, the focus of this article will be the events of September 6, 2017, when hurricane Irma hit Puerto Rico, and to a greater extent, those of September 18 and 20 when hurricane María hit Dominica and Puerto Rico, respectively. The inhabitants of both islands have not remained idle, but have instead implemented recovery efforts towards the re-making of their countries. Fortunately, Dominica was spared a head-on hit by Irma, receiving only showers and gusts of winds. However, the impact of the storm on Puerto Rico and its sister islands of Vieques and Culebra included flooding and wrecked houses, and left more than half of their inhabitants without water and power. Irma ravaged northeastern Puerto Rico, and before it left the island, it had claimed four lives. Irma skirted the island, almost as if to prepare its citizens for what lay ahead in the form of hurricane María. With category 5-level winds, María is regarded as one of the worst hurricanes in the history of Puerto Rico and Dominica. At least fifteen of Dominica’s 73,000 residents lost their lives, with infrastructure and houses collapsing all around them. One hundred percent of its agricultural sector was obliterated, elevating the estimated cost of the damages to billions of dollars. With little outside support, Dominica has had to rebuild largely on its own. María’s unwelcomed stay on Dominica was recorded by its Prime Minister, Roosevelt Skeritt, who bore witness to its devastating winds in his Facebook comments. “The winds are merciless!” he wrote. “We shall survive by the grace of God!” (Dominica hopes to ‘rebuild better’ after hurricane devastation”, France 24 with Reuters).

Dominicans have maintained a positive outlook on their future and they have formed a network of help brigades to rebuild their country and reclaim their lives. Celebrations, parades, festivals and carnivals have remained on schedule. The Mas Domnik 2018 Official Calendar of Events was released in January. Among the activities are the launch of Mas Domnik, Carnival Movie Night, Carnival Ole Mas Festival, Calypso shows, parades, Reggae on the Boardwalk, Carnival Beer Fest Bar Lyme, Astaphans Powder Fest, and Jouvert, among others. In an email interview with Kristine Simelda, an American writer who has made Dominica her home for the past twenty-four years, she explained that most of the Calypso songs sung at the festival were about María (K. Simelda, personal communication, February 15, 2018). As the popular saying goes: “The show must go on.”

In LeShaun Peter’s January 5th article “Métyé Maria! The lighter side of Dominica's post-Maria recovery efforts” for the Dominican POST, the locals described their ordeal jokingly. Helen Reid from Louisville said: “I never thought I’d be eating so much pasta, pasta, pasta.” She also understated the loss of her roof: “That roof fly like kite.” Others, like Trafalgar resident Roma Nelson, has accepted the inevitability of her current situation: “No fridge, no meat.” Another Dominican man claimed that while others lost their homes, clothes and jobs, he lost his set of teeth. Children celebrate with glee the discovery of running water from dry faucets; their smiling faces captured on camera. Dominicans accept their life-changing situation and continue to focus on adapting to their current plight and making the best of it.

According to Simelda, the islanders were totally unprepared for María’s strength, stating that partly because Irma had hardly touched them, they had underestimated María. My interview with her was via email, because of interrupted land line and cell phone service. Despite the herculean efforts that Dominicans have made to keep their chins up, not everyone has been able to cope with the limitations and crippled services left in the wake of the storm. Simelda expressed her grief and frustration after having been informed that she will have to do without her landline internet for approximately two years. To get a fair cyber signal she goes to the university.

María inflicted similar chaos and tragedy on Puerto Rico. Entire houses were swept away by overflowing rivers that seemed to be desperately searching for their lost banks. Glass windows shattered under the force of the strong winds, awnings flew away like projectiles, cement power pilons were knocked to the ground and many were snapped in half. Produce and trees were uprooted and ruined. Cows, horses, pigs, hens, cats and dogs lay dead on the streets. With the water system shut down, very little could be done to clean up. Rat infestations became an impending threat. Pressure mounted on the government to restore water and avoid an uncontrollable outbreak of leptospirosis. Seventy-six cases of the disease were reported by the Environmental Protection Agency. The whole island was left in the dark. The death toll has yet to be determined, but has reached at least 4,000 as of mid-2018.

Puerto Ricans assumed a similar approach as did the Dominicans in coping with their own post hurricane hardships. They adopted the slogan: “Puerto Rico se levanta” (Puerto Rico rises). The hurricanes sparked the creativity of the population, with hilarious and ingenious memes, posters, jingles, comic strips, video clips, Christmas songs, photos and parodies emerging from the disaster, not only as a means to deal with their sense of loss and angst, but also as an original approach to denounce a governmental system that was too slow in responding to their primary needs.

De la nada, a caricature video clip series, has broadcast several episodes of political and governmental satire. The videos poke fun at the lack of basic resources provided by the Puerto Rico Electric Power Company (PREPA) and the Puerto Rico Water Works Authority (AAA by its Spanish acronym). To illustrate, the title and lyrics to “Verde Luz” (Green Light) a very popular song in Puerto Rico which has been sung by such renowned artists as José Feliciano, Danny Rivera and Antonio Cabán Vale (El Topo) were changed to satirical “Vuelve Luz” which translates to “Come Back, Power!” alluding to the interrupted power service Puerto Ricans have and continue to experience as a result of the storms. This video clip shows the image of a disheveled girl singing with her guitar, surrounded by a dog, bird and a hen with long faces. A power outlet is shown covered in spider webs suggesting that it has not been used in a long time. The videos criticize the slow and inefficient response to the collapse of water and power systems on the island. To this very day, there are citizens whose electricity and water service have not yet been restored.

193

The opening lines of the original lyrics to “Verde Luz” celebrate the island’s splendor:

Verde luz de monte y mar,
isla virgen del coral,
si me ausento de tus playas primorosas
si me alejo de tus palmas silenciosas,
quiero volver, quiero volver

In contrast, these lyrics have morphed into a lament and plea for the restoration of the island’s power supply:

Vuelve luz, vuelve a brillar
vuelve al campo y la ciudad
tantos meses entre noches tenebrosas
ya me cansan estas plantas tan ruidosas
quiero volver, quiero volver

[Come back power, come light us up again
Come to the countryside and city
So many months of bleak nights

I am weary of noisy generators
I want to return, I want to return]

Amusing posters, memes and photographs have flooded the social media. For instance, a posting appeared on my Facebook feed that read: “The media has informed us that the power system has been restored in the following businesses: Wometco, Woolworth, Gonzalez Padín, Topeka, Casa de los Tapes, Felicilandia, Colombo Frozen Yogurt and Velasco”. As one reads through the list, the reality sinks in, as one realizes that all the businesses mentioned went bankrupt and have been closed down for decades. In other words, as faith in the government’s response waned, people resorted to humor. You couldn’t help but crack a smile. Another photograph shows a man trying to cross the street with water up to his chest yet covering his head with an umbrella. The words that accompany the image say: “Luckily I brought my umbrella; I don’t want to get wet.”

Other memes mockingly displayed canned versions the very popular Puerto Rican Christmas delicacy rice with green pigeon peas, *pasteles* (meat pies) and *mofongo* stuffed with skirt steak as if these dishes, which require hours of special preparation, could ever be put into tins, so that those without the electricity and water to prepare them might enjoy them over the Christmas holiday that followed the hurricanes. Instead of the usual ornaments, Christmas trees in memes were trimmed with lanterns, batteries, matches, gas lamps, propane gas, bottled water and canned sausages. Another meme featured the “Boricua (Puerto Rican) Kit” which included bottled water, batteries, candles, matches, flashlight, charger, canned goods and an alcoholic beverage to ease ones’ woes.

Christmas songs and jingles were likewise changed to accommodate the new reality that Puerto Ricans faced. The Christmas jingle: “Si no me dan de beber, lloro” (If I am not given booze, I’ll cry) was changed to “Si no me dan internet lloro” (If I am not given internet, I’ll cry) in a Christmas video. Other parodies of songs that mock governmental agencies include: “Prendiste la luz,” (You turned on the lights), “Prende la planta, Paloma” (Turn on the generator, Paloma), and “Yo tenía una luz,” (I once had light).

Posters referring to the massive emigration of Puerto Ricans to the US, fleeing the lack of services, long lines at supermarkets and scarcities of fuel, also went viral on social networks. The poster that reads: “Yo me quedo para hacer historia” suggests that those who remain on the island are doing so to make history with their valor, rather than to make a living. A comic strip shows a woman giving birth to her baby. The father asks the doctor: “Doctor, aren’t you going to slap its rear end?” The doctor answers: “We are not doing that anymore. What we do is tell them they were born in Puerto Rico and they start crying on their own.”

A meme suggesting names for newborns sounded like the items in the Boricua kit: Carmela Ortiz named after the Carmela brand of canned sausages; Fema Marie Cruz, after the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); Andrés Propano Curbelo from propane gas; Sihai Diesel Rodríguez from diesel fuel; Leotoldo Cruz after the canvas that have replaced roofs on many houses; Aquí Enlafia Martínez, which translates to “I am here waiting in line Martinez”; Sequemó Laplanta Cruz which means “the power plant burnt Cruz.”

As days became weeks and weeks turned into months, frustration transformed into anger. A meme shows a grandmother holding a rifle with the words: “I am waiting for the electric company to come read my meter.” The government was criticized for sending out very high electricity bills, even while there was no electric power on the island. Religious groups were no exception, they too, designed memes and posters invoking the Almighty’s presence and help before and after the hurricanes hit. Images of Jesus embracing the map of Puerto Rico and Holy hands holding the flag were among those disseminated.

Most people in both countries have found ingenious ways to maintain their physical existence and humorous ways to maintain their sanity. Rather than drown themselves in sorrow and frustration, they have taken the bull by the horns and have learned to live within their new limitations, laughing at their situation and themselves in the process. What most of them understand is that although the hurricanes have laid waste to their livelihoods, their spirit and determination have not been destroyed. Dominicans have continued with their annual carnival celebrations as a way to defy their misfortunes and achieve some sense of normalcy in their lives. Irma and María may have deprived the people of Puerto Rico and Dominica of property, electricity, water, online communication, and even the lives of family and friends, but the hurricanes have not succeeded in extinguishing their love of life, their capacity to celebrate and laugh, and their will to rebuild their present for a better tomorrow.

REFERENCES

- Castro, Danilo (2017). Hurricane Maria: all the memes you need to see. *Heavy.com News*. Retrieved Sept. 2017 from <https://heavy.com/news/2017/09/hurricane-maria-memes-songs-reactions-twitter/>
- De la nada* TV! Episodio 04- Reforma Laboral. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4pVaT2nu6Vc>, <https://me.me/t/puerto-rico>
- De la nada - Vuelve luz* (parodia de Verde Luz). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GJjWjN_uKY
- France 24 (2017). *Dominica hopes to ‘rebuild better’ after hurricane devastation*. Retrieved Sept. 2017 from <http://www.france24.com/en/201709-dominica-rebuild-hurricane-maria-devastation-aid>

- Johnson, Alex, Daniel Arkin, Jason Cumming & Bill Karins (2017). Hurricane Irma skirts Puerto Rico, leaves 1 million without power. *NBC News*. Retrieved Sept. 2017 from <https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/hurricane-irma/hurricane-irma-skirts-puerto-rico-lashing-it-powerful-winds-flooding-n799086>
- Nedelman, Michael (2017). Suspected leptospirosis cases increasing in Puerto Rico after hurricane Maria. *CNN*. Retrieved October 2017 from <http://edition.cnn.com/2017/10/24/health/leptospirosis-puerto-rico/index.html>
- Peter, LeShaun (2018). Mésy  Maria! The lighter side of Dominica’s post-Maria recovery efforts. *Dominican Post*. Retrieved Jan. 2018 from <http://dominicanpost.com/2018/01/02/mesye-maria-dominica-post-hurricane/>
- Schick, Camilla, Robin Lindsay & Chris Cirillo (2017). ‘Leave now’, Florida Governor warns as storm nears. *The New Times*, Sept. 8. Retrieved Sept. 2017 from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/08/us/hurricane-irma-florida.html>
- Simelda, Kristine (2018, February 15). Personal interview.

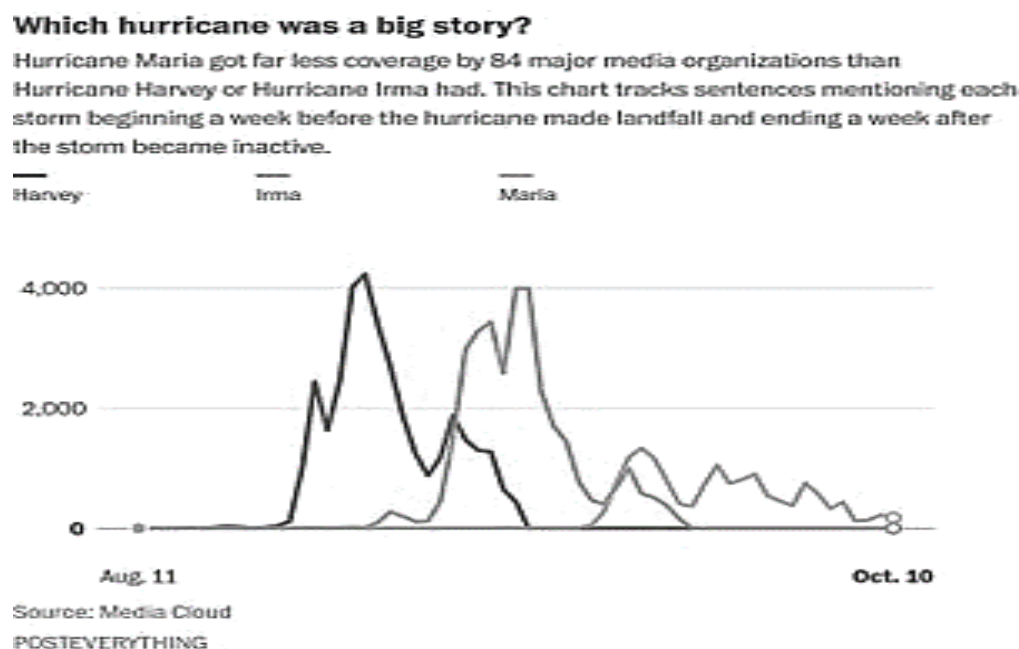
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC DISCOURSE AFTER HURRICANE MARIA HIT PUERTO RICO

ALEXANDRA N. MIHAIOVIC COURT AND LUIS A. SANCHEZ GALAN
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, RÍO PIEDRAS

As far as the eye could see, nothing but flooding, rain and destruction filled the streets of Puerto Rico during the days following Hurricane María. The immediate reaction from the United States was silence and darkness. There was no communication with residents of Puerto Rico, but soon enough President Trump's controversial reaction towards the severity of the situation on the archipelago would be shamelessly displayed on the world's stage. Statistically, Hurricane María received less media coverage than both Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma, since it did not touch US soil (Shah et al., 2017). It was not until San Juan's Mayor Carmen Yulín Cruz complained about the inefficiency of the response of the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the US military, that Trump was called to task over the dire situation that Puerto Ricans confronted (Gajanan, 2017). Nine days later, the US Department of Homeland Security and other agencies began working in the archipelago as Trump's government described the situation as "a good news story" (Griffin, 2017), trivializing the severity of the situation and delaying help that could have saved a vast number of lives over both the shorter and longer term. This happened under the backdrop of Puerto Ricans desperately searching for basic necessities such as fuel, food and water.

Because of this inadequate response to this dire situation, this article plans to conduct a critical analysis of public discourse after the hurricane, with the help of Van Dijk's (2017) theoretical framework, in order to emphasize how Trump established an Us vs. Them mental model to minimize sympathy in the US with the Puerto Rican people. It will attempt to analyze a series of articles dating from the immediate aftermath of the storm which hit on 20 September 2017, to Trump's visit to Puerto Rico on 3 October 2017. From a chronological standpoint, it was not until Mayor Yulín dared to break the "bounds of permitted dissent" (Van Dijk, 2017) that Puerto Rico became more visible in US media (Holpuch, 2017). Before this, the US media was relatively silent in regard to Hurricane María. Moreover, Trump also minimized the harm done by the hurricane, while exalting FEMA's "efforts" within first critical days after the event. The Washington Post suggests that the coverage of hurricanes Harvey, Irma and María was unbalanced in the sense that these events were not covered with the same intensity (Shah et

al., 2017). In the following Media Cloud graphic, one can observe the number of times that the names of each of the storms were mentioned, suggesting discrepancies between Harvey and Irma, which received substantial coverage on the one hand, and Maria which received relatively little coverage on the other:



198 **Figure 1** Relative media coverage of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria (The mainstream media didn't care about Puerto Rico until it became a Trump story, *The Washington Post*, November 27, 2017)

Setting up a discursive model of *Us* vs. *Them*, Trump focused on hailing FEMA's good work vs. Puerto Rico's dire economic situation during the immediate aftermath of the hurricane. From the passing of the hurricane up until five days later, Trump remained silent on the situation in Puerto Rico, exacerbating the issue of invisibility in the US media. Nonetheless, on September 25, 2017, Trump tweeted:

Texas & Florida [i.e. "Us"] are doing great but Puerto Rico [i.e. "Them"], which was already suffering from broken infrastructure & massive debt, is in deep trouble.....It's old electrical grid, which was in terrible shape, was devastated. Much of the Island was destroyed, with billions of dollars.... ..owed to Wall Street and the banks which, sadly, must be dealt with... Food, water and medical are top priorities - and doing well" (Graham, 2017).

By giving emphasis to the "billions of dollars... owed to Wall Street" Trump tried to divert the focus of the situation from his inadequate response and blame the post-hurricane crisis on Puerto Ricans themselves. After demonizing and othering Puerto Ricans by highlighting a set of negative factors and associating these factors with the people of

the island, at the end of the tweet Trump redirects his attention to a set of positive factors (“good deeds”) which he associates with his government and the US mainland. Further entrenching this Us vs. Them discourse, Secretary of Homeland Security Elaine Duke, framed Hurricane María as a “good news story” only ten days after the passing of the storm: “I know it is really a good news story in terms of our ability to reach people and the limited number of deaths that have taken place in such a devastating hurricane” (Diaz, 2017). By the time Trump visited Puerto Rico, the official death toll was up to only 16 people, while other sources indicate that during Trump’s visit there was a total of 556 reported deaths throughout the island (Robles, 2017). During Trump’s visit he stated that Puerto Ricans should be proud because of the low death toll in comparison to death toll resulting from Hurricane Katrina’s which was 1,833 people (Robles, 2017).

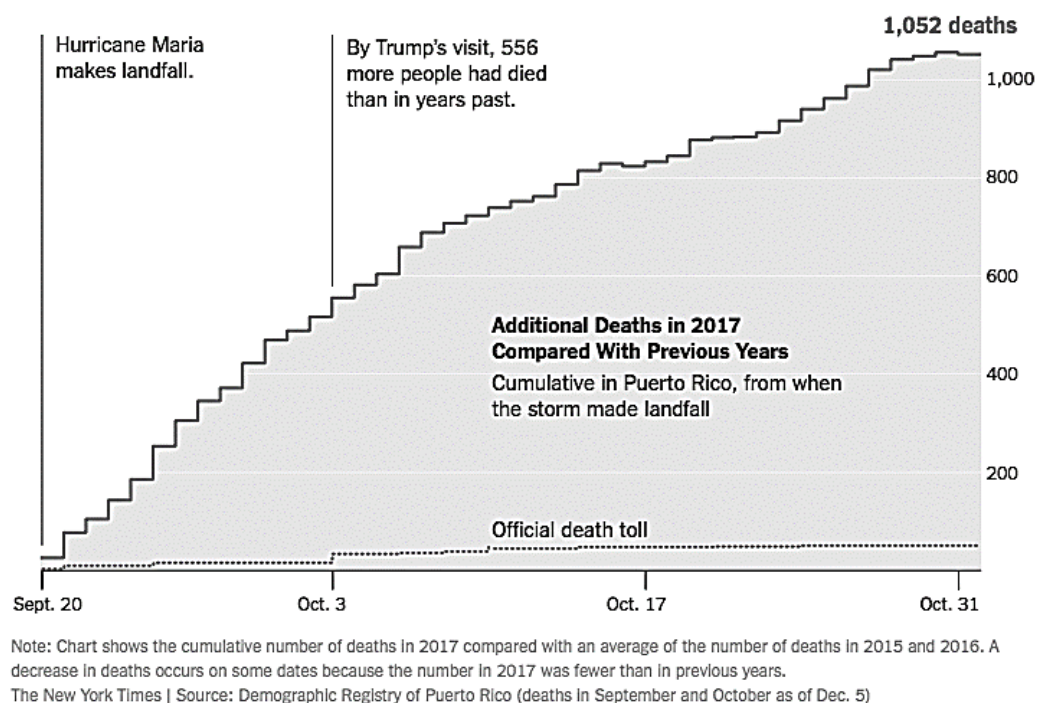


Figure 2 Estimated death toll resulting from Hurricane Maria (Official toll in Puerto Rico: 64. Actual deaths may be 1,052, *The New York Times*, December 9, 2017)

In an interview with CNN on September 26th, San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulín responded to Trump’s tweets on the economic situation of Puerto Rico: “Son dos asuntos diferentes. No se pone a la deuda por encima de la gente, se pone a la gente por encima de la deuda. Lidiemos con el asunto de forma separada, porque hay una crisis humanitaria aquí” [These are two different things. We shouldn’t consider the debt to be more important than human life, we should consider people to be more important than the debt. Let’s deal with these issues separately, because we have a humanitarian crisis on

our hands here] (Delgado, 2017). Moreover, on September 29th when responding to Secretary Duke's comments on Puerto Rico being a 'good news story' Yulín stated:

Well, maybe from where she's [the Secretary of Homeland Security] standing it's a good news story. When you're drinking from a creek, it's not a good news story. When you don't have food for a baby, it's not a good news story. When you have to pull people down from their buildings—I'm sorry, but that really upsets me and frustrates me. I would ask her to come down here and visit the towns and then make a statement like that, which frankly, it is an irresponsible statement and it contrasts with the statements of support that I have been getting since yesterday when I got that call from the White House. Dammit, this is not a good news story! This is a people-are-dying story. This is a life-or-death story. This is a there's-a-truckload-of-stuff-that-cannot-be-taken-to-people story. This is a story of a devastation that continues to worsen because people are not getting food and water (Graham, 2017).

Yulín pointed out that while Puerto Ricans were struggling to survive, the United States government was evidently trying to understate the damage done by the hurricane using its discursive power over the media.

It was not long until the discourses of Yulín and Trump clashed. While the US media outlets were relatively silent during the first two weeks after Hurricane María, they only began to focus on the situation in Puerto Rico when they saw an opportunity to convert the growing conflict between Mayor Yulín and President Trump into a media circus (Shah, Ko & Peinado, 2017). On September 29th, Yulín broke out in frustration:

We are dying here. And I cannot fathom the thought that the greatest nation in the world cannot figure out the logistics for a small island of 100 miles by 35 miles. So, mayday, we are in trouble.... [FEMA] had the gall this morning [...] of asking me: 'What are your priorities, mayor?'... "And I have been very respectful of the FEMA employees. I have been patient but we have no time for patience anymore... So, I am asking the president of the United States to make sure somebody is in charge that is up to the task of saving lives [...] I will do what I never thought I was going to do: I am begging. I am begging anyone that can hear us to save us from dying. If anybody out there is listening to us, we are dying. And you are killing us with the inefficiency and bureaucracy... Again, this is what we got last night: four pallets of water, three pallets of meals and 12 pallets of infant food. Which, I gave them to [the town of] Comerío, where people are drinking out of a creek So I am done being polite. I am done being politically correct. I am mad as hell because my people's lives are at stake... So I'm asking members of the press to send a mayday call all over the world. We are dying here. And if we don't stop and if we don't get the food and the water

into people's hands, what we are going to see is something close to a genocide... So, Mr Trump, I am begging you to take charge and save lives. After all, that is one of the founding principles of the United States of North America. If not, the world will see how we are treated not as second-class citizens but as animals that can be disposed of. Enough is enough (Holpuch, 2017).

Yulín's discourse went out of the bounds of permitted dissent when her criticism went too far in the eyes of the political elite. The use of the word 'genocide' may be considered as breaking this barrier, meaning that only certain language is considered permissible when expressing discontent over a distressing situation that is perpetuated by government inefficiency. This can be seen for instance in the plight of the Rohingya in Myanmar; their violent displacement has taken place by force for the last year, yet the U.N. has not called it 'genocide' because of the geopolitical implications this may have amongst the political elites, represented by security council members (Rohingya Refugee Crisis, 2018). In the case of Mayor Yulín, her speech served to stress the fact that Puerto Rico's plight was much more serious than what was being portrayed in the media, and her readiness to break the bounds of what she termed "polite" discourse was successful at drawing more of the much needed attention to the island's plight in that moment of despair.

Predictably, Trump's negligent and petty response was to personally undermine Mayor Yulín, and place the blame yet again on the Puerto Rican people. On September 30, Trump responded in a sequence of tweets: "The Mayor of San Juan, who was very complimentary only a few days ago, has now been told by the Democrats that you must be nasty to Trump ... [Puerto Ricans] want everything to be done for them when it should be a community effort. 10,000 Federal workers now on Island doing a fantastic job." Here we see how Trump again praises his Federal employees ("Us") on the one hand, and associates Mayor Yulín with playing petty politics in support of his enemies (the Democrats or "Them") on the other, returning to his *Us* vs. *Them* discourse strategy. A few days later, in an interview with Univision Mayor Yulín wore a t-shirt with the word 'NASTY' and responded: "What is really nasty is that anyone would turn their back on the Puerto Rican people [...] When someone is annoyed by someone claiming lack of drinking water, lack of medicine for the sick, and lack of food for the hungry, that person has problems too severe to be explained in an interview". Lastly, she labeled President Trump as lacking "common courtesy" and a "miscommunicator-in-chief" (Wright, 2017).

By focusing on her tone rather than her message, Trump helped create a mental model in which expressing anger and frustration towards an injustice is considered "out of bounds". Instead of focusing on Mayor Yulín's plea to help Puerto Ricans, Trump focused on Yulín's tone, portraying her as "nasty". Media coverage brought considerable attention to this debate between Trump and Yulín, and it also helped to perpetuate social

representations and ideologies that ostracize those in the colonies who demand assistance and respect from their colonial masters. Yulín's response was to 'own' her 'nas-tiness', but nonetheless in doing so, she let herself be defined by the oppressor.

As an approach Critical Discourse Analysis encourages academics to move beyond analysis, and actively change discourse through our actions in the communities surrounding us. Immediately after Maria, groups in the diaspora began working incessantly to send supplies to the island. Contrary to Trump's statements, Puerto Ricans do not want everything done for them, but instead we want to have the freedom to solve things on our own. Community and grassroots organizations such as *El Comité Boricua en la Diáspora* along with similar organizations sent a container filled with supplies which were distributed to communities in Loíza, Toa Baja and Utuado. This was one of the many community projects that emerged around the island, where Puerto Ricans helped each other in the midst of Federal inefficiency. It is important that we Puerto Ricans take control of our lives, and not wait around for the government to 'save' us from our circumstances. As we have seen, politics is nothing but a game of discursive power and most of the time works against and not in favor of the people.

REFERENCES

- Crunden, E.A. (26 Sept. 2017). Trump breaks silence, blames Puerto Rico for humanitarian disaster. *ThinkProgress*. Available at thinkprogress.org/trump-puerto-rico-blame-be2d88f5a7fc/
- Delgado, Jose A. (26 Sept. 2017). Carmen Yulín responde a tuits de Trump. *Primera Hora*. Available at www.primerahora.com/noticias/puerto-rico/nota/carmen-yulinrespondeatuitsdetrump-1247527/
- Diaz, Daniella (29 Sept. 2017). San Juan mayor: 'Dammit, this is not a good news story'. *CNN, Cable News Network*. Available at edition.cnn.com/2017/09/29/politics/puerto-rico-hurricane-maria-san-juan-mayor-trump-response/index.html
- elvocero.com, Redacción (25 Sept. 2017). Trump asegura que Puerto Rico está en un gran problema. *El Vocero de Puerto Rico*. Available at www.elvocero.com/gobierno/trump-asegura-que-puerto-rico-est-en-un-gran-problema/articulo_768ab526-a256-11e7-a58f-b397a2c23e90.html
- Gajanan, Mahita (29 Sept. 2017). San Juan Mayor to US: Your inefficiency is killing us. *Time*. Available at time.com/4963614/puerto-rico-hurricane-maria-san-juan-mayor/
- Gilmer, Marcus (29 Sept. 2017). San Juan mayor to Trump: 'You are killing us with bureaucracy'. *Mashable*. Available at mashable.com/2017/09/29/san-juan-mayor-blasts-trump/#stk7r7r42kq3

- Gimenez, Clarita (23 Sept. 2017). San Juan mayor: 'There is horror in the streets.' *The Washington Post*. Available at www.washingtonpost.com/video/local/weather/san-juan-mayor-there-is-horror-in-the-streets/2017/09/23/83469f26-a0a0-11e7-b2a7-bc70b6f98089_video.html?utm_term=.2b52a30b08d4
- Graham, David A. (29 Sept. 2017). Why does Trump keep praising the emergency response in Puerto Rico? *The Atlantic*. Available at www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/09/trumps-uncomfortable-maria-messaging/541542/
- Griffin, Kyle (29 Sept. 2017). San Juan mayor slams acting DHS Sec. Duke's Puerto Rico remarks: 'Damn it, this is not a good news story.' *Twitter*. Available at twitter.com/kylegriffin1/status/913752750529400832
- Holpuch, Amanda (29 Sept. 2017). San Juan mayor's harrowing plea: 'Mr Trump, I am begging. We are dying here'. *The Guardian*. Available at www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/29/san-juan-mayor-plea-donald-trump-puerto-rico
- Kopan, Tal (29 Sept. 2017). DHS's Duke explains 'good news story' quote. *CNN, Cable News Network*. Available at edition.cnn.com/2017/09/29/politics/elaine-duke-explains-good-news-story/index.html
- Mogashoa, Tebogo (2014). Understanding critical discourse analysis in qualitative research. *International Journal of Humanities Social Science and Education (IJHSSE)*, 1, 7, 104-113.
- Morales, Rafael (26 Sept. 2017). Presidente Trump agradece palabras a Carmen Yulín. *Metro*. Available at www.metro.pr/pr/noticias/2017/09/26/presidente-trump-agradece-palabras-carmen-yulin.html
- Riotta, Chris (29 Sept. 2017). Puerto Rico mayor slams Trump White House for hurricane response: "People are dying!" *Newsweek*. Available at www.newsweek.com/puerto-rico-relief-donald-trump-white-house-mayor-carmen-yulin-cruz-674287
- Robles, Frances, et al. (8 Dec. 2017). Official toll in Puerto Rico: 64. Actual deaths may be 1,052. *The New York Times*. Available at www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/12/08/us/puerto-rico-hurricane-maria-death-toll.html
- Robson, Steve (27 Sept. 2017). Puerto Rico mayor weeps as she begs for help while Trump congratulates himself on 'good job' with aid. *Mirror News*. Available at www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/puerto-rico-mayor-weep-begs-11243584
- Rohingya Refugee Crisis (2018). *OCHA*, 27 Apr. 2018. Available at www.unocha.org/rohingya-refugee-crisis
- Shah, Anushka, Allan Ko & Fernando Peinado (27 Nov. 2017). Analysis: The mainstream media didn't care about Puerto Rico until it became a Trump story. *The Washington Post*. Available at www.washingtonpost.com/news/posteverything/wp/2017/11/27/the-mainstream-media-didnt-care-about-puerto-rico-until-it-became-a-trump-story/?utm_term=.7b6b41f0e26b

Superville, Darlene & Luis A. Lugo (29 Sept. 2017). Trump praises Puerto Rico aid, mayor says it's 'killing us'. *Fox News*. Available at www.foxnews.com/us/2017/09/29/trump-official-in-tempest-her-own-making.html

Superville, Darlene & Luis Alonso Lugo (30 Sept. 2017). Trump lashes out at San Juan mayor who begged for more help. *The Denver Post*. Available at www.denverpost.com/2017/09/29/puerto-rico-aid-donald-trump-mayor-carmen-yulin-cruz/

TeleSUR English (13 Dec. 2017). *More than a thousand people have died in Puerto Rico due to failed infrastructure after this year's hurricanes*. Available at m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1245321535611246&id=479681268841947&refsrc=https%3A%2F%2Fm.facebook.com%2Ftelesurenglish%2Fvideos%2F1245321535611246%2F&_rdr

Univision Noticias (4 Oct. 2017). "What is truly 'nasty' is to turn your back on the Puerto Rican People": mayor of San Juan. *Univision Noticias*. Available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=6IZilGOXmG8

Univision (5 Oct. 2017). 'Nasty': the combative t-shirt worn by the mayor of San Juan that went viral. *Univision*. Available at www.univision.com/univision-news/united-states/nasty-the-combative-t-shirt-worn-by-the-mayor-of-san-juan-that-went-viral

Van Dijk, Teun (2017). *Discourse and domination: 25 years of critical discourse analysis*. Conferencia Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 16 Feb. 2017

White, Jeremy B. (29 Sept. 2017). 'Something close to genocide': San Juan mayor Carmen Yulin Cruz begs for more Puerto Rico relief. *Independent Digital News and Media*. Available at www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/puerto-rico-crisis-latest-san-juan-genocide-mayor-beg-carmen-yulin-cruz-aid-relief-a7975021.html

Wright, Mike (5 Oct. 2017). The 'nasty' mayor matching President Trump at his own aggressive media game. *The Telegraph*. Available at www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/10/05/nasty-mayor-matching-president-trump-aggressive-media-game/

**TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY
OF EDUCATION IN THE
GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND**

LECTURERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFICACY OF THE INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATIVE STRATEGIES AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGIES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

JANICE JULES

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, CAVE HILL CAMPUS

Introduction

In today's world (McGroarty, 2001: 345), proficiency in two or more languages is viewed as a highly desirable goal, and along with significantly improving the level of relation and communication between linguistic and cultural groups, proficiency in several languages is one of the most effective ways of language preservation. Indeed, it is not exceptional that in many parts of the world populations have the ability to speak more than one language so that a monolingual individual would be regarded as a misfit and marked as lacking that an important skill of being able to interact freely with the speakers of other languages (Wardhaugh, 2010: 93). In fact, evidence shows that it is possible to learn a second or foreign language and enhance learning at no expense to the first language (Swain, 1987:69). Moreover, the ability to speak more than one language is becoming increasingly important worldwide, as the execution of the skills and competencies of foreign language speakers enable a larger percentage of the world's population to understand the information that is conveyed in various communicative contexts. In addition, in many countries, government and non-government authorities have recognised the significance of their nationals being able to speak more than one language for communication associated with economic progress in business and commerce as well as for social development.

Over the years, as bilinguals and multilinguals have proved successful in improving their employment opportunities, there has been a steady and appreciable growth in interest in foreign and second language teaching to adults. In the Caribbean region, this is evidenced by the implementation of courses in the teaching of foreign and second languages at some of the tertiary level institutions. Accordingly, at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Cave Hill Campus, along with the thirteen-week English as a Second Language (ESL) programme which deals with teaching English to adult Spanish-speakers from Latin American countries such as Ecuador and Venezuela, there are also foreign language programmes of similar duration which enable adults to learn languages

such as Chinese and Portuguese. Furthermore, the UWI Modern Languages programme enables adults to learn French and Spanish through study in several related courses for approximately three to five years. The continuity of such language programmes is further verification of their worth to the Caribbean region, and one of the main objectives is for learners to attain a level of proficiency that is higher than the level they were assessed to have at the commencement of their instruction. However, the accomplishment of this goal is not the sole criterion for the evaluation of the usefulness and value of the foreign language programme. This is because those involved in the delivery of instruction in the UWI Modern Language programme are aware that the favourable outcome of foreign language instruction should be measured on specific criteria. For this reason, the central focus is on learners' acquisition of permanent language skills and competencies that provide them with the ability to execute and utilise linguistic competence effectively, along with communicative competence to facilitate communication via meaningful language that is appropriate within various situational contexts.

To this end, learners must possess permanent language capabilities associated with communicative competence which enable them to use the foreign language appropriately to facilitate effective communication in real life communicative interactions (James, 1994: 59). This means that the language learner must have much more than simply knowledge of the grammar or structure of the language (Widdowson, 1978: 117). This becomes painfully apparent when students, especially in industrializing countries, receive several years of formal teaching, but frequently remain deficient in the ability to actually use the language and to understand its use in normal communication. This fact must inform instructional strategies used in foreign language programmes at tertiary level institutions within the Caribbean, inclusive of the UWI Cave Hill Campus.

According to Al-Mahrooqi & Troudi (2014), with a focus on communicative strategies, currently instructional technology can be utilised to enhance foreign language teaching, and there is keen interest in combining different methodologies with instructional technologies that promise to motivate learners and respond effectively to their present needs as well as to their continued lifelong learning. Some of the positive changes which have occurred in language teaching can be directly associated with the success of combining communicative strategies, authentic material and instructional technology. They point out that this integration of communicative strategies and instructional technology provides a student-centred learning environment with a reduction in teacher-centred instruction which results in decreasing the level of anxiety which learners experience. Such an environment provides them with the opportunity to practise language in an atmosphere of comfort without the fear of embarrassment associated with making mistakes.

In this type of instruction, there is an integration of language teaching and content, such that much of the abstraction associated with other language teaching methods is erased.

As a consequence, learners experience authentic communication and learn the communicative functions of the new language within purposeful contexts. At the same time, effective use of the combination of communicative strategies with technology allows learners to experience intense, active and meaningful use of the target language. Furthermore, the application of this blend of strategies in grammar instruction sessions necessitates the utilisation of all the components of communicative competence. As a consequence, in this language learning environment, learners are exposed to instruction in which they experience the communicative features of the target language. After attempting to implement the integration of communicative strategies and instructional technology into grammar instruction in foreign language teaching at the UWI, Cave Hill Campus over the past years, it was decided that there was a need for reliable data on lecturers' perceptions of the efficacy of this new approach.

Research problem and theoretical framework

This study seeks to examine the perceptions of lecturers in Spanish and French at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus about the application of communicative strategies and instructional technology in grammar instruction in foreign language teaching to determine their views of their knowledge of the two strategies and the level of efficacy attained from the combination in their instructional sessions. Thus, the research sets out to answer the following questions: 1) To what extent are communicative strategies and instructional technology used in grammar instruction in foreign language teaching in Spanish and French at The UWI, Cave Hill Campus? 2) What are the lecturers' perceptions of their knowledge of the application of communicative strategies and instructional technology in grammar instruction in foreign language? and 3) What are the lecturers' perceptions of the efficacy of the use of communicative strategies and instructional technology in their grammar instruction sessions?

Language learning is often described as a complicated and challenging process for the learners as well as the instructors. For this reason, intense focus must be placed on the use of the most effective grammar instructional methods and strategies to enable all stakeholders to experience enjoyment and attain the highest level of success. Accordingly, when communicative strategies are utilised there is a decrease in focus on lecturing and other traditional teacher-directed methods, and the result is the general removal of instructional activities in which the learners are reduced to passive recipients of knowledge that is provided only by the teacher with no active engagement of the learner. With the application of communicative strategies, the teaching-learning environments are conducive to 'experiential learning' as learners are motivated to interact and participate in various patterns of interaction, such as learner-to learner, small group and whole class. This approach to language teaching highlights learners' acquisition of knowledge as they interface with whole ideas, events and materials in purposeful context rather

than studying subparts of the content which are distinct from how they are actually required to be applied in real life (Zemelman, Daniels & Hyde, 2005: 10-13). Accordingly, the use of communicative strategies facilitates the learners' meaningful application of various components of communicative competence which enables speakers to acquire sociolinguistic competence demonstrated through the ability to use the language appropriately (Hymes, 1986).

Geddes (1989) suggests that for their first experience, learners should participate in activities which mirror authenticity in language contexts and which help in preparing them for real communication outside of the structured classroom environment. This form of instruction exposes them to functional and real content as well as meaningfully language. It is vital that the learners engage with real, rich, complex ideas and materials which empower them with lifelong capabilities for meaningful communication within many different sociolinguistic contexts (Zemelman, Daniels & Hyde, 2005: 10; Richards & Rodgers, 2001: 70; Johnson & Morrow, 1989, 62-63).

Sharma & Barrett (2007) put forward four principles in this regard, the first of which is the separation of the role of teacher from that of technology, because although these two roles are complementary, they are definitely not interchangeable. This principle suggests that instructional technologies must be perceived as teaching tools which support the activities and function of the teacher within the foreign language classroom. Thus, technology can never replace the teacher who must possess the required knowledge of the grammar content as well as an awareness of the appropriate strategies to use, and how to apply them to achieve the optimum level of effectiveness during instruction. Their second principle is to teach in a principled way which focuses on learners' needs while ensuring that all instruction is based primarily on pedagogical principles as opposed to merely using the technology because it is accessible. Their third principle insists that technology be used to complement and enhance face-to-face teaching and that there be a close correlation between the content of the instructional sessions and the online materials. For this reason, learners should not be left on their own completely to manipulate the technology without direction and guidance as they seek information. Their acquisition of knowledge via the technology should be systematic and organised as well as combined with information obtained from face-to-face instruction. Their final principle stipulates that the central focus is not the instructional technologies themselves, but instead on how they are applied during instruction.

Focus should be placed on the objectives set out by learners to enable the provision of more opportunities for them to utilise the target language within the teaching-learning environment in the classroom, thus improving their sense of achievement during the learning process as well as their awareness of the relevance of their knowledge (Crookes & Chaudron, 2013: 38). In such a student-centred approach, one avoids activities based on unfocused content which is not relevant directly to the learners' real needs (Zemelman, Daniels & Hyde, 2005:13).

Based on all the aforementioned reasons, attempts have been made to integrate communicative strategies and instructional technology into grammar instruction in foreign language teaching at the UWI, Cave Hill Campus, and the present study is designed to begin to evaluate the results of that process.

Research design, sample, and data collection

An Action Research design was utilised in this study. According to Bryman & Bell (2011) Action Research involves cooperation between the members of the study sample and the researcher in assessing the problem under examination, and based on the findings, in determining an effective solution. Therefore, when the findings and conclusions are presented, there is scope for recommendations for relevant adjustment or modification to further supplement or enhance foreign language teaching in Spanish and French at the UWI, Cave Hill Campus. Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered through administering a questionnaire and conducting semi-structured interviews designed to elicit participants' perceptions of relevant aspects related to their knowledge of communicative strategies and instructional technology as well as the efficacy of combining these variables in foreign language instruction.

The study sample consisted of a very specific population of five Spanish and five French lecturers from the Modern Language programme at the UWI, Cave Hill Campus. Based on the selection procedure, this sample could be categorised as purposive, since although its members can be categorised according to criteria such as age, gender, academic qualification, and years of experience, the main criterion which influenced the respondents' selection was their profession as lecturers in the foreign language programme at UWI. The low number of individuals in the sample represented all the participants that were available, facilitating the acquisition of information-rich data.

The questionnaire included sixty statements to be rated by respondents on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5). Another component of the instrument was designed to gather biographical information about each respondent's qualifications, proficiency in the foreign language, and length of time teaching in their discipline. These data were supplemented with information gathered from a semi-structured interview designed to collect qualitative data.

The administration of the questionnaire to the ten participants took place at the conclusion of first semester of the academic year 2014-2015 over a period of eight days with copies of the instrument distributed to the participants who were asked to complete the items. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) programme was applied to the responses on the questionnaires to determine means and percentages. The semi-structured interviews were conducted over a five day period after the examination and analysis of the data from the questionnaire. Each interview lasted for between twenty to thirty minutes, and along with providing information for items not addressed by the

primary instrument, this secondary instrument was used to collect data to support any area in which a deficit in the data was revealed after the analysis.

Participants were informed via written and oral modes of their option to withdraw at any time during the administering of the instruments, and were advised to avoid including information on the basis of which they could be identified, and they were assured that their responses would be kept strictly confidential. Because there is only one foreign language instructor at the UWI Cave Hill for Portuguese and Chinese respectively, these lecturers were not included in the study sample for the research, to avoid possible loss of anonymity.

Results and analysis

In this preliminary study, not all of the items on the questionnaire are considered. Table 1 presents participants' responses to items based on their perceptions about the use of instructional technologies.

Table 1 Participants' responses related to the use of instructional technologies

N0	Item	Mean	%
10	The use of technology can enhance the teaching of grammar in the foreign language	4.2	84
19	I always incorporate student and teacher use of technology in my grammar lesson plans	3.6	72
21	I always include technology in managing, planning and communication aspects of my grammar instructional sessions	4	80
22	I always have back-up plans when using technology in case a problem occurs during my grammar sessions	3.9	78
37	I always encourage students to use many available resources within a grammar lesson including the Internet	4.5	90
38	I find it difficult using technology in teaching grammar instruction in foreign language because I was never taught how to use it.	2.5	50
51	In my grammar lessons students are allowed to use electronic resources to support the learning of the content	4	80
60	Students are encouraged to use technology to facilitate their use of language	4.4	88

Based on the data in Table 1, participants show a level of 84% agreement that the application of technology can positively influence their grammar instruction, while they show a level of 72% agreement that believe they are consistent in making provision to use technology as well as always ensuring that the learners do so as well. Moreover, at

an 88% level of agreement, the participants indicated that they think they inspire learners to use the technology to assist in their use of the language and with a 90% level of agreement, they are of the view they encourage learners to use as many modes of technology that are available. Most of the respondents acknowledged that problems can occur with the technology, and based on the data, there is a 78% level of agreement that they make preparation for such eventualities. It is noted that while there is a 50% level of agreement that they are not limited in using instructional technology, there is also a 50% level of agreement that some challenges in this area related to the fact that they were never taught formally how to use it.

When asked about their perceptions about the use of technology in grammar instruction in foreign language teaching some responses were as follows:

Participant 1: Technology has to be embraced in order to enhance the FL learning experience. For example, when I am teaching the present tense I always use Internet games to bring home my point. Students find it exciting, they are motivated and this leads to a better understanding of grammar point.

Participant 2: Like any other field of learning, language learning must take into consideration the way people live, learn, indeed their everyday habits. Lifestyles have become totally dependent on technology. To make the classroom meaningful and to tap in on new or the multiple learning styles of students, the language teacher must avail himself of these technologies.

Participant 3: Very useful. Students do activities on-line. For instance, you can include discussion for multiple choices or even quizzes.

213

In addition, participants were asked present their views on the use of authentic material.

Participant 1: They are an integral part of teaching and making the language meaningful. In fact, nowadays the Internet has a plethora of authentic materials that the teacher can use, so including these items is not a problem for most teachers in their planning.

Participant 4: It is important to incorporate authentic material such as newspapers, articles or even tours. I do that with the grammar course that I am currently teaching.

These qualitative data validate the quantitative findings that the participants perceive their knowledge of the use of instructional technology to be at a sufficient level that it enhances their delivery of grammar instruction. Generally, they believe that they are aware of the possibilities for interaction provided by instructional technologies offers and the importance of using a tool with which learners are familiar to enhance the level of interest and enjoyment of classroom sessions.

Table 2 presents participants' responses to items based on their perceptions about instructional strategies and techniques.

Table 2. Participants' responses related to instructional strategies and techniques

N0	Item	Mean	%
24	I always use methods and strategies which make my grammar lessons interactive	4.7	94
25	It is always time consuming to make my periods of teacher-student interactions meaningful during the grammar sessions.	3.2	64
28	I always use student-student interaction to enhance individual understanding of the content of the grammar lesson	3.9	78
34	My instructional choices engage students in active learning of the grammar rules	3.7	74
35	I always incorporate strategies and activities which facilitate the application the grammar rules to real-life situations	4	80
36	I focus on developing practice in applying knowledge of the grammar rules based on the structure of the final examination	3.5	70
44	In my lessons students' activities and discussions enable them to make meaningful connections of the grammar rules and concepts	4.4	88

According to the data, there is a 94% level of agreement that the methods and strategies which they apply in their grammar sessions are interactive, and this is supported by a 74% level of agreement that they think learners are actively involved in their own learning during the sessions while there is an 80% level of agreement that they believe they focus on learners' knowledge of how to apply the grammar outside of the classroom to the activates which occur in real life. However, only there was only a 26% level of disagreement that teacher to student interaction is time consuming, and a 64% level of agreement that the process took a lot of time. In addition, based on the findings, there was a 70% level of agreement that the structure of the final examination influenced their grammar instruction. The response to this item appears to contrast somewhat with the high level of agreement that they apply strategies in their grammar instruction which prepare learners for real-life situations.

When asked about their perceptions on instructional strategies and techniques, some responses were as follows:

Participant 3: I try to vary my language teaching as much as can. It depends on the activity.

Participant 1: The Communicative Approach.

Participant 2: Most of foreign language teachers use a combination of methods and it is often difficult to pinpoint any one. However, I would say that essentially I use the Communicative Approach.

The respondents were asked to give their perceptions on the use of contemporary methods in the grammar instructional sessions for foreign language.

Participant 4: They are very important because they make the class lively.

Participant 2: Contemporary methods tend to focus on communication and I agree with that. However, it must be made clear that there is no one correct way for learning a language, and while teaching style, materials, technology are important, the learner has a role to play in formal language learning.

Participant 1: They should be embraced.

Participants were also asked about the use of communicative task-based activities in grammar instructional sessions.

Participant 4: I use the com. approach so a great deal of time is spent on task-based activities.

Most of the participants perceived that the strategies they use in the grammar sessions correlate with the communicative features of encouraging various patterns of interaction, active learning for the learners and knowledge of the application of the language to real life situations. Hence, the results revealed that participants perceive that the strategies associated with the Communicative Approach are prominent in the grammar instruction sessions they deliver.

Table 3 presents participants' responses to items based on their perceptions about students' needs.

Table 3 Participants' responses related to students' needs

N0	Item	Mean	%
30	I do not allow for the use of the grammar of the language for real-life communication	2	40
46	I always provide students opportunities to apply new learning of the grammar of the language to situations in the real world	4.5	90
48	I structure the content to focus on the students' learning of the grammar of the language for the development of life skills	3.6	72
56	I use classroom management which maximizes learning opportunities for my students	4.5	90
58	Students are motivated to use the grammar of the language effectively in the classroom	4.2	84

The details in Table 3 reveal that there is a 90% level of agreement that they set out to provide as many learning opportunities as possible for the learners during the grammar sessions and a 90% level of agreement that it is important for the learners to be able to apply their newly acquire grammar knowledge to real situations outside of the classroom. There is, however, a 40% level of agreement that during their grammar instruction they do not enable the learners to use the language for real life situations. This results conflict somewhat with the 90% level of agreement that they always provide opportunities for students to apply any new grammar concepts to real-life situations. However, based on the data, generally, the participants think they structure their grammar sessions to cater to the students' needs. This indicates that they perceive that their activities are very student- centred and experiential.

Discussion & conclusions

Based on an analysis of the above findings, we conclude that generally the participants perceive that they possess more than basic knowledge about the communicative strategies and instructional technology used in grammar instruction in foreign language teaching, and they believe that they apply this knowledge during their instructional sessions. Accordingly, they also believe that through the use of these two strategies, they provide learners with student-centred teaching, meaningful interaction, the opportunity to be active participants in their own learning, as well as an awareness of how to apply the knowledge of grammar of the foreign language to real situations they encounter in life.

The results also reveal some areas to which increased attention should be given. Many participants were of the view that they had no formal training in the use of technology in the teaching of grammar. This is a situation which should be rectified. It is noted that the results indicate that the participants think that despite their lack of training, they are effective in the classroom. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that with the necessary training, their capabilities in the classroom might be further enhanced and this could increase the possibility of their being even more efficient in enabling the learners to attain success in their acquisition of the target language. Participants' views on their level of technological awareness highlights the fact that they should endeavour to present activities in which the communicative features which are associated with instructional technology become more prominent. Hence, participants should be trained further in how communicative strategies and instructional technology can complement each other to enhance the learning opportunities.

Attention must be drawn to that fact that there is a 70% level of agreement that teaching is influenced by the requirements of the final examination. Although the final examination is very important and each student has to be attain the required pass in order to be

successful in the Modern Language programme, the aforementioned perception indicates a diversion from one of the major principles of communicative teaching, which is to prepare the learner for life by equipping him or her with life-long language competencies. There is the belief, that with such thorough preparation, the learner will pass the final examination as well apply his or her knowledge in real-life circumstances. A 60% level of agreement that they facilitate the use of grammar of the language for real communication during grammar sessions, indicates that a sizeable minority think that the strategies which they use do not facilitate this feature. In this regard, training may be required to ensure that effective integration of communicative strategies and instructional technology can be achieved to ensure that learners are able to function effectively in real-life scenarios within the classroom in which they can apply their new knowledge of the grammar. Also, learners can be invited to engage in such activities outside the classroom where they can explore and experience real language and be encouraged to apply their newly acquired grammar knowledge. On the basis of our findings, it appears that, while important progress has been made in integrating communicative strategies and instructional technology in foreign language teaching at UWI, Cave Hill, new training programmes must be designed to ensure that this process achieves the desired outcomes.

REFERENCES

- Al-Marooqi, Rahma & Salah Troudi (2014). *Using technology in foreign language teaching*. New Castle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Bryman, Alan & Emma Bell (2011). *Business research methods* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Crooks, Graham & Craig Chaudron (2013). Guidelines for language classroom instruction. In Marianne Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language*, 3rd ed. (pp. 29-42). Boston: Heinle.
- Geddes, Marion (1989, [1981]). Listening. In Keith Johnson & Keith Morrow (Eds.), *Communication in the classroom: application and methods for communicative approach* (pp. 78-117). London: Longman.
- Hymes, Dell H. (1986). On communicative competence. In John B. Pride & Janet Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics* (pp. 269-292). New York: Penguin.
- James, Charles J. (1994, [1985]). *Foreign language proficiency in the classroom and beyond*. Lincolnwood: Natl. TextBk.
- Johnson, Keith & Keith Morrow (Eds.) (1989, [1981]). *Communication in the classroom: application and methods for communicative approach*. London: Longman.

- McGroarty, Mary (2001). Bilingual approaches to language learning. In Marianne Celce-Murcia (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (3rd ed.) (pp. 345-356). Boston: Heinle.
- Richards, Jack C. & Theodore S. Rodgers (2001, [1986]). *Approaches and methods in language teaching: a description and analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sharma, Pete & Barney Barrett (2007). *Blended learning using technology in and beyond the language classroom*. Oxford: Macmillan.
- Stern, Hans H. (2009, [1983]). *Fundamental concepts of language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swain, Merrill (1987). Bilingual education: research and its implications. In Michael H. Long & Jack C. Richards (Eds.), *Methodology in TESOL: a book of readings* (pp. 61-69). Boston: Heinle.
- Wardhaugh, Ronald (2010). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (6th ed.). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.
- Widdowson, H G. (1978). *Teaching language as communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Zemelman, Steven, Harvey Daniels & Arthur A. Hyde (2005). *Best practice: today's standards for teaching and learning in America's schools* (3rd ed.). Portsmouth: Heinemann.

SPELLING ACQUISITION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA: AN ERROR ANALYSIS

PENELOPE MONTFORT
UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA

Introduction

This study examines misspellings by first year undergraduate students of the University of Guyana. It attempts to evaluate the distribution of error types, analyze the nature of the errors, and determine the linguistic factors that influence these misspellings. Data were collected from 911 first year students from the Turkeyen and Tain Campuses, enrolled in the Use of English programme at the University of Guyana. Based on the POMAS error classification scheme, orthography (as opposed to phonology or morphology) contributed more than half to the total number of spelling errors, while vowels were the most frequently misspelled phonological unit. The results also showed that the students' native language experiences significantly impacted their spelling ability.

Research on reading acquisition has proliferated in the literature over the last three decades. Spelling, a comparatively complex cognitive activity, has not received as much attention. Early research on spelling acquisition done by Charles Read (1975, cited in Boras, 2003), showed that from an early age, children applied phonemic awareness skills to produce English spellings, and their misspellings were structurally uniform. These findings provided strong evidence for the developmental processes involved in the acquisition of spelling skills. Subsequent studies confirmed Read's stage theory of spelling development, with variations in the number of stages required (Bourassa & Treiman, 2001; Ehri, 1987; Gentry, 1981; Henderson, 1990; Masterson & Crede, 1999). Because spelling acquisition progresses from the very simple to the more complex feature, a systematic approach to spelling instruction must be adopted for all English Language Learners (ELLs).

From a cognitive developmental perspective, it might be postulated that spelling acquisition for adult ELLs differs from that of children. The literature claims that adult spelling errors are predominantly morphological in nature, presupposing that adult learners have already mastered the phonology and orthography of the language (Bahr et al., 2012; Goodwin, Lipsky & Ahn, 2012; McNeill & Kirk, 2014). In general, however, evidence demonstrates that although adult learners exhibit superior skills with cer-

tain spelling features, they acquire spelling in a similar fashion to children, thus confirming the theory that spelling evolves in stages (Boras, 2003; Goodwin, Lipsky & Ahn, 2012).

The linguistic situation in Guyana is one of an official standard alongside a related Creole that is used in most informal contexts, and this directly impacts the teaching and learning of spelling skills. English is the country's official language and the official language of instruction in education, whereas Guyanese English-lexifier Creole, also referred to as Guyanese Creole English (GCE), is most students' home language. In spite of the similarity in their lexicon, there are key phonological differences in the pronunciation of words between these two languages. Since the majority of our students originate from Creole-speaking backgrounds, they fail to detect these differences and transfer Creole features into their academic writing.

Writing, like other literacy tasks, is a cognitive developmental activity that is mastered through consistent practice and perseverance. In academia, writing is the principal medium through which students demonstrate their communicative competence. It is therefore imperative that students' writing reflects a high academic standard. One of the key elements of good writing is achieving spelling proficiency. Developing this skill is critically important since incorrect spelling is a barrier to effective communication, and leads to misinterpretation and incomprehension of text. Correct spelling greatly augments a writer's credibility as well as garnering respect for the written product.

220 While explicit instruction is given in writing through English Composition courses or through the research component of university level courses in Guyana, spelling itself is not taught as a subject of instruction at the tertiary level. However, its importance cannot be overlooked. From my teaching experience in the Use of English programme at the University of Guyana, spelling inaccuracies are among the most dominant and pervasive language problems evident in students' writing. First year students have received at least thirteen years of formal instruction in English Language, and must attain an acceptable level of English Language competence, that is, Grade three for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations, for admission into university. Yet, spelling inaccuracies persist in students' writing.

The purpose of this study is to examine misspellings made by University of Guyana first year students, to evaluate the distribution of error types, and to analyze the nature of these spelling errors. The study is also designed to determine the linguistic factors that influence the misspellings.

Literature review and state of the question

Spelling is closely associated with reading since they both rely on similar cognitive processes for acquisition. While reading employs skill in decoding – articulating the sound that corresponds to printed letters – spelling involves the diametrically opposite process of encoding, that is, being able to print the letter that corresponds to a specific

sound segment or phoneme. This phoneme-grapheme correspondence is typical of alphabetic writing systems which can range from transparent to opaque. Transparent writing systems such as Finnish and Greek have highly predictable grapheme-phoneme relationships. On the other hand, opaque orthographies are characterized by inconsistent sound-letter mappings (Russak & Kahn-Horwitz, 2015; Boulware-Gooden, Joshi, & Grigorenko, 2015). In English, for example, the grapheme <e> can be pronounced in a number of ways including /i/ or /ɛ/ and the phoneme /i/ is represented by several graphemes, including <ee, e, ea, ei, ie, y>. The considerably opaque nature of English orthography makes spelling a challenging and frustrating exercise for many students.

Traditional rote memorization of words is a major contributor to the challenges associated with spelling achievement. Proponents of this oversimplified instructional approach fail to consider linguistic principles that govern the domain of English spelling. Studies have shown that spelling instruction is most effective when taught as a linguistic activity by focusing on the phonological, orthographic, and morphological awareness that is fundamental to spelling mastery (McNeil & Kirk, 2014; Goodwin et al., 2012; Bahr et al., 2012). Current literature uses the term ‘triple word-form theory’ to describe the interaction of the phonological, orthographic and morphological systems in spelling acquisition (Bahr et al., 2012; Berninger et al., 2010). The traditional rote method has dominated spelling instruction for two main reasons. Firstly, relatively little scientific research has been done specifically on spelling. Secondly, teachers have not been exposed to those empirical findings that do exist on spelling, and therefore lack the relevant linguistic knowledge to design appropriate teaching-learning strategies. As a result teachers end up recycling the ineffective traditional approach bequeathed to them (Boras, 2003).

Spelling errors give insight into the cognitive processes involved in producing correct word forms, as well as the properties of a language’s orthography. Classifying and evaluating spelling errors is not a simple straightforward process. Researchers contend that a simple correct versus incorrect approach disregards the subtle yet rich nuances of the linguistic and orthographic features of a specific language (Protopapas et al., 2012). A holistic approach is required to aptly describe the internal nature of spelling errors (Protopapas et al., 2012).

English words are composed of individual sound segments, or phonemes which have a graphic representation. The ability to correctly match phonemes with their graphic form, termed phonemic awareness, is fundamental to reading and spelling acquisition (Boulware-Gooden et al., 2015; Fraser & Conti-Ramsden, 2008; Ritchey, 2008; Stainthorp, Powell & Stewart, 2013). Accurate spellings are produced when phonemes in a word are first isolated, then mapped onto their respective graphemes. Phonemic awareness skills facilitate fast and efficient performance of this cognitive task.

It is indisputably established in the literature that spelling ability is significantly predicted by phonological awareness (Boulware-Gooden et al., 2015; Furnes & Samuelson, 2010; DeSousa, Greenop & Fry, 2010; Fraser & Conti-Ramsden, 2008; Holm, Farrier & Dodd, 2008; Ritchey, 2008; Stainthorp et al., 2013; Yeung, Siegel & Chan, 2012). Phonological awareness refers to knowledge of factors such as the phonotactic constraints of a language, that is, the restrictions on possible combinations of sounds. For instance, the consonant clusters ‘bck’ or ‘pwt’ are never allowed in English. Phonological awareness also involves the application of phonological rules to derive the phonetic form of words – the actual spoken form. As an example, the English plural morpheme written as <-s> is pronounced as /-s/, /-z/ and /-əz/ in different environments.

Phonologically-based spelling errors are a natural part of spelling development. These errors are systematic, and are due to early spellers’ limited phonological knowledge (Bahr et al., 2012). Common misspellings include word-initial and word-final consonant cluster reduction, and substitution of single letters for phoneme sequences. Continuous interactions with the oral and written forms of the language will increase students’ phonological awareness, and thus decrease this error type.

The word orthography is a derivative of the Greek roots *orthos* and *graphein*, which mean ‘correct’ and ‘to write’, respectively (Apel, 2011). Orthography therefore means ‘to write correctly’. Correct representation of speech sounds in written form depends on the orthographic knowledge one possesses. There are two dimensions to orthographic knowledge, namely, an individual’s mental repertoire of whole words or parts of words, referred to as mental graphemic representations (MGRs), as well as his/her knowledge of a language’s orthographic patterns (Apel, 2011). The latter dimension taps into one’s phonological awareness skills.

Spelling tasks move beyond mere knowledge of an orthography to a conscious deliberate manipulation of the orthographic system, termed orthographic awareness. Apel (2011) defines orthographic awareness as “individuals’ implicit or explicit attention to orthographic knowledge, either for the MGRs they have developed or the orthographic patterns they have learned” (p. 594). Orthographic knowledge and orthographic awareness are like two sides of the same coin connected by one’s linguistic metacognition.

The interplay between receptive and expressive orthography also significantly impacts spelling acquisition. Researchers concur that receptive orthographic growth is more rapid in the lower elementary grades than expressive orthographic growth (Berninger et al., 2010). This process facilitates the development of a comprehensive MGR which forms the foundation for subsequent orthographic development. While receptive orthographic development decreases beyond third grade, expressive orthographic skills continues to mature (Berninger et al., 2010).

Accurate orthographic representations of a language’s lexicon are primarily facilitated by a rich robust inventory of MGRs comprising a high percentage of irregular words (Apel, 2011; Stainthorp et al., 2013). MGRs also significantly impact the automaticity

required for writing essays, which demand spelling accuracy while simultaneously processing ideas and diction (Bigozzi, Tarchi, & Pinto, 2016). When the MGR inventory is deficient or limited, individuals are forced to access their phonological schema to decipher word spellings. In the case of opaque orthographies, such as that of English, there is a high probability that reliance on phonological skills will hamper correct spelling.

Words in the English lexicon are generally categorized as either phonologically regular, that is, exhibiting frequent spelling patterns, or as sight words (Russak & Kahn-Horwitz, 2015; Laureate, 2009). The techniques used to learn English spellings vary according to the word category. Spelling by the addressed route (Stainthorp et al., 2013), or the lexical route (Bigozzi et al., 2016), involves the retrieval of whole words from the MGR inventory as needed. On the other hand, use of the assembled route (Stainthorp et al., 2013), or sub-lexical procedures (Bigozzi et al., 2016), to spell irregular and new words relies on phonemic and phonological awareness. These theories of spelling acquisition align with Apel's (2011) conceptualization of the interaction between orthographic knowledge and orthographic awareness.

Morphology is the branch of linguistics which studies the structural composition of words. It analyzes the types of words found in a language, word formation processes, and how combinations of morphemes affect the meaning or the grammatical function of the newly created word. Morphemes – the smallest units of language that have meaning or a grammatical function – are the central building blocks of the word formation processes. (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011).

English orthography is morphophonemic, so that words are generally constructed on morphemic and phonological rules (Goodwin & Ahn, 2013; Boulware-Gooden et al., 2015; Apel & Werfel, 2014). Morphophonemic processes alter the pronunciation, meaning and spelling of derived forms. Spelling ability is greatly augmented through accurate auditory processing of word forms as well as knowledge of the meaning of morphemes and their polymorphemic derivations (Bigozzi et al., 2016; Goodwin & Ahn, 2013; Apel & Werfel, 2014). Morphological knowledge therefore, helps individuals to encode, decode and transcode text during reading and writing. Linguists concerned with spelling skills describe this process as morphological awareness (Mihalicek & Wilson, 2011).

Morphological awareness has a prolonged developmental period from early primary to mid secondary education (Berninger et al., 2010; Goodwin et al., 2012). As students interact with familiar or high frequency words in the primary grades, they unconsciously process their morphological components. However, unfamiliar or low frequency words encountered in the higher grades must be consciously analyzed (Berninger et al., 2010; Goodwin et al., 2012). Morphological awareness skills do enhance this process, thereby reducing the percentage of morphologically related spelling errors (Berninger et al., 2010; Goodwin et al., 2012; McNeil & Kirk, 2014; Bahr et al., 2012).

Explicit systematic instruction in morphology promotes the development of morphological awareness skills. Findings from a corpus of studies which examined this phenomenon led to the conclusion that morphological instructional practices can improve students' morphological awareness and spelling skills (Berninger et al., 2010; Goodwin et al., 2012; McNeil & Kirk, 2014; Bahr et al., 2012; Benson-Goldberg, 2014). These researchers further postulated that successful spelling programmes used this approach, and emphasized morphological instruction in the higher grades (Berninger et al., 2010; Goodwin et al., 2012; McNeil & Kirk, 2014; Bahr et al., 2012).

Interaction of phonological, orthographic, and morphological awareness

Phonological, orthographic and morphological awareness (POM) do not develop along a continuum with demarcated time boundaries. For instance, phonological, orthographic and morphological features of words are all stored in working memory and are all used to process unfamiliar words, as well as to produce correct orthographic forms of allophones and allomorphs (Berninger, et al., 2010). POM as a conjoined unit becomes functional at varying levels and time periods in each individual's language development (Bahr et al., 2010; Fraser & Conti-Ramsden, 2008). Based on this premise, Berninger et al., (2010) proposes a literacy methodology that focuses on POM to help children integrate these linguistic forms in learning to read and write.

Spelling development is not automatic, but requires explicit intensive instruction for acquisition. Spelling errors should not be perceived as characteristic of students' disabilities but more as a reflection of teachers' inability to appropriately address students' linguistic deficiencies. McNeil and Kirk (2014) point out that inadequate teacher training, lack of knowledge and inadequate instructional time are three major deterrents to using a linguistic approach to teach spelling.

Many educators theorize that spelling instruction has become irrelevant in this advanced technological era. Spell checker software and programmes are a viable alternative method to teaching and correcting spelling. I deem this approach a quick-fix, opt-out solution to the problem. Spell checkers neither highlight authentic spellings used in the wrong context; nor do they present relevant options for unidentifiable words. They also identify uncommon proper nouns as misspellings. Students must be aware of these limitations and employ other proofreading techniques to edit misspellings (Boras, 2003). In other words, spell checkers are useless if students lack the skills to detect and correct their errors (Bahr et al., 2012).

A few common threads can be found in the literature on spelling achievement. Firstly, spelling is a linguistic activity and must be explicitly taught. Secondly, rote memorization is outmoded and must be replaced by linguistic strategies. Thirdly, phonology, orthography and morphology contribute conjointly to effective spelling instruction, with morphological awareness becoming more necessary in the higher grades (Boulware-Gooden et al., 2015).

The present study: sample and methodology

The study upon which this article is based targeted first year students from the Turkeyen and Tain Campuses, enrolled in the Use of English program at the University of Guyana. A large amount of data is required to give a true reflection of the distribution of error types. Therefore, data was collected from 911 students from six faculties. The population distribution across the faculties was as follows: Agriculture and Forestry (n=54), Earth and Environmental Studies (n=137), Education and Humanities (n=216), Health Science (n=197), Natural Science (n=108), and Social Science (n=199). An expository/argumentative essay was the instrument used to collect data from the students. The essay topics were varied in their scope and context. Handwritten samples were specifically selected to capture students' use of language in a natural setting without technological support.

Spelling errors from students' documents were identified, listed and coded under four headings: phonological, morphological, orthographic, and phonological/orthographic. The data were analyzed to determine the nature of the misspellings and the distribution of error types (Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard, 2002: 147). The Phonological, Orthographic, and Morphological Assessment System (POMAS) was used to analyze the data for this study. POMAS was designed on the basis of triple-word form theory to organize and analyze spelling errors according to their general and specific linguistic components (Silliman et al., 2006). Phonological errors change a word's phonological form, thus interfering with the correct pronunciation of the word. These words are therefore phonetically inaccurate. For instance, if the word <equipment> /ikwipment/ was spelled <equiptment> it was coded as epenthesis within the phonological category. Orthographic errors on the other hand, retain the phonological structure of the word but change its graphic form, for example, by substituting phonetically similar graphemes, doubling single consonants, and omitting single letters in doubled consonants. A typical instance is <speling> instead of <spelling>. Misspellings attributed to inflectional and derivational miscues were coded as morphological errors. For example, the misspelling <problemes> for <problems> signals difficulty with an inflectional suffix, whereas <predictible> for <predictable> signals difficulty with a derivational suffix. Homonyms were identified as morphological errors, to account for errors that were made in word selection. The following steps were taken to analyze the misspellings:

1. Identify the broad linguistic category of each spelling error, namely, phonological, orthographic, morphological, or phonological/orthographic
2. Identify and group patterns within each category
3. Assign specific linguistic features to each subcategory, e.g. epenthesis (phonological), letter doubling (orthographic), and derivational suffixes (morphological).

Quantitative analyses were done to highlight the distributional pattern of misspellings across the broad and in specific linguistic categories. The POMAS also caters for

spelling errors that span two linguistic categories, for example, the spelling <brige> for <bridge> is classified as a phonological/orthographic (PO) error. POMAS also allows for the addition of new features to account for novel spelling errors. Thirty-two linguistic features were analyzed in this study: 30 from the original POMAS list, and 2 additional features. Based on the premise that orthographic misspellings are phonetically accurate, one feature originally coded as orthographic (OCE) was re-coded as phonological/orthographic (POCE). The features were distributed as follows: Phonological = 10; Orthographic = 14; Morphological = 4; and Phonological/Orthographic = 4.

Results

The data were analyzed quantitatively based on 721 misspellings. Table 1 displays the total number of spelling errors per category at the four levels: word, vowel, consonant, and inflectional.

Table 1 Distribution of misspellings per linguistic category

Category	Word level	Vowel level	Consonant level	Inflectional level	Total	%
Phonological	103	51	13	—	167	23.2
Orthographic	1	158	245	—	404	56
Morphological	31	—	—	42	73	10.1
Phonological/orthographic	48	6	23	—	77	10.7
Total	183	215	281	42	721	

The results reveal that orthography accounted for more than half of the total number of spelling errors (56%); phonology for nearly a quarter (23.2%); morphology one-tenth (10.1%) and combined phonology/orthography another tenth (10.7%). When computed together phonology and orthography accounted for approximately 90% of the total errors. According to the extant literature, spelling errors in the higher grades are predominantly morphological since students have to unravel morphologically complex words at that level (Bahr et al., 2012; Goodwin et al., 2012; McNeill & Kirk, 2014; Berninger et al., 2010). However, the present study indicates that spelling errors made by freshmen at the University of Guyana are mainly orthographic. A plausible explanation for this is

the unpredictability of the sound-letter correspondences in English. Spellers often misrepresent those sounds that have multiple graphic representations.

Phonological errors included epenthesis, where both sounded and silent consonants (<cooperate> for <cooperate>), and sounded and silent vowels (<studients> for <students>; <eairly> for <early>) were added to words. Unnecessary syllables were also added to words (<eternity> for <eternity>). Misspellings in this category included reducing stressed and unstressed syllables (<society> for <society>; intrest for interest); reducing diphthongs to monophthongs (<conselors> for <counselors>); as well as deleting obligatory consonants (<satisfy> for <satisfy>) and vocalic /r/ (<motocade> for <motorcade>). There were isolated instances of nasal errors (<dilemna> for <dilemma>), stopping (<excalate> for <escalate>), and devoicing (<affort> for <afford>).

Orthographic error patterns generally involved misrepresentations of consonants and vowels. For consonants the misspellings reflected problems with ambiguous letters (<persive> for <perceive>), grapheme doubling (<comming> for <coming>), and silent letters (<wich> for <witch>). For vowels the misspellings reflected difficulties with long vowels (appriciate for appreciate); short vowels (<systamic> for <systemic>); long vowel digraphs (<fery> for <fairy>); and unstressed vowels (<juvinile> for <juvenile>). Additional errors were made by misrepresenting r-controlled vowels (<docterate> for <doctorate>) and vowel spelling patterns (<enuf> for <enough>); omitting silent e (<baptis> for <baptize>), and reducing consonant digraphs such as <etanol> for <ethanol>.

227

The results further reflected phonological/orthographic misspellings in the form of metathesis, vowel dependent spellings, and vowel deletion. Students reversed consonant digraphs such as <strenght> for <strength>, vowel digraphs such as <aviable> for <available>; and the CV, VC, and CC sequences respectively in words like <burglary> misspelled <burgalry>, <film> misspelled as <flim>, and <brings> misspelled as <brigns>.

Morphologically-triggered spelling errors included misusing homonyms like <there> for <their>, misspelling derivational suffixes as exemplified in misrepresenting <sequential> as <sequencial>, and incorrectly applying or omitting inflectional suffixes, e.g., writing <robberys> for <robberies>.

The misspellings analyzed in this study resulted from inaccurate phonological, orthographic and morphological schemata. Contrary to previous findings based on studies conducted outside the Anglophone Caribbean, the misspelling in this study were primarily orthographic and not morphological. Sounds, particularly vowels, were misrepresented mainly due to the opaque orthography of English.

REFERENCES

- Abbott, Robert D., Virginia W. Berninger & Fayol Michel (2010). Longitudinal relationships of levels of language in writing and between writing and reading in grades 1-7. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 102, 2, 281-298.
- Apel, Kenn (2011). What is orthographic knowledge? *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 42, 592-603.
- Apel, Kenn & Krystal Werfel (2014). Using morphological awareness instruction to improve written language skills. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 45, 251-260.
- Bahr, Ruth H., Elaine R Silliman, Virginia W. Berninger & Michael Dow (2012). Linguistic pattern analysis of misspellings of typically developing writers in grades 1-9. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 55, 6, 1587-1599.
- Benson-Goldberg, Sophia (2014). Spelling of derivationally complex words: the role of phonological, orthographic, and morphological features. *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*. Available at <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/etd/5182>
- Berninger, Virginia W., Robert D. Abbott, William Nagy & Joanne Carlisle (2010). Growth in phonological, orthographic and morphological awareness in grades 1-6. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 39, 2, 141-163.
- Bigozzi, Lucia, Christian Tarchi & Giuliana Pinto (2016). Spelling across tasks and levels of language in a transparent orthography. *PLOS One*, 11, 9. Retrieved from journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0163033
- Boras, Julie (2003). Spelling development: a comparative study of adult learners and grade seven children. Retrieved from University of Lethbridge Institutional Repository, <http://hdl.handle.net/10133/940>
- Boulware-Gooden, Regina, R. Malatesha Joshi & Elena Grigorenko (2015). The role of phonology, morphology and orthography in English and Russian spelling. *Dyslexia*, 21, 2, 142-161.
- Bourassa, Derrick C. & Rebecca Trieman (2001). Spelling development and disability: the importance of linguistic factors. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 32, 3, 172-181.
- DeSousa, Diana, Kirston Greenop & Jessica Fry (2010). The effects of phonological awareness of Zulu-speaking children learning to spell in English: a study of cross-language transfer. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 80, 4, 517-533.
- Dutro, Susan, Ellen Levy & David W. Moore (2011). Equipping adolescent learners for academic achievement: an interview with Susana Dutro and Ellen Levy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 55, 4, 339-342.
- Ehri, Linnea C. (1987). Learning to read and spell words. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 19, 1, 5-31.

- Fraser, Jill & Gina Conti-Ramsden (2008). Contribution of phonological and broader language skills to literacy. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 43, 5, 552-569.
- Furnes, Bjarte & Stefan Samuelsson (2010). Phonological awareness and rapid automatized naming predicting early development in reading and spelling: results from a cross-linguistic longitudinal study. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 21, 1, 85-95.
- Gentry, Richard J. (1981). Learning to spell developmentally. *The Reading Teacher*, 34, 4, 378-381.
- Goodwin, Amanda P., Miriam Lipsky & Soyeon Ahn (2012). Word detectives: using units of meaning to support literacy. *The Reading Teacher*, 65, 7, 461-470.
- Goodwin, Amanda P. & Soyeon Ahn (2013). A meta-analysis of morphological interventions in English: effects on literacy outcomes for school-age children. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 17, 4, 257-285.
- Henderson, Edmund H. (1990). *Teaching spelling*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Holm, Allison, Faith Farrier & Barbara Dodd (2008). Phonological awareness, reading accuracy and spelling ability of children with inconsistent phonological disorders. *International Journal of Language & Communication Disorders*, 43, 3, 300-322.
- Kear, Dennis J., Gerry A. Coffman, Michael C. McKenna & Anthony L. Ambrosio (2000). Measuring attitude toward writing: a new tool for teachers. *The Reading Teacher*, 54, 1, 10-23.
- Laureate Education, Inc. (Executive Producer). (2009). Literacy interventions in special education: intervention: word-level disabilities. Baltimore: Laureate Education.
- Masterson, Julie J. & Leigh A. Crede (1999). Learning to spell: implications for assessment and intervention. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 30, 3, 243-254.
- McNeill, Brigid & Cecilia Kirk (2014). Theoretical beliefs and instructional practices used for teaching spelling in elementary classrooms. *Reading and Writing*, 27, 3, 535-554. Retrieved June 2016 from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11145-013-9457-0>
- Meijer, Paulien C., Nico Verloop & Douwe Beijaard (2002). Multi-method triangulation in a qualitative study on teachers' practical knowledge: an attempt to increase internal validity. *Quality & Quantity*, 36, 2, 145-167.
- Mihalicek, Vedrana & Cristin Wilson (2011, [1977-1979]). *Language files: materials for an introduction to language and linguistics* (rev. ed.). Columbus: Ohio State University press.
- Moats, Louisa C. (2005/2006). How spelling supports reading and why it is more regular and predictable than you may think. *American Educator*, 29, 12-22.

- Moats, Louisa C. (2009). Knowledge foundations for teaching reading and spelling. *Reading and Writing*, 22, 4, 379-399.
- Protopapas, Athanassios, Aikaterini Fakou, Styliani Drakopoulou, Christos Skaloumbakos & Angeliki Mouzaki (2012). What do spelling errors tell us? classification and analysis of errors made by Greek schoolchildren with and without dyslexia. *Reading and Writing*, 26, 5, 616-646. Retrieved June 2016 from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11145-012-9378-3>
- Ritchey, Kristen D. (2008). The building blocks of writing: learning to write letters and spell words. *Reading and Writing*, 21, 1/2, 27-47.
- Russak, Susie & Janina Kahn-Horwitz (2015). English as a foreign language spelling: comparisons between good and poor spellers. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 38, 3, 307-330.
- Silliman, Elaine R., Ruth H. Bahr & Michelle L. Peters (2006). Spelling patterns in preadolescents with atypical language skills: phonological, morphological, and orthographic factors. *Developmental Neuropsychology*, 29, 93-123.
- Stainthorp, Rhona, Daisy Powell & Morag Stuart (2013). The relationship between rapid naming and word spelling in English. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 36, 4, 371-388.
- Yeung, Susanna S., Linda S. Siegel & Carol K.K. Chan (2012). Effects of a phonological awareness program on English reading and spelling among Hong Kong Chinese ESL children. *Reading and Writing*, 26, 5, 681-704.

ON BEING INCARCERATED IN PUERTO RICO: EMPLOYING AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PEDAGOGY

CYNTHIA PITTMANN
UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO

We are as forlorn as children lost in the woods. When you stand in front of me and look at me, what do you know of the griefs that are in me and what do I know of yours? Franz Kafka (in a letter to Oskar Pollak on 8 November 1903)

We encounter many people in life but what do we know about them? How can we understand each other if our lives are experienced in isolation? Many groups of people, particularly those incarcerated, live from years to decades in a segregated and inhumane reality. Through this article, I join my voice with others who seek to shed light on the problem of incarceration in Puerto Rico, the United States and elsewhere, and to offer concrete teaching ideas that use autobiography as both material and method. My own stories include military service, experience working in the federal corrections system as a communication skills teacher as well as many years as a university professor. After returning to work with the incarcerated population in Bayamón, Puerto Rico where I taught several university classes to a group of fifteen women at the Women's Correction and Rehabilitation Center, my compassion has deepened for imprisoned individuals.

Throughout my life, I have had both personal and transitory connections to both the victims and the convicted. In fact, while employed in a medium-level facility in California, I received the news that our neighbor had murdered some members of my family. After conviction, he was incarcerated in Jackson, Michigan. Recently, I discovered that my stepbrother, who was fifteen at the time of these murders, is now incarcerated in that same facility. By using my own stories and experiences as autobiographical oral and written narrative models, I try to bridge the understanding gap between present life and future possibilities while teaching within the University of Puerto Rico's University Education in Prison Program.

Sharing stories from my own life experience assists in modeling the kind of narrations that the students write. In this way, the teacher's role is similar to a facilitator. Arranging the chairs in circles for discussion and providing a non-authoritarian presence allows trust to be established between the professor and the students. My vulnerability in sharing my own stories helps the students to understand that the room is a safe space for

exploration. For example, I read the self-authored story “Go-go girl” to the group. It is a story about a young girl (me) who dreams of becoming a dancer but the sexual misconduct of an older uncle during a “show” destroys the girl’s confidence and ambition. Modeling this kind of meaningful personal experience helps the students open up and discuss private, usually off-limit, content in class. It allows them to begin writing their own painful stories.

As with all teaching, stories need a meaningful context to become useful learning events. What follows in this article is a pedagogical structure and a set of techniques for integrating compassion while accomplishing educational goals. For this, I am using the ‘currere model’ for integrating the autobiographical into education. Though this model requires class time spent in reflection, the effort pays off in terms of deepened learning about the subject (literature, reading and writing) and in terms of student retention. It builds on personal experience and makes connections to other stories shared within the classroom (or outside with family and friends) and the authors represented in autobiographical literature. While my application of this model and the activities I suggest extend it beyond its originally intended curricular purpose, my background in teaching autobiography and personal narrative led me to understand its appropriateness to this group of students. Educational concerns, such as developing social consciousness, understanding personal identity, and the formation of attitudes that can enhance change, are the most significant advantages of this method.

232 Essentially, currere is an autobiographical method developed by William Pinar (2004) based on post-modern philosophy and psychoanalytical technique, which uses a person’s lived experience of curriculum to foster deeper self-understanding. I have adapted the process by following Pinar’s steps of regression, progression, analysis, and synthesis, but apply them to a new population with somewhat different goals. Rather than using this autobiographical model for interning teachers as intended by Pinar, I use it primarily to shift social consciousness, enhance identity formation and connect idealism to reality in incarcerated students. In the following paragraphs, I discuss the modalities, implications and results of my adaptation of the method.

The currere process begins with regression into memory. The students begin each semester with a line free notebook to be used in a journal project. I broaden the informal writing activity to include naturally evolving autobiographical notes and stream-of-consciousness explorations. Timed writing activities encourage spontaneous recording of thoughts while post-writing reflection allows for reflection (Goldberg).

A multigenre section in the journal is used for visualizations of the future and oral presentations (Romano, 2000). In one activity, the students quickly review a stack of magazine images and select one that represents how they see themselves. This identity image is placed under their name on the front page of their journal with a quote or saying related to what it represents. Often students connect the representational image with a life philosophy such as “hear no evil, see no evil, say no evil.”

Another multigenre activity involves creating an image collage that represents a happy and realistic future. After assembling the images, the students write about what each image symbolizes, for example, “the porcupine represents the anger I feel at anyone who hurts my family” or “the tree represents life and my love of nature.” After writing a paragraph about this hope for future, the collage is orally presented to the class. The weekly writing and multigenre creative activities serve to develop a reflective approach to thinking about themselves and their goals in life.

Next, an analysis of the past and visions of the future are connected to close reading of autobiographical texts and class discussion. For example, this semester the students read “Complexion” by Richard Rodriguez, which is an essay about the author’s struggle to understand his Mexican families’ reaction (and his own) toward his dark skin tone. Through seeking answers to questions, the students begin to understand and discuss aspects of self-rejection and the empowerment of acceptance. Through written reflection, their insights are consciously connected to positive notions of their own personal identity. As they move toward a more mentally-liberated reality, they become aware of more possibilities for the future and the availability of more life choices.

The careful selection of autobiographical readings helps to make these positive connections. Incarcerated students connect well to writings by others who were (or are currently) incarcerated. I select narrative essays from Wally Lamb’s *Couldn’t keep it to myself*, which contains stories written by incarcerated women. Some of these women were released by the time of publication, but the majority are still confined. Reading about a fellow prisoner, Robin Cullen, who tries to celebrate during the Christmas holidays, touches a tender nerve among my students. Everyone in class has experienced the pain of family separation and a profound need to be at home during the holidays. Post-reading reflection on this narrative essay provides an outlet for feelings of loss and grief that are usually held inside. Allowing an emotional outlet through writing and sharing is a balm for emotional wounds and eases the students into the healing process. Occasionally, sharing these reflections causes too much pain and must be put off for another time. However, I accept that moments of personal grief and profound grief are part of teaching in this environment. It is important for the group experience that the environment remains judgement free.

Toward the end of class strategic reflections, which connect culled experience, personal memories, published narratives, and multigenre insights, are integrated into the students’ decisions about life and life choices. Since currere is a cyclical process, it is hoped that such stream-of-consciousness writing, reading and reflection described above continues outside of classroom and serves as a touchstone, whenever it is needed. This final synthesis phase pulls together memories, dreams for the future, and self-knowledge to make conscious healthy decisions. Daily journal writing (outside of class) helps students to uncover patterns of thinking that have served them well or harmed them in life. The habit of reflection is fostered in class in other ways as well.

As part of their autobiographical self-analysis, the students frequently create life compasses. I developed this activity to allow for quick insights into daily moods and to make connections between four mood states: mental, emotional, physical and spiritual. Though the first three are self-explanatory, the spiritual mood needs to be defined. I explain to the students that it can mean religion if they prefer, but that the sense of the spiritual in the life compass is more about an awareness of connection to other people, nature and having transcendent feelings of goodwill.

The students first draw a circle with a spiral in the center, which represents flowing and changing mood states. On the east side (mental state), they quickly write the number that reflects their current state. They select numbers from one through three; one representing a closed and contracted state while three is an open, free-flowing state. Moving down to the south (emotional state), then west (physical state) and on to the north (spiritual state), they continue to write the number that corresponds to how they feel. In total, by adding all the numbers, twelve would correspond to the highest possible state.

I ask the students to briefly record what is happening in their lives (now) that led them to assign each number to the four compass points. I remind them that these numbers fluctuate over the course of time. It is important to be aware of connections and patterns between the states. Sometimes students do not notice how hunger or tiredness influences their emotions or ability to think. This self-observation process takes about one to two minutes to complete but over the duration of a month, with analysis and reflection, it provides a location for deep insights into individual reactions to life experience. Additionally, it aids in self-knowledge that can bring awareness that can lead to conscious decision making. The insights gained from all of the above mentioned activities naturally lead the students to write their own stories and poems.

The writing of autobiographical stories and poems is further developed through a systematic autobiography project. Through answering questions about family and ancestors, students are encouraged to position themselves in geography and history. Writing activities for this project include clustering work with their given name and Venn diagrams comparing a similar and dissimilar ancestor – all with the goal of pulling memories out and putting them on to the paper. As they learn about story structure, vivid detail and sensory imagery these are incorporated into their stories. Finally, the stories are reflected upon, shared orally with the class and, through reflection, related to the additional insights gained from other class activities.

Stories that evoke profound feelings in the student authors and their classmates often emerge through this process. Since beginning my work with these incarcerated women, I have had four students who have been awarded prizes in the university English department's annual literary contest. The affirmingly powerful experience of such forms of acknowledgement and validation cannot be understated, and attests to the beneficial value of this type of educational process.

In this brief article, I have reflected on my experience offering university classes to a group of female inmates at the Women's Correction and Rehabilitation Center in Bayamón, Puerto Rico. I discuss an autobiographical pedagogy that I have used to successfully teach incarcerated populations. This pedagogy is based on the currere method of using autobiography to aid in regression, progression, analysis and synthesis of a concept. I described activities that I use to engage reflection such as stream-of-consciousness journal writing, future visualization with oral presentation, and multigenre techniques, such as autobiographical collage. I describe how students' analysis of the past and vision for the future are connected to close readings of autobiographical texts and by class discussion. Finally, I demonstrate how relevant insights are synthesized through written reflection where they are consciously integrated into the personal identity of the incarcerated student. All of this I have done with the goals of promoting improved appreciation of literature and quality of writing, as well as liberating consciousness and expanding awareness of life choices among the students.

Autobiographical pedagogy is learner-based and involves a reciprocal process, beginning with the professor as facilitator (offering her own stories), while including the inmates as learners who construct and share their own personal stories. The overarching framework is transdisciplinary in nature and has been adapted to the needs of the ever-increasing incarcerated population. Though these techniques are non-traditional, I encourage readers to maintain an open mind and consider implementing life experience and autobiographical literature into university classes which include inmates or other marginalized populations.

Despite my firm convictions, I have been always a man who tries to face facts, and to accept the reality of life as new experience and new knowledge unfolds it. I have always kept an open mind, which is necessary to the flexibility that must go hand in hand with every form of intelligent search for truth. —

Malcolm X (1965: 365)

REFERENCES

- Appleman, Deborah (2013). Teaching in the dark: The promise and pedagogy of creative writing in prison. *English Journal*, 102, 4, 24-30.
- Bausells, Marta (May 7, 2014). Readers panel: experiences of books in prison. *Guardian*. Retrieved April 2018 from <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/may/07/readers-panel-experiences-of-books-in-prison>
- Cullen, Robin (2004). Christmas in Prison. In Wally Lamb (Ed.), *Couldn't keep it to myself* (pp. 177-184). New York: Harper Collins.
- Goldberg, Natalie (2016, [1985]). *Writing down the bones: freeing the writer within*. Boulder: Shamballa.

- Halberstadt, Alex (July 7, 2014). A prisoner's reading list. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved Sept 2017 from <http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/a-prisoners-reading-list>
- Kafka, Franz (1908). *Kafka, to Oskar Pollak, Nov 8, 1903*. Retrieved April 2018 from <http://thewgnews.com/kafka-oskar-pollack-1903/>
- Lamb, Wally (2004). *Couldn't keep it to myself*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Maher, Jane (2015). Teaching academic writing in a maximum security women's prison. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 170, 79-88.
- Malcolm X & Alex Haley (1965). *The autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Grove Press.
- Miller, Nancy (1998). Teaching autobiography. In Sidonie Smith & Julia Watson (Eds.), *Women, autobiography, theory: a reader* (pp. 461-470). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Pinar, William F. (2004). *What is curriculum theory?* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum. Retrieved April 2018 from <http://www.khuisf.ac.ir/Dorsax/userfiles/file/mota-lead/0805848274.pdf>
- Pittmann, Cynthia (2017). *Go-go girl*. Unpublished creative nonfiction story.
- Rodriguez, Richard (1982). Complexion. In *Hunger of memory* (pp. 119-150). New York: Bantam Dell.
- Romano, Tom (2000). *Blending genre, altering style: writing multigenre papers*. Portsmouth: Boynton/Cook.
- Romano, Tom (2013). *Fearless writing: Multigenre to motivate and inspire*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Salzman, Mark (2004). *True notebooks: a writer's year at juvenile hall*. New York: Vintage.
- Scott, Robert (Ed.) (2015). Bringing college education into prisons. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 170.
- Smith, Sidonie (2010). From the women's prison: third world women's narratives of prison. In Sidonie Smith & Julia Watson (Eds.), *Women, autobiography, theory: a reader* (pp. 453-459). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Smith, Sidonie & Julia Watson (2010). Life narrative in historical perspective. In *Reading autobiography: a guide for interpreting life narratives* (pp. 103-125). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Smith, Sidonie & Julia Watson (2010). The visual-verbal virtual contexts of life narrative. In *Reading autobiography, a guide for interpreting life narratives* (pp. 167-191). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

A PRELIMINARY ACCOUNT OF A TRANSFORMATIVE PEDAGOGICAL MODEL: USING HISTORICAL FICTION IN THE CARIBBEAN

JEFFREY O'FIELD & PATRICK ONEILL LÓPEZ NEGRÓN

UNIVERSIDAD INTERAMERICANA DE PUERTO RICO, SAN GERMÁN

Introduction

Education in the Caribbean context has been enriched by educators who challenge learners to work beyond the prescribed, strict boundaries that have been established by classroom-shaping socio-political structures. The approach advocated in this paper highlights learner agency and is particularly relevant to teaching language in places that have historical links with colonialism. It sharply contrasts with traditional approaches that keep learners from taking an active role in their educational growth. For this approach to be successful, however, educators must consider the intrinsic motivation of their learners to bring purpose to language acquisition and to foster intelligence at a holistic level. A transformative approach as described above and observed in Narismulu (2013) stimulates critical and self-regulating thought that permits systematic transformation under which a community of co-learners develops. In this article, we propose a self-sufficient and self-regulating model that aims to create a lasting effect in learners. We suggest that, to achieve these two components of the model, a cycle should be initiated by educators in the classroom.

Figure 1 demonstrates a conceptualization of our model when set into motion by the agent for the first time. At first, it adopts a linear form rather than that of a cycle. The cycle takes shape once we realize that these elements not only co-occur to a lesser degree, but repeat themselves in this particular order, creating a cycle.

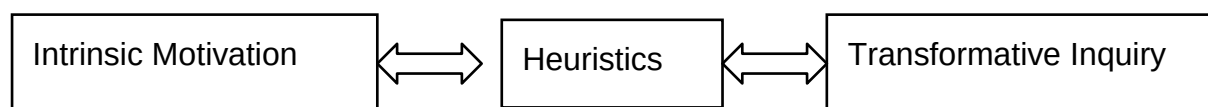


Figure 1 Linear representation of the IHT model

In this cycle, three elements interconnect: intrinsic motivation (I), heuristics (H), and transformative inquiry (T). Figure 2 demonstrates interaction between the three elements in the IHT cycle. The educator uses the model to awaken intrinsic motivation in

learners for active participation in a process of transformative inquiry; heuristics are employed to challenge learners to remove extraneous variables from their learning process.

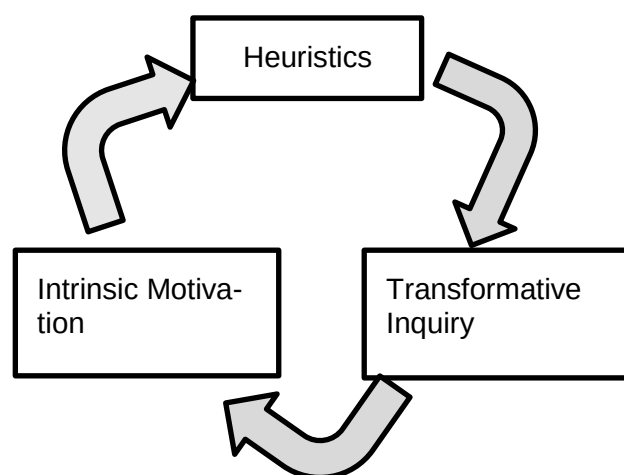


Figure 2 Cyclical representation of the IHT model

In the remainder of this paper, we provide an overview of the 3 components of the IHT cycle. For the purpose of examining the teaching implications of the proposed model, we contextualize its application to the Puerto Rican university-level ESL classroom using Edwidge Danticat's novel *The farming of bones*. The context discussed below is Puerto Rico's educational system, where sociopolitical factors have had a major hindering effect in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom, impacting both directly and indirectly on how learners are taught. We focus on how educators might help remedy this situation by implementing a methodology that promotes critical thought beyond the boundaries of the imposed pre-conventions of a colonial situation (Memmi, 1991).

Parameters, agents, and the components of the IHT cycle

The educator sets into motion the IHT cycle with the intention of empowering learners to invest more in their learning process. Using heuristics, educators and learners seek to resist extraneous variables that interfere with the transformative inquiry process and which might otherwise overpower the cycle as shown above. These variables include, but are not limited to, socio-political influence, oppressive language dynamics, and interfering factors that represent harm or a setback to the learning process.

The pedagogical model that we propose is supported by three parameters which Kumaravadivelu (2003) offers and describes for second language instruction in the post-methods era: particularity, practicality and possibility. Language pedagogy needs to account for the particularity of educators, learners, learning objectives, institutions and socio-cultural factors within specific contexts. Practicality translates into pedagogical

beliefs built from an educator's practice. This parameter can be described as a meta-process that allows the educator to heuristically categorize the multiple factors that participate in the dynamics of teaching in order to analyze the situation, remove interfering elements, and employ a theory in practice suitable for the classroom. Critical pedagogy recognizes the subject-positions and constructed identities of educators and learners. From this perspective, positive and negative consequences on learning and the construction of self-identity in educational and social contexts are subsumed under possibility. Integrated into our model, these parameters work at an implicit level and their components will be properly identified before being implemented, because, and as Fanon (2004) establishes, the "... proof of success lies in a social fabric that has been changed inside out. This change is extraordinarily important because it is desired, clamored for, and demanded" (p. 1).

To have a clear understanding of the agents in this process, that is, the Educators and the Learners, we must first identify them. Educators are described by Kumaravadivelu (2003) as transformative intellectuals. Transformative intellectuals are receptive to cultural differences in the classroom and strive to break down cultural barriers that could potentially interfere with the learning process. This is achieved by constant self-revision and ongoing education on theories of practice. In assuming this role, educators understand their pedagogy to be useful for transformation within the classroom and beyond, harmonizing the experiencers' perspectives of the relationships between the educational institution and society.

Learners are envisioned as empowered individuals who, together with their teachers, constitute a community of co-learners, unrestricted by the traditional banking model of learning which situated learners as passive recipients and teachers as 'experts'. Rather than being situated as cogs in a machine that operates with difficulty, learners situate themselves, participating in a world where their role as an agent of change is as important as the entire system – one that is strengthened by self-regulation and functions within self-sufficient parameters (Freire, 1970).

Intrinsic motivation is chosen over extrinsic motivation for the IHT cycle, because it operates within our identified agents as a catalyst, internally rewarding them with feelings related to self-sufficiency (Brown, 2014). Thus, it can be sustained over longer-periods of time and it engages the learner in learning opportunities because they are seen as enjoyable, interesting, or relevant to meeting their core psychological needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to self-determination theory, all people seek to satisfy three inherent psychological needs: the need for developing competence, the need for relatedness (creating meaningful connections with others), and the need for autonomy (perceiving that one is able to initiate and regulate one's own actions). Satisfaction of these psychological needs promotes intrinsic motivation (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991; Froiland, Oros, Smith & Hirschert, 2012), but before satisfying these needs we propose a safety net by exercising heuristics in the teaching practice.

In exercising heuristics as an approach to problem solving, learners make inferences while setting aside extraneous factors in order to narrow their focus to the content of linguistic task at hand. Narismulu (2013) argues for the use of heuristics in the English language classroom at the university level in post-colonial South Africa; this provides a lens applicable to the educational context in Puerto Rico. Narismulu credits this use of heuristics with the capacity to overpower “histories of systemic violence, disempowerment, neglect, division, marginalisation and silencing in society and education”, as well as the inhibiting discourses that shape classrooms from within and without (p. 784). This approach aligns with the fundamental underpinnings and goals of transformative inquiry.

Transformative inquiry is an approach to learning that responds to the complexity of the individual, the community, and various environmental systems at work. It challenges the learner to think and to act critically. For sustained transformation, metacognitive and critical thinking skills are necessary to promote inquiry in the classroom and beyond (Narismulu, 2013), empowering agents who set their own goals aligned to the purpose of this process. As in the case of Narismulu’s context in South Africa, university education is viewed as central to societal transformation. The skills and processes as mentioned above can consistently serve the social, cultural, and cognitive needs of Puerto Rican university students, as well.

Application of the model and the IHT cycle

In *The farming of bones*, Edwidge Danticat crafts a story that thematically demonstrates the power of language within the genre of historical fiction by fusing the work of collective and individual memory to commemorate the 1937 Parsley Massacre in which Haitian sugar-cane workers were killed in the Dominican Republic. A parallel emerges between the Puerto Rican, Dominican and Haitian colonial histories of industrial era sugar cane injustices. The historical events situate the story in a specific time and place, and Danticat engages readers in this historical moment by writing from the perspective of a fictional protagonist, Amabelle Desir. In this way, “Danticat makes use of memory as way of uncovering and recovering the forgotten and manipulated histories of the “nameless and faceless” in order to reshape a future of and for other subjects” (Cardaretti: 25). The importance of memory, both individual and collective, is tantamount to understanding the novel and its purpose to reclaim history for those who have been historically disempowered. By implementing the IHT cycle, the educator exercises the relevance of this literary work to the Puerto Rican classroom by creating activities that aim to help university level ESL learners focus on the topic of cultural identity under pressure from an oppressive force.

While reading this story, learners not only focus on understanding the novel from the perspective of the narrator; they also construct meaning through the eyes of Haitian-

American immigrant author, Edwidge Danticat. Analyzing the importance of an immigrant author writing about the history of her country of origin through historical fiction challenges learners to reclaim their own agency, extend it beyond the classroom and into their social circle. By reading this novel in an ESL setting, students can be given the platform and opportunity to discuss themes relevant to their own experience: trans-cultural identity, the elasticity of shared and individual memory, the history of systemic violence, disempowerment, neglect, cultural marginalization, and can develop critical thinking capacities in the following activities that have been created with the IHT cycle in mind:

1. To introduce learners to the text before reading a single line, students can use the title to begin predicting what will take place in the novel. The title presents a non-standard collocation that accurately describes the tragic violence and injustices perpetrated against sugar-cane workers and others in the novel. How can bones be farmed? This is a question that students will have to ask and answer as they read and analyze the text.
2. Central themes of memory, struggle, and betrayal can be explored through prediction and inferencing activities so that students can build appropriate expectations for the style, tone and theme of the language, which includes varied instances of code-switching, used throughout the text (Paran & Robinson, 2016).
3. Learners can write and present a final analysis of their reading of the story, paying particular attention to the power of language and power structure dynamics portrayed in the novel.

Discussion

While this model has been developed with the university classroom in mind, the cycle is applicable to other levels of education, where adjustments could be made for various developmental stages and sociolinguistic and illocutionary competences at particular grade levels. An ESL classroom at the elementary level would assess intrinsic motivation differently than an ESL classroom at the secondary level. Likewise, heuristics would be applied in unique ways at each level. As a lifelong process, transformative inquiry may be best begun at an early age and brought to fuller fruition at the university level in the form of advanced metacognitive and critical thinking capacities.

The focus of this model has been limited to the perspective of two agents (educator and learner) and does not take into account other interactions that develop in the institution and beyond, where it can also promote a transformative process. In its implementation, the proposed model is designed to challenge the oppression inflicted in a colonial educational situation by acknowledging the bias inherent in the sociopolitical influences that reach learners through the educational system, both in the public and private sector.

The role of the educator as an agent that sets change into motion originates from a different logic than the one that predominates at present. This alternative logic ushers the learner into a learning system that is based on critically revised and regulated parameters, rather than the prescribed guidelines imposed by the current system that inhibit the learning process. As such, it fundamentally aims to prepare the emerging generation of learners for uncharted possibilities with renewed perspectives of the self in transformative learning, not only in Puerto Rico, but also in the Caribbean region and beyond.

REFERENCES

- Brown, H. Douglas (2014, [1980]). *Principles of language learning and teaching: a course in second language acquisition*. White Plains: Pearson.
- Cardaretti, Cristiane Vieira G. (2011). 30,000 “Sebastiens Onius” brought from the margins to the center through memory in Edwidge Danticat’s ‘The farming of bones’. *Revista e-escrita: Revista do Curso de Letras da UNIABEU*, 2, 6, 18-32.
- Danticat, Edwidge (1998). *The farming of bones: a novel*. New York: Soho Press.
- Deci, Edward L., Robert J. Vallerand, Luc G. Pelletier & Richard M. Ryan (1991). Motivation in education: the self-determination perspective. *The Educational Psychologist*, 26, 3/4, 325-346.
- Fanon, Frantz (1963, [1961]). *The wretched of the earth*. (Trans. Constance Farrington). New York: Grove Press.
- Freire, Paulo. (1970, [1968]). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (Trans. Myra Bergman Ramos). New York: Continuum.
- Froiland, John M., Emily Oros, Liana Smith & Tyrell Hirschert (2012). Intrinsic motivation to learn: the nexus between psychological health and academic success. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 16, 91-100.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2003). *Beyond methods: macrostrategies for language teaching*. New Haven/London: Yale University Press.
- Memmi, Albert (1991, [1957]). *The colonizer and the colonized*. (Trans. Howard Greenfeld). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Narismulu, Priya (2013). A heuristic for analysing and teaching literature dealing with the challenges of social justice. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 18, 7, 784-796.
- Paran, Amos & Pauline C. Robinson (2016). *Literature*. Oxford University Press.
- Ryan, Richard M. & Edward L. Deci (2000). Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25, 1, 54-67.

**TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY OF THE
LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN THE
GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND**

THE LANGUAGE OF SUGAR CANE AND RUM IN MARTINIQUE

HÉLÈNE ZAMOR

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, CAVE HILL CAMPUS

The colonial history of Martinique has generated a culturally diversified society in which people express themselves using a range of codes. The process of creolization has also shaped the Martinican culture by creating new forms of art, cuisine, architecture and particularly language. Martinican French lexifier Creole, a fusion of French and African languages, has given Martinicans the opportunity to create specific names for the numerous types of sugar cane and rum-based drinks found on their island.

After Emancipation in 1848, the sugar cane industry in Martinique was not as prosperous as it had previously been earlier in the colonial period. Many planters experienced financial difficulties because of lack of labour and the fall of sugar prices. Furthermore, disease had been a constant threat to the local varieties of sugar cane. To solve this problem, Martinican planters have resorted to cross-breeding since the late nineteenth century. Despite these obstacles, Martinique has made great efforts keep its sugar cane industry alive over the years by producing sugar and rum. This article seeks to account for the origins of sugar cane on the island and to focus on the names given to the major cane species being used for sugar and rum production.

245

Origins and botanical description of sugar cane

Linnaeus was the one who named sugar cane “*Saccharum Officinarium*” in 1753, and the name was used by apothecaries who sold sugar for medicinal purposes. The classification of cane varies according to researchers. Glyn James (2004, 4) provides the following examples of these classifications: 1) Mukherjee differentiates between three varieties of cane: *Saccharum* (hereafter *S.*) *officinarium*, *S. barberi* and *S. sinensi*; 2) Grassl posits four major groups: *S. officinarum*, *S. robustum*, *S. spontaneum* and *S. barberi*; and 3) Parthasarathy identifies two major groups of cane, one including varieties which are related to both *S. barberi* and *S. sinensi*, and the other comprised the “Noble” cane species *S. officinarum*. Wild cane species, which originated in New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanatu and Borneo and are placed under the *S. robustum* category. Both the *S. barberi* and *S. sinense* groups are related to *S. officinarum*. In James’ view, they may have originated in China and India. Among some of the more well-known South Asian varieties which could grow in poor soils we find Chuneé was a sweet, tall and thin cane that was difficult to crush, and Glaglah or *S. spontaneum* had deep roots and rhizomes and was rich in sugar.

During the colonial period, the “Noble cane” eventually overthrew its “Creole” predecessor. The “Noble” cane varieties were originally domesticated mainly in the South Pacific region, particularly in Java and New Guinea, but were eventually cultivated in many other parts of the world. One variety named “Otaheite” also known as “Bourbon” hailed from Mauritius and made its way to the Caribbean in the 1790’s. Due to the different diseases to which it was prone, Otaheite sugar cane was later supplanted by the Cheribon variety. James (2004, 5) states that: “the Cheribon was also the most valuable among the noble canes for breeding” (p. 13). This variety developed in Java during the first half of the nineteenth century in Java. Galloway (1989, 11) explains that the Dutch were said to have given the name of “noble” to these varieties because of their sugar content.

Takeo Yamane (2016, 1) classifies sugar cane as a “perennial grass of the Poaceae family”. Kiran Yadav (2009, 1) states that a sugar cane can reach up to 5 or 6 meters in length and has four main parts: root system, stalks, leaves and inflorescence. The fibrous root system consists of both “selt roots” and “shoot roots”. In general, the stalks have a cylindrical shape and several “waxy” nodes and internodes. Yadav points out the presence of a bud which is visible at the top of the stalks. Sugar cane also produces branches called “tillers”. Additional buds often called *zyé* (eye) in French lexifier Creole are found on each node and they are usually protected by a leaf sheath. Under the bud, one can see a “point of attachment” called a “leaf scar”. Yadav states that the leaves “grow alternately on opposite sides of the cane stalk from the nodes”. Each leaf has a sheath and a long blade, which can vary in colour from yellowish green to very dark green, depending on the type of the cane and the nutrients in the soil. Yadav mentions a “membranous attachment” referred as a “ligule” at the junction of the blade and sheath, while a basal ring connects the sheath to the cane. The inflorescence commonly known as *flèch kann* (arrow) in French lexifier Creole is an open panicle 30 centimeters in length, with the older flowers at the top and the younger ones at the bottom. These flowers have both male and female organs and blossom during the month of December.

In the Caribbean, the sugar cane harvesting period lasts from January to late June when the sugar concentration in the cane reaches its maximum. Prior to harvesting, the fields are set on fire to drive out snakes and burn leaves and weeds. The cane is cut at ground level because the sugar is concentrated in the lower sections of the stem. Mechanical harvesters cut the cane at the base of the stalks.

Cross-breeding in the sugar cane industry

In spite of its sweet taste, Noble cane is subject to disease, such as those caused by the fungi called *mosaic* and *serch*. To solve the problem and to deal with labor shortages after Emancipation and lower sugar prices, a cross-breeding programme was put in place by the Javanese and the Barbadians at the end of the nineteenth century.

According to Rao Seshagiri (no date), the British West Indies Central sugar cane Breeding Station was established in 1932, and came under the supervision of the Sugar Association of Caribbean (SOC) in 1962(1). Since that time, the SOC has yielded 115 varieties of cane and has been working closely with Variety Testing Stations in places such as Guyana, Trinidad, Barbados, St. Kitts, Jamaica and Belize. By the 1950s the “Noble” cane varieties were supplemented by Inter-specific hybrid varieties (I-SH) such as B34104, B37161, B41227 and B4362. Before getting involved in their sugar cane cross-breeding programme, Martinicans used mainly “Noble cane” varieties, such as Bourbon, Cristalline, Tanna and Chéribon to make sugar. Like Chéribon, the Tanna variety had stripes and a light colour. It was imported from the island of Tanna in Vanuatu where it was developed. Among the Cheribon varieties, the White Transparent cane was mostly used (Galloway, 1989 and 1996).

The Cristalline variety was brought to Martinique around the same time as the Chéribon and the Tanna cane. This non-hybrid cane has a greenish colour and it turns yellow when it is exposed to sunlight. Its internodes are slightly bent and have a cylindrical shape and it is characterized by frequent scabs and growth splits. Today, Cristalline is found mainly in the northern Martinique. Because it is soft and sweet, this variety attracts rodents and it is therefore difficult to cultivate it on a large scale.

Marie-Sainte & Mbolidi-Baron (2007, 2) observe that new breeds, including B197, B156, B208, B60.32, BH 10.12 from Barbados and POJ 28.78 from Java were brought into Martinique. After the Second World War, Martinique received more clones, such as B34.104 and an “extension” of BH 10.12 from Mauritius and Puerto Rico. Between the 1960s and the 1980s, the Canne Vanille (B51.129), the Canne Noire (B46.364), and the Canne Roseau varieties predominated, while other clones fell out of use. In Martinique, sugar cane cross-breeding has been taking place in a research centre called Centre Technique de la Canne et du Sucre (CTCS). Founded in 1952 in the town of Lamentin, the CTCS meets sugar growers’ needs by carefully selecting cane of good quality based on a number of criteria such as sugar content, adaptation to cropping techniques and soils, and resistance to diseases and pesticides. Experts working for the CTCS study each variety of cane for a period of ten years before making a final decision as to whether it should be used or not. The CTCS annually receives over three hundred varieties of cane from the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) and other international research centres.

Between 1946 and 1950, both the BH 10.10 called Canne Corossol and the Pen épi Lèt varieties were created. By 1982, the Canne Roseau variety had replaced most of the older varieties. The late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s marked the prominence of varieties such as Canne Paille (R570) and anne Zikak (B80.0689), while two other hybrids known as Canne Cannelle (B82.0333) and Canne Caïmite (B80.0689) were also developed.

The names given to varieties of Martinican cane and rum-based drinks

Szwed (2011) states that Creole languages and cultures “are more than the result of meeting and interaction of European and African languages” (25). Instead, according to Romberg (2000) they are also linked to various styles, forms of expression and beliefs that accompany the emergence of new cultures and languages. The French and French lexifier Creole names given to cane varieties are a result of this process. The Centre Technique de la Canne à Sucre et de la Canne has created a *fiche technique* for each variety of cane, which is a document providing its name, its origins and the year of its creation. For example, the *fiche technique* for code B.69.566 indicates that the variety called Canne Bleue was bred in Barbados in 1969 after 566 attempts.

The Canne Malavoi variety, which has a reddish, almost purple colour, bent stalks and never blossoms, was named after a street called Malavoi on the French slave trading island of Gorée which is off the Senegalese coast. Sugar cane cultivation began two centuries earlier in Africa than in the Caribbean. Marie-Sainte & Mbolidi-Baron (2007, 1) provide a list of interesting French lexifier Creole names given to some of the oldest sugar cane varieties. The Canne Corossol or Kowosòl variety took its name after the *corossol* which is the French equivalent for the soursop fruit, perhaps because of the similar green colour of its foliage and white colour of its internal fibres.

The name of the Canne Cribiche means name meaning “crayfish” in French lexifier Creole, because its yellow colour and stripes conjures up the image crayfish living in a river. This non-blossoming variety which is found in low lying areas grows tall depending on the type of soil where it is cultivated and it constantly needs water. The Canne Rossignol variety is named after the common nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*), because its dark and yellow hues are similar to those found on the bird. After full maturation, Canne Rossignol becomes spongy and soft. The name of the Pen épi lèt variety, which grows close to rivers and reaches up to 6 meters in length, means “bread and milk” in French lexifier Creole, because it has white flesh. The Canne Zo variety is named for French *les os*, meaning ‘bone’ or *zo* in Martinican French lexifier Creole, because this hardy and tall variety turns yellow after maturation. One very sweet variety called Canne Couronne (crown) is also called “Sik sossé dan myèl” which means “sugar soaked in honey” in French lexifier Creole, and expression used to refer to someone who has a good disposition.

Marie-Sainte & Mbolidi-Baron (2007, 1) identify the varieties of cane currently being used for rum and sugar production in Martinique (Mbolidi et al., 2008). These include Canne Bleue (B69 566), Canne Caïmite (B.80. 689), Canne Roseau (B.59 92), Canne Paille (R570), Canne Panier (BJ 64.56), Canne Zikak (B80 08), Canne Rouge (B 64 277), Canne Roseau (Canne Zyé Wouj (B73 419), Canne Verte (B76 56) and the “Noble” Canne Cristalline and many more.

Most of the time, the names given to these varieties refer back to their physical characteristics. For example, Canne Bleue which is of Barbadian origin has brown and

green internodes that can turn pink and which are covered with a thick wax which gives the stalk a kind of greyish, purplish or bluish colour. The Clement rum distillery has been using Canne Bleue to make its tasty “Rhum Agricole”, which is made from extracted sugar cane juice instead of molasses, for over two decades. Of Barbadian origin, the variety called Canne Zyé Wouj, whose name means ‘red eye’ in French lexifier Creole, has green growth rings green that turn yellow, with a yellow green root band that widens at its prominently placed eye which can be green, red or even purple. This variety therefore could have received its name from the changing colour of its eye. The variety bearing the name of Canne Paille originated in La Réunion and it has a greenish colour, which tends toward pink when it becomes ripe, while the wax of the cane tarnishes when there is humidity in the atmosphere. The ring of growth is green and straight and this variety has small yellow eye which resembles the color of straw, from which its name is derived. The Canne Verte variety whose name is derived from the word for ‘green’ in French has a green stalk which tends to turn greenish and yellowish once exposed to sunlight. Sometimes, its heavy wax has a greyish and blackish shade and the internodes have a cylindrical shape causing the stalk to bend slightly.

With the increase in the status of French lexifier Creole over the years, both a grammar and spelling system have been put into place by linguists and cultural activists. It is common to see many of these French lexifier Creole names written in their standard form. For instance, the French name Canne BH (the letters BH stand for ‘Barbadian Hybrid’) has been written in creolized form as *kann Béyach*. Other names such as Canne Rossignol and Canne Guatémala have their own French lexifier Creole spelling: “Kann Rosinyòl and Kann Gwatémala.

Since 1996, Martinican rum has been subject to a French policy known as Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée. This prestigious certification is granted by the French government to a given type of wine, cheese or other agricultural product provided that it is manufactured in its region of origin according to particular traditional methods. The same criteria are applied to Martinican rum. To meet the requirements of the Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée, rum producers must grow their cane in specific officially designated areas. As already stated, Martinique produces its Rhum Agricole or “Rum Zabitan” with sugar cane juice. The existence of this rum dates back to the end of the nineteenth century when it began to be produced by the smallest sugar factories could not get their cane transported to the largest factories by the trains.

Rum consumption is part of Martinican gastronomy and culture. A number of French Creole names have been created to designate the most famous rum based drinks. French lexifier Creole *dékolaj* is related in French to *décollage* meaning “take off” (as in an airplane taking off) and is the name given to a rum based drink consumed around five or six o’clock in the morning. The *tilagoutte* whose name comes from French *pétite goutte* meaning “little drop” is drunk before the midday *ti-punch* from the French

lexifier Creole ‘little Punch’ which is a drink is made of sugar, rum and lime. According to Lafcadio Hearn (2001: 273) the practice of taking rum after drinking a large glass of coconut water called *cocoyage* and the similar practice of taking rum after drinking a glass of *mabi* (mauby) called *mabiage* are named after French (and French lexifier Creole) *coco* “coconut” and *mabi* “mauby”.

In Martinique the sugar and rum industries have a long and rich history. Despite their gradual decline over the years, they have contributed significantly, not only to the economy, but also to the language and culture of the island.

REFERENCES

- Galloway, J.H. (1989). *The sugar cane industry: an historical geography from its origins to 1914*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Galloway, J.H. (1996). Botany in the service of Empire: the Barbados cane-breeding program and the revival of the Caribbean industry, 1880-1930's. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 86, 4, 682-706.
- Hearn, Lafcadio (2001, [1890]). *Two years in the French West Indies*. Oxford: Signal Books.
- James, Glyn (2004, [1984]). *Sugarcane*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Marie-Sainte, Eugène & Hélène Mbolidi-Baron (2007). *Anciennes variétés de canne et synthèse sur l'évolution variétale en Martinique*. Available at: http://dom01.sasi.fr/web/ctcs/Info_ctcs.nsf/922533767c51f91605256ae0005e5e23/07e5ea6f17a09368042572cf005ece8f/Document/M2/ActuCanne%2020
- Mbolidi, Hélène et al. (2008). *Guide Variétal. Les Variétés de canne en Martinique pour la fabrication de sucre et l'élaboration de rhums*. Lamentin: CTCS.
- Romberg, Raquel (2002). *Revisting creolization*. Available at <https://www.sas.upenn.edu/folklore/center/ConferenceArchive/voiceover/creolization.html>
- Seshagiri, Rao (no date). Sugarcane breeding and varieties in the Sugar Association of Caribbean (SAC) industries and prospects for the future. Available at www.wicscbs.org
- Szwed, John F. (2011). Metaphors of incommensurability. In Robert Baron & Ana C. Cara (Eds.), *Creolization as cultural creativity* (pp. 20-31). Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.
- Yadav, Kiran (2009). Botanical description of sugarcane. *Agropedia*. Available at <http://agropedia.iitk.ac.in/content/botanical-description-sugarcane>
- Yamane, Takeo (2016). Sugarcane plant. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Available at <https://www.britannica.com/plant/sugarcane>

BARBADOS AND ITS “COLONY” SOUTH CAROLINA: HISTORICAL, CULTURAL, AND LINGUISTIC CONNECTIONS

BRENDA L. DOMÍNGUEZ ROSADO

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, BAYAMÓN

Introduction

The inhabitants of the Caribbean and the rest of the world are constantly bombarded with a Eurocentric version of history detailing how the European colonizers “developed” an “undeveloped” indigenous region. This narrow perspective leads to the assumption that events in the Caribbean did not influence other areas of the world. This illusion can be dispelled by studying the history of Barbados and its connection to the origin of the state of South Carolina in the United States. The relationship between Barbados and South Carolina (especially the city of Charleston) is so close that South Carolina has often been called a “colony” of Barbados and not England: a “colony of a colony” (Edgar, 1998: 35). This article will present a brief review of the historical, cultural, and linguistic connections that tie two distinct areas of the world to each other and illustrate how the accustomed “colonial” order was in some sense inverted.

251

The historical connection

Did you know that...

- ties between Barbados and the Carolinas (North and South) date back to the middle of the 17th century?
- seven of the Carolina’s governors traced their roots to Barbados?
- Hilton Head Island in South Carolina is named for a Barbadian adventurer, Captain William Hilton?
- the concept of the Charleston single house was developed in Barbados and taken to the Carolinas?
- Gullah (Sea Island English Lexifier Creole) is similar to Bajan (Barbadian English Lexifier Creole)?
- Charleston was named the “twin city” of Speightstown (Barbados) in 1997? (Green, March 2015; “The Single House”, May 2013)

These and many other parallels have been documented by historians interested in the links between these two areas.

But how did this all begin? This account should commence with Barbados and its own colonization by the British in 1627 (Battle, 2012b). At that time, as was customary in the rest of the Caribbean, diverse European colonizers were setting their sights on specific islands in order to acquire land and wealth. Barbados was seen as a land of opportunity by its British settlers as they set out to discover which crops might become a lucrative venture for exportation. After some trial and error, the Dutch convinced them that sugar cane production would be the key to their success. They built sugar cane plantations but encountered difficulties because of their reliance on indigenous peoples as well as European descended indentured servants and captives (convicts or people kidnapped or “barbadosed” from Scotland, Ireland, and England), and this led to the enslavement of Africans to augment their work force (Battle, 2012b; Watson, 2011). By 1670, due to the backbreaking labor of the enslaved, the settlers became incredibly wealthy with the profits from their sugar cane plantations. The interaction between the settlers and the slaves became the foundation of a “powerful local culture” which would eventually be transported off the island to other English-colonized Caribbean islands such as Jamaica and to the eastern coast of the newly formed Carolina colony (Battle, 2012b; Edgar, 1998: 36).

In 1663, some exiled British royalists (an eight-member group known as the Lords Proprietors, which included Barbadian John Colleton) received a charter to establish the colony of Carolina in repayment for their service to the monarchy during the English Civil War. These men wished to imitate the lucrative Barbadian plantation model and concluded that the best way to do so would be to recruit settlers from the Barbados itself. The new settlers were offered abundant land, quasi self-rule, religious freedom, and absolute power over the enslaved, through the proposed (although never ratified) “Fundamental Constitutions” document (Edgar, 1998: 40, 42, 46; Green, 2014).

After several failed attempts in other locations in the region, “Charles Towne” became the first settlement to succeed in the Carolina colony and flourished with the help of both European descended laborers, locally enslaved indigenous peoples and enslaved African descended Barbadians who were forced to accompany their masters. Fifty-four percent of the European descended people who immigrated were from Barbados, and most of their surnames and influence are still present in the Carolinas (Beardon, Colleton, Daniel, Drayton, Fenwicke, Gibbes, Godfrey, Ladson, Middleton, Moore, Schenck- ingh, and Yeamans). Other English-descended West Indians were categorized as “Barbadians” even if they were from other islands. These new settlers were mainly adventurers searching for a way to establish themselves and earn their own fortune like their forbears had done in Barbados or other islands. They were merchants, former indentured servants, or the younger sons of planting families. Most of the important plantation families from Barbados (fifty-one in number) sent family members or representa-

tives to Carolina. They knew how to “prosper in a colonial environment,” and contributed their Anglican religion, parish system, and brutal plantation slavery to the fledgling colony (Edgar, 1998: 48; Battle, 2012a).

At the time, many of the African descended enslaved were transported to Carolina directly from Barbados and not from Africa. This eventually changed when sugar cane plantations were replaced by the more profitable rice plantations in the marshy and isolated coast and “Sea Islands” areas just off the coast (also known as the “Lowcountry”) and enslaved West Africans from the Upper Guinea coast who were knowledgeable about rice cultivation were specifically imported to the Carolina colony (Cassidy, 2008: 19; Edgar, 1998: 68; Montgomery, 2008: 5; Opala [1987]: 3).

The independent-minded European descended Barbadian transplants formed the “Goose Creek Men” coalition and became too unruly for the Lords Proprietors who decided to recruit other Europeans (French Huguenots, Scots, and Germans, among others) in an attempt to diffuse any threat to their dominance. This backfired on them however, and by 1719, they had been overthrown and a final split between North and South Carolina had occurred (Edgar, 1998: 85; Battle, 2012a). The enslaved continued to be brought directly from Africa (the West Indian slaves were taxed at a higher rate to discourage their purchase and sabotage any possible uprisings by them), and by 1730, there was an African descended majority in South Carolina who despite all efforts to the contrary, managed to resist by creating their own African American culture (with West Indian elements) and language (Edgar, 1998: 70-71).

The cultural connection

The historical connection between Barbados and the Carolinas can still be attested through cultural connections. Organizations such as the Barbados and the Carolinas Legacy Foundation along with the South Carolina National Heritage Corridor organization have done an excellent job in piecing together evidence that shows the enduring links between the two regions. Some of these cultural elements (parish names, street grids and architecture, rainbow colors, place names, food, and the Crop Over Festival) are listed on their websites and will be mentioned here:

1. **Parish Names:** The Barbadians divided their island into parishes because of their Anglican religion and this was replicated in South Carolina. Some of the duplicate names are St. John, St. James, Christ Church, St. Peter, St. George, St. Phillip, St. Andrew, and St. Thomas. The parish names in South Carolina eventually gave way to district names but are still used in Barbados (Edgar, 1998: 36; Green, September 2014; Lewis, 2013).
2. **Street Grids and Architecture:** The streets in Charles Towne (Charleston) were laid out in similar orderly fashion to those in Barbados by Barbadian John Culpeper. The “single house” building was also emulated in Charleston, and the city currently contains more samples of this type of architecture than Barbados

itself, because most such buildings were destroyed by fires on the island in the late 17th century. The “Arlington House” in Speightstown, Barbados is one of three such houses still standing (Downs, 2015; “The Connection”; “The Single House”).

3. **Rainbow Colors:** The vivid “rainbow” colors used to paint houses in Barbados are emulated in present day Charleston, plainly seen in its famous “Rainbow Row” houses (“International Partnership”).
4. **Place Names:** Historical names from Barbados (settlers, their families, or places) appear both on the island and in both North and South Carolina.
 - a. One of the most famous is Hilton Head Island in Beaufort County, South Carolina named after the Barbadian adventurer Capt. William Hilton.
 - b. Gibbs Bay in Barbados and Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston
 - c. The Haywood Family from St. Peters Parish, Barbados and Haywood County and Plantation in Mt. Gilead in North Carolina
 - d. The Colleton Family also from St. Peters Parish, Barbados and Colleton County in South Carolina
 - e. Sir John Yeamans from St. Nicholas Abbey plantation in Barbados and Yeamans Hall Plantation in South Carolina
 - f. Cherry Tree Hill, a scenic view located in St. Andrew Parish in Barbados and Cherry Hill School, a National Register of Historic Places site, located on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina (Green, 2014).



Illustration 1. The author, Brenda Domínguez-Rosado, and her husband Thomas Colón-Olivares at Cherry Tree Hill in Barbados (November 2016: Picture by Emily Krasinski)

5. **Food:** Since the British used Barbados as their “sorting, training, and trading center” for the enslaved in the 17th and 18th centuries, many enslaved Africans made their first landing in the Americas on the island, and began combining their own cuisine and cooking techniques with the creole cuisine that had already emerged in the colonial Caribbean. Eventually, after being transported to the plantations in the Carolinas and other colonies, they influenced food choice and preparation across the Americas (Caribbean Influences, 2013: 309). Some of the foods that have been identified as having such precursors in Barbados are a cornmeal and okra-based dish called “cou-cou” that the Carolinians call “coush-coush” (Caribbean Influences, 2013: 309) and Macaroni Pie from Barbados, which is known as Macaroni and Cheese Casserole in Charleston (Willis, 2015).



Illustration 2. Food served at the Atlantis Hotel in Barbados. The plate contains macaroni pie, flying fish, and fish cakes – all traditional foods on the island. (November 2016: Picture by Brenda Domínguez-Rosado)

6. **The Crop Over Festival** in Barbados is believed to have been influenced by both the Harvest Festival of the Anglican church and the Yam Festivals of West Africa. It takes place during the last three weeks of June and first week of July and includes costume bands, folk music, and calypso competitions (Mulraine). In Charleston, South Carolina, they celebrate “Carifest” (Caribbean Festival) which is held for four days at the end of June and incorporates parades, steel bands, and masqueraders (Charleston Carifest).

These are some of the possible cultural links between Barbados and South Carolina, but this is just a brief compilation. A more intense search and detailed comparison would surely uncover even more. Language is the one final cultural component that needs to be presented but will be discussed separately because of its complexity.

The linguistic connections

The quest to find a link between language in Barbados and South Carolina is an intricate one and needs much more research. In this brief foray, a description of language in Barbados will first be presented followed by one of South Carolina.

Barbados' official language is a variety of British English, but an English-lexifier creole language known as "Bajan" (also called "broad dialect") is used widely by the population for daily life (urban and rural). It is not an official language nor does it have a standardized written form. It has been called an "intermediate creole" because it occupies a closer position on the continuum to acrolectal English influenced varieties than to basilectal African substrate influenced varieties. This was due to a larger creole (mixed) population from the beginning and more European descended (masters and indentured servants) than African descended people on the island in the pre-plantation era (roughly 1627-1650) plus close working relationships between them in the early plantation era that followed (roughly 1650-1680) (Winford, 2000: 225). In the 17th century, the majority of the European descended spoke regional varieties of English from south-west England, but the indentured servants also spoke varieties from Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. The enslaved people who arrived during the plantation era were from all along the west coast of Africa and the linguistic input was mainly from the Benue-Kwa languages (Cassidy, 2008: 20; Winford, 2000: 227).

In South Carolina, a variety of Standard American English is the official language. An English lexifier creole language called "Gullah" ("Sea Island Creole English") is spoken mainly by people who live in the coastal areas or sea islands of the Carolinas and Georgia. These speakers are also known as "Gullah" or "Geechee" and are descendants of the enslaved Africans who worked mainly on the rice plantations. Gullah (the name may have come from "Gola", an ethnic group which traditionally farms rice from the Sierra-Leone/Liberia border) seems to have emerged in the 18th century in North America. Bajan Creole may have influenced it, but there is also evidence of the influence of speakers of the languages of the rice producing regions of Sierra Leone and bordering countries. These experts in rice cultivation were enslaved and brought directly from Africa to the rice plantations of South Carolina without stopping in Barbados first (Opala [1987]: 2; Senkova, 2008: 175).

My own initial review of studies done by linguists who have specialized in the study of Bajan and Gullah indicates that the link between the two varieties has not yet been firmly and directly established (Hancock, 2008; Mixson Geraty, 2016; Opala [1987];

Senkova, 2008; Stevens 2005). The two languages do, however, exhibit many similarities which may be attributed to the fact that Atlantic English-lexifier Creoles generally share a number of features that distinguish them from many Standard varieties of English that are also shared by Bajan and Gullah, including the following:

- 1) use of dental stops instead of dental fricatives
- 2) use of monophthongs or long vowels instead of diphthongs
- 3) lack of final consonants or final consonant clusters
- 4) use of compound question words
- 5) widespread use of reduplication
- 6) use of pronouns that are invariant for case
- 7) use of a complementizer derived from ‘say’
- 8) use of adjectives and other predicates as verbs, eliminating the need for a copula
- 9) use of invariant verb forms
- 10) use of serialized verb constructions
- 11) use of anterior marker derived from ‘been’
- 12) use of future/irrealis marker derived from ‘go’

Bajan is a language that was still in formation when the slaves were transported from Barbados to the Carolinas and because more slaves were transported directly from Africa after they arrived, it has been difficult to conclude if they did or did not have a great influence on the formation of Gullah (Hancock, 2008: 97). However, in a conversation with Dr. Karl Watson, a retired professor of history and native and resident of Barbados, he mentioned that he is active in the Barbados-Carolina Legacy Foundation and travels frequently to Charleston and has been amazed by the similarities between Bajan and Gullah (private communication: November 5, 2016). His comments about how easily he could understand Gullah and could incorporate his Bajan in skits and performances with the actors speaking Gullah gave me pause for thought. The isolation of the formerly enslaved peoples who live in the Gullah-Geechee Heritage Corridor (sea islands from the south of Georgia to the north of Florida) has helped preserve their language and may be why it is also different from the AAVE (African American Vernacular English) or ABE (American Black English) that is spoken in other parts of the U.S. Their distrust of outsiders has also contributed to the lack of detailed studies (Roberts, 2008: 89, 91). Much more needs to be done before Gullah decreolizes and its historical clues are lost forever.

A specific linguistic link between Barbados and South Carolina is still to be determined, and new studies need to be undertaken, but it is obvious that the historical and cultural links are firmly and prominently in place. Once the “colony of a colony,” South Carolina has acknowledged its Barbadian roots and inserted its Caribbean experience into U.S. history books. Barbados itself has also moved onward and recently celebrated fifty

(50) years of independence from British rule. Because of this, both peoples are now more than ever at liberty to continue their relationship on their own terms, free from the chains of colonization that once tied them together, and free to forge a new story of interconnectedness.

REFERENCES

- Battle, Mary (2012a). Barbadians in Carolina. *Lowcountry Digital History Initiative*. Retrieved August 15, 2016 from <http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu>
- Battle, Mary (2012b). Early Carolina settlement: Barbados influence. *Lowcountry Digital History Initiative*. Retrieved August 2016 from <http://ldhi.library.cofc.edu>
- Caribbean influences on American food (2013). In Andrew Smith (Ed.), *The Oxford encyclopedia of food and drink in America, Vol. 2* (pp. 308-310) (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. Retrieved October 5, 2016 from <https://books.google.com.pr/books>
- Cassidy, Frederic G. (2008, [1994]). Gullah and the Caribbean connection. In Michael Montgomery (Ed.), *The crucible of Carolina: essays in the development of Gullah language and culture* (pp. 16-22). Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Charleston Carifest 2016. Retrieved October 5, 2016 from <http://www.charlestoncarifest.com/>
- Davis, E. Jerome (2016). Excerpts from *From Bajan to Standard English*. Retrieved October 2016 from <http://barbadosdialect.page.tl/>
- Downs, Kenya (21 July 2015). From Crape Myrtles to Longhouses: Charleston is a big Barbados. *NPR*. Retrieved September 2016 from <http://www.npr.org>
- Edgar, Walter (1998). *South Carolina: a history*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press. Retrieved August 2016 from <https://books.google.com.pr>
- Fraser, Henry (6 May 2007). Common sense & evidence: the art of Bajan dialect. Retrieved October 2016 from <http://archive.nationnews.com>
- Green, Rhoda (10 September 2014). What remains of the Barbados-Carolina shared influences. Retrieved September 2016 from http://www.barbadoscarolinas.org/what-remains-of-the-barbados-carolina-shared-influences-2/799_10-09-2014
- Green, Rhoda (19 March 2015). Press Release: Building on the Barbados-Carolina connection. Retrieved September 2016 from http://www.barbadoscarolinas.org/PDF/PressRelease_2015-mar19.pdf
- Hancock, Ian F. (2008, [1994]). Componentiality and the creole matrix: the Southwest English contribution. In Michael Montgomery (Ed.), *The crucible of Carolina: essays in the development of Gullah language and culture* (pp. 95-114). Athens: University of Georgia Press.

- International Partnership tells story of Carolina-Barbados connection (n.d.). Retrieved September 2016 from <http://barbadoscarolinas.org/PDF/SC-Barbados-connection.pdf>
- Lewis, J.D. (2013). South Carolina Districts & Parishes 1775-1783. Illustration. Retrieved October 2016 from http://www.carolana.com/SC/Revolution/sc_revolution_districts_parishes.html
- Mixson Geraty, Virginia (2016). The Gullah creole language. Charleston County Public Library (CCPL). Retrieved October 2016 from <http://www.ccpl.org>
- Montgomery, Michael (2008, [1994]). Introduction. In *The crucible of Carolina: Essays in the development of Gullah language and culture* (pp. 1-15). Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Mulrairie, Lloyd (n.d.). Barbadian Americans. Retrieved September 2016 from <http://www.everyculture.com/multi/A-Br/Barbadian-Americans.html>
- Opala, Joseph A. [1987]. The Gullah: rice, slavery, and the Sierra Leone-American connection. Retrieved September 2016 from <http://glc.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/Gullah%20Language.pdf>
- Roberts, Peter (2008, [1994]). Flexibility in Afro-American English. In Michael Montgomery (Ed.), *The crucible of Carolina: essays in the development of Gullah language and culture* (pp. 87-94). Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Senkova, Joko (2008, [1994]). Recollections of African language patterns in an American speech variety: an assessment of Mende influences in Lorenzo Dow Turner's Gullah data. In Michael Montgomery (Ed.), *The crucible of Carolina: essays in the development of Gullah language and culture* (pp. 175-200). Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Stevens, Jeff (3 May 2005). "Gullah" phonology. Retrieved October 2016 from <http://faculty.washington.edu/wassink/gullah.pdf>
- The Connection: a brief history (24 May 2013). *The South Carolina National Heritage Corridor*. Retrieved September 2016 from <http://www.scnhc.org/story/the-connection-a-brief-history>
- The Single House (24 May 2013). *The South Carolina National Heritage Corridor*. Retrieved September 2016 from <http://www.scnhc.org/story/the-single-house>
- Watson, Karl (17 February 2011). Slavery and economy in Barbados. *BBC*. Retrieved September 2016 from <http://www.bbc.co.uk>
- Willis, Kelcie (23 July 2015). 21 Delicious foods from Barbados everyone should know and love. Retrieved October 5, 2016 from <https://www.buzzfeed.com/kelciewillis>
- Winford, Donald (2000). 'Intermediate' creoles and degrees of change in creole formation: the case of Bajan. In Ingrid Neumann-Holzschuh & Edgar W. Schneider (Eds.), *Degrees of restructuring in Creole languages* (pp. 215-246). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

THE LINGUISTIC AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF FOOD VOCABULARY IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO ENGLISH LEXIFIER CREOLES

IRIS HEWITT-BRADSHAW

UNIVERSITY OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Introduction

This article reports on a linguistic analysis of the food vocabulary in the English lexifier Creoles spoken in Trinidad and Tobago. The investigation analyses how that language has assimilated terms from different ethnic groups due to socio-historical and demographic factors. The paper suggests that diachronic change in lexical items, (e.g. *bara* ~ *doubles*, where English-sounding words gradually replace non-English ones), as well as the existence of synchronic variants (e.g. *baigan* ~ *melongene* ~ *eggplant*) can be explained by the impact of socio-political and economic factors on the status, culture and language of social groups. The impact of technology has enabled greater intra and inter group communication, and that, together with changing patterns of consumption in a small physical and social space, has facilitated the emergence of food terms in ways that can be categorised using linguistic criteria.

Mendes (2010: 3) describes Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creoles as being “... thoroughly marinated in First People’s raw defiance ... seeped with Indian *taalkari*... seasoned by the colourful expletives of the *jamettes* ... sauteed over the fires of the retaliatory *Cannes Brulées*” This extended food metaphor merges language, history, culture, and identity to render the linguistic reality of a country that was originally inhabited by indigenous Amerindian peoples; was colonised for centuries by the British, French, Dutch, Spanish and Baltic Courlanders; accommodated plantations cultivated by enslaved Africans and later indentured labourers from South Asia; and received numerous migrants from other islands of the Caribbean, Portugal, China, Syria, and Lebanon. A nation’s cuisine is an aspect of its culture, and the language used to label food, like other aspects of language use, can serve as evidence of diachronic and synchronic language change that exhibits processes such as language divergence and convergence. Languages reflect the culture and identity of a community, and the connection between cultural artefacts and linguistic terminology is often overlooked. Studies in the process of language change can help to further validate stigmatised languages in the eyes of their users, especially in communities where Creoles and their lexically related Standard

varieties co-exist. In the Caribbean, most Creole languages do not enjoy a status equal to Standard varieties, and are not generally used as official languages. Native speakers of Creoles are so close to their languages that they often overlook the fact that all linguistic varieties are influenced by the same linguistic processes, such as diachronic and synchronic variation. Many still believe that their home language is not as viable, valuable, versatile and dynamic as standardized languages. Language change and shift are not unidirectional in situations of language contact, and it is often incorrectly assumed that the official language that enjoys higher status influences other non-standard varieties, but is not influenced by them.

Implicit in this investigation is the position that the Creoles of Trinidad and Tobago are not dialects of European languages but are linguistically distinct, with rule-governed grammatical systems that serve as valid means of communication. Although this article treats Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creoles as one language system, it is generally accepted that the speech of Tobagonians differs significantly to that of Trinidadians, and that there is also marked linguistic variation due to ethnic and social class differences. Thus, the English lexifier Creole spoken by people of African descent differs from that spoken by people of East Indian descent because of differing input languages, such as Bhojpuri which was spoken by indentured labourers who came to the island from the sub-continent (Mohan, 1978). Tobago English lexifier Creole itself exhibits internal variations. For example, James and Youssef (2009) referred to the varieties found in Tobago as ‘languages’ because of the linguistic differences among those varieties.

One limitation of the present investigation is its almost exclusive reliance on print media, since collection of data was largely limited to cookbooks, magazines, newspapers, local dictionaries and other texts. One audio-visual source was also used. Oral texts were not recorded for this study, though in some instances, the print media utilised represented the speech of the community. Thus, phonological differences in pronunciation were not considered.

Sociolinguistic history of Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago is a twin-island republic in the English-speaking Caribbean. The country became a unitary territory in 1888 and achieved independence from Britain in 1962. Today the nation comprises an ethnically diverse population of approximately 1.3 million people with about 93% living in Trinidad and 7% living in Tobago (Central Statistical Office, 2011). Significant historical events such as colonialism, slavery, indentureship, and migration determined the demographic composition of the society, and thus shaped the socio-linguistic environment that exists today. Past events brought many languages in contact and processes of language change and language shift produced Creole languages that today are the home languages of the majority of the inhab-

itants of the two islands. These language varieties are limited to communication in informal situations and are not official languages – a role that is filled by a local variety of Standard English that is required in formal communication contexts such as in schools, courts, parliament, and other public official functions.

In the early process of creolization, varieties of European languages as well as those of African languages provided “adstratal” input (Warner-Lewis, 1997). Warner-Lewis uses the term “adstratal” instead of “superstratal” and “substratal” – the terms more commonly utilised in the literature on Creoles and creolization – to emphasize the dynamic and diverse nature of language change processes during slavery and the emancipation period in the Caribbean, and the difficulty of identifying any one variety that had dominance over others. Dichotomous labels at times obscure the range of language varieties that interact and respond to non-linguistic factors in the social context. For example, Brereton (1996: 22) noted that in 1802, there were a significant number of free mixed-race people in Trinidad, who were usually of both African and European descent. It is probable that their language practices would have been neither exclusively African or exclusively European, and it would be difficult to assert that all groups inevitably endeavoured to speak the language of the ruling classes.

In addition, geographic factors would have impacted on the process of language change. For instance, apart from the former slaves who had fought on the side of Britain against the United States in 1812, and were brought to Trinidad and settled in the Company villages around Princes Town, there was a settlement of soldiers in Manzanilla in 1815. Brereton (1996: 24) observes that the isolation of these Manzanilla families created conditions for the emergence of a variety specific to this speech community, which incorporated English, French, and African features. Later, after emancipation of the enslaved in Trinidad, as South Asian indentured labourers and other ethnic groups arrived, different varieties emerged over time. Examination of the linguistic structure of the Creole languages of Trinidad and Tobago reveals that the European language influence is predominantly lexical, and this visibility tends to mask the fact that other phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic features exhibit influence from languages of populations that were not politically or economically dominant. A brief history of the colonization of Trinidad and Tobago helps to further elucidate how this language situation evolved as it did.

Trinidad and Tobago were the island homes of indigenous Amerindian peoples before centuries of repeated invasion and conquest by European powers, beginning with the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1498 (Brereton, 1996). The harsh treatment of these original inhabitants resulted in a rapid decline in their numbers. From the 1500s to the 1800s, the Spanish, Dutch, English, French and Baltic Germanic Courlanders waged numerous wars to gain possession of these islands. The Portuguese established a trading presence as well in the Caribbean. During this time, a plantation economy flourished on both islands, supported by enslaved labour from West Africa (Williams, 1964). The

enslaved brought varieties of African languages to the Caribbean to join the European and Amerindian languages that were present on the linguistic landscape.

A significant historical event occurred in 1783 when, using inducements of land, the Spanish authorities issued a decree to attract settlers to Trinidad in order to increase the population and fortify the island against the British (Brereton, 1996:13). Among other migrants, a large number of French colonists took advantage of the incentives and migrated with their slaves and emancipated people of colour. The period saw the emergence of a French lexifier Creole which, as the number of speakers increased, became the *lingua franca* in Trinidad, enabling communication in a country that was becoming increasingly ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse. Although the British were successful in establishing and consolidating their rule over Trinidad soon thereafter, this French lexifier Creole persisted and was only gradually supplanted by the English lexifier Creole that predominates today. The number of language varieties increased significantly after the abolition of slavery and the impending collapse of the sugar industry due to labour shortages. In response, the colonial powers imported indentured laborers from South Asia and migrants from Portugal and China. It was around this time that the two islands were administratively merged. Varieties of Hindi and Bhojpuri (Mohan, 1978; Mahabir, 1991), Portuguese, and Chinese were thus added to the language mix. This historical background explains the linguistic diversity of the islands, especially Trinidad, as reflected in the data gathered for this study. Given the linguistically heterogeneous conditions of myriad languages in contact, and the need to communicate in a defined physical space over a protracted period of time, both French-lexifier Creoles and English-lexifier Creoles gained currency at different points in the country's history. The Creoles used on the two islands have areas of similarity and difference in grammar and pronunciation. Winer (2007) provides a detailed account of the social history of language in Trinidad and Tobago and later gives a historical account of the emergence of lexical items in a dictionary of Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creole(s) (Winer, 2009). All Creoles in Trinidad and Tobago, to different degrees, exhibit structural differences from Standard English in areas of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and discourse patterns. Examples of these are summarized in numerous publications on Caribbean Creoles.

Theoretical framework and methodology

This study utilizes the tools of historical linguistics, sociolinguistics, and dialectology. Historical linguistics studies change in languages over time, usually employing comparative methods to determine the nature and causes of change in a particular language. Since variation is key to both language change and sociolinguistics, adopting a sociolinguistic lens is useful since social factors can determine the retention, loss, assimilation or creation of linguistic structures. As a field of study that incorporates elements of

both historical linguistics and sociolinguistics, dialectology focuses on variation among different varieties of language.

Linguistic change requires the diffusion of variants across a speech community in a particular place – synchronic variation – and over time – diachronic variation. The former refers to the existence of variants at a particular point in time while the latter refers to the increase or decrease in use of a variant over a period of time. All grammatical features are subject to variation and change. The direction of change is a consequence of numerous factors: social, political, historical, and geographic, among others. Auer, Hinskens, & Kerswill (2005) state that one approach to analyzing language change employs the concepts of convergence and divergence to capture language processes that affect the relationships between and among different linguistic varieties. They contend that convergence and divergence are relational notions; the first refers to the increase in similarity in form and structure between and among languages, and involves linguistic unification or homogenization, while the second involves diversification, growing diffuseness and heterogenisation (p. 2).

In their exploration of language convergence, Torres Cocoulllos and Travis (2015) highlight key issues that are relevant to this study, including: 1) the importance of social context in the study of multi-lingual phenomena; 2) the need for care in handling linguistic research data, both spoken and print; and 3) the consideration of “probabilistic constraints” underlying occurrence rates of a given linguistic form. They argue that a strict test of contact-induced change should start with comparative reference to a pre-contact variety or identification of an earlier stage of the same variety in order to determine whether change actually occurred. Further, establishing that convergence actually occurred involves identifying “conflict sites” or “areas at which the structures of the language pair do not match” (p. 377). According to Hinskens (1998: 35-36; see also Nagy, 2014: 8 and Dougherty, Mobley & Smith, 2010) dialect levelling can occur in language contact situations when there is reduction of variation between language varieties. Among other processes that can occur are functional shift when new words are created by the shifting of lexical categories or parts of speech without markedly changing the form of the word and lexical loans or borrowing of words and phrases between varieties.

This study began with data gathered from the present and worked backwards in time, drawing data from a variety of sources, mainly print. These included dictionaries and lexicons (Allsopp, 2003; Mendes, 2010; Winer, 2009), cookbooks and relevant published works (Hi-Lo Food Stores, 2012; Naparima Girls’ High School Cookbook, 2002; Rahamut, 2002; Warner-Lewis, 1997; Winer, 2007) and media sources such as newspapers and television. The corpus collected was restricted to food terms and phrases and a comparative method was adopted to analyse differences over time. Winer’s *Dictionary of English/Creole of Trinidad and Tobago* (2009) was particularly useful, since it

provided samples of historical usage for each term with specific dates. The wide range of entries in that source, its detailed treatment of each, and its suggested etymologies allowed more extensive comparison between the lexical items listed in its pages with modern day food terms than with those listed in other sources. Because forms generally occur in spoken language before they occur in written form, this was not interpreted as conclusive evidence that the specific lexical item was not used prior to the first date mentioned, but the reference in Winer's dictionary was taken as an indication that a particular term had currency in communication by a particular time.

The data was initially analysed in terms of the synchronic diffusion of forms used in different domains and current publications. These forms were then analysed diachronically with reference to published lexicons and dictionaries that captured language in use over time, including the etymology of specific words and phrases. These etymologies are incorporated into the present study where available from the following sources: *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* (DoCEU) (Allsopp & Allsopp, 2003); *Cote ci Cote la* (CcCl) (Mendes, 2010); *Trinidad Yoruba: From mother tongue to memory* (TY) (Warner-Lewis, 1997); *Badjohns, bhaaji & banknote blue: Essays on the social history of language in Trinidad and Tobago* (BB&B) (Winer, 2007); and *Dictionary of the English/Creole of Trinidad & Tobago* (DoECTT) (Winer, 2009). The etymology for some terms differed depending on the source consulted.

Findings and discussion

The examples from the data provided below are illustrative of some of the processes of language change evident in Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creole. The term 'variants' in the table is used to refer to alternate forms used for the same food related concept, or alternative ways of spelling the term in different publications or texts over time. Due to limitations of space, only twenty illustrative examples from the larger data set are listed in Table 1.

Table 1 Selected food related terms in Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creole

Food related term	Etymology/meaning	Variants and related terms	Remarks
<i>accra</i>	Yoruba: 'fritter made of shredded saltfish mixed in a batter of flour and seasoning' (DoCEU, DoECTT); a lexical loan from Africa that TY traces to Yoruba <i>akara</i> , a bean paste fritter	<i>akra</i> , <i>acra</i>	The second vowel in <i>akara</i> might have been deleted from the original Yoruba which has fewer consonant clusters than English and French
<i>aloo</i>	Hindi: <i>aaluu</i> 'potato' (DoECTT)	<i>alo</i> ; <i>alu</i>	<i>aloo pie</i> : small pie made with a filling of fried mashed potato

			and seasoning fried in oil
<i>anchar</i>	Bhojpuri: <i>atchaar</i> from Hindi <i>achaar</i> (pickles) ‘a mixture of pieces of green mango and other fruit with peppers, ground <i>maassala</i> , vinegar and salt in mustard oil (DoECTT); ‘a condiment’ also occurs in erroneous forms <i>amchaar</i> , <i>anchar</i> by folk etymology from Hindu <i>aam</i> ‘mango’ and <i>char</i> ‘four’ in reference to the quartering of the mango which is the chief ingredient’ (DoCEU).	<i>amchar</i> ; <i>achar</i>	Rahamut’s cookbook uses <i>amchar</i> although <i>anchar</i> is the most widely used in speech and print
<i>arepa</i>	Spanish: <i>arepa</i> ‘a griddle-cake made of soaked maize ground into a paste or dough’; a fried cornmeal pie with a richly seasoned meat or fish filling (DoECTT)	<i>arepe</i>	
<i>bake</i>	English: a large roasted piece of round, flattened dough	<i>fry bake</i> ; <i>roast bake</i>	
<i>bara</i>	Hindi <i>baraa</i> , a small fried cake of ground peas; an East Indian delicacy made from dough, ground split peas and turmeric, deep-fried in oil	<i>barra</i>	no plural ‘two <i>bara</i> ’ also called <i>doubles</i>
<i>buljol</i>	French lexifier Creole from French: <i>brule gueule</i> , a dish of shredded saltfish seasoned with hot peppers, onions, tomatoes and olive oil	<i>bhuljol</i> , <i>bull-jowl</i> , <i>brulejol</i> , <i>bulljol</i>	
<i>cake</i>	English: a sweet confectionery	<i>nut-cake</i> , <i>biscuit-cake</i> , <i>sugar-cake</i> , <i>rock-cake</i>	
<i>callaloo culture</i>	From <i>callaloo</i> , a thick green soup made from dasheen leaves, okra, coconut milk	<i>calaloo</i> , <i>calalue</i> , <i>calilue</i> , <i>calilou</i> , <i>callaloo</i> , <i>callalou</i> ,	Winer (2009) provides historical samples from 1844 to 1994 showing

	and seasoned to taste (CcCl); <i>Callaloo culture</i> is used to mean a mixture of cultures	<i>colaloo, kalalu, calalu, kallaloo, calliloe</i>	progressive changes in the spelling of this word
<i>coo-coo</i>	Twi: <i>kuku</i> , a mixture of corn meal, okra and butter, boiled and stirred	<i>cou-cou, cookoo, cuckoo, ku-ku, cucu</i>	
<i>cousoumeh</i>	French lexifier Creole from French: <i>consommé</i> , ‘distillation’ a simmering down of different foods to create a new dish; <i>Cousoumeh</i> music and philosophy refer to a particular trend in Trinidadian music and thought		<i>Cousoumeh</i> is also, the name of a music band
<i>dhal</i>	Hindi: <i>daal</i> ‘pulse’; a paste or powder made from yellow split peas to be put into a type of <i>roti</i> (flat bread) or used to make a very thick seasoned soup	<i>dal, dahl, dholl, daal</i>	
<i>dhalpuri</i>	Bhojpuri from Hindi: <i>daal</i> ‘pulse’ and <i>puri</i> , a type of fried bread; a type of <i>roti</i> (flat bread) with a filling of <i>daal</i> , often cooked in ghee (liquefied butter)	<i>daalpuri; dhal-puree dhalpourri, dhal puri, dahl puri</i>	
<i>doubles</i>	English: a kind of sandwich made of two <i>bara</i> (small fried cakes of ground peas) with a filling of curried <i>channa</i> (chick peas) popularly sold as a snack		invariant form for singular and plural ‘one doubles’, ‘a doubles’, ‘two doubles’
<i>eggplant</i>	English: smooth skinned usually purple fruit with soft flesh that is widely used as a vegetable	<i>baigan, melongene, aubergine, eggplant</i> have by now generally converged to <i>melongene</i>	Bhojpuri and Hindi <i>baigan</i> ; French: <i>mélongène</i> , French: <i>aubergine</i> only found in <i>Savour</i> , (published by HiLo) perhaps because of target audience
<i>guava season</i>	English: ‘hard times’ Spanish <i>guyaba</i> and/or French <i>guave</i> from Arawakan	<i>guava days, guava times</i>	

	<i>guyabo</i> : a tough limbed fruit-bearing tree		
<i>metai</i>	Bhojpuri from Hindi: <i>mithaai</i> 'sweetness; sweetmeat'; a finger-like east Indian sweetmeat made with flour and water, coated with sugar and fried crisp	<i>mithai, methai kurma; khurma; kurmah</i> , by now generally converging to <i>kurma</i>	
<i>paimé</i>	French lexifier Creole from French: <i>pain de mie</i> 'a bread made from crumbs'; a bread with little crumbs; the French origin has been lost, and replaced by the folk etymology or notional spellings of which <i>paimé</i> seems to be the commonest (DoCEU)	<i>pemi; pamee, paymee</i>	
<i>pone</i>	Amerindian <i>apan</i> , a pudding of grated sweet potato, milk, sugar, butter, and spices served as a dessert		
<i>tamarind</i>	English from Arabic: a hard, brown pod with several seeds embedded in pulp and eaten raw or as a preserve	<i>tambran, tamran, tambrin</i>	many variants in spelling reflect dialectal pronunciation, commonly one with the homorganic cluster /-mb-/ (DoCEU)

Although a term might at times be phonologically similar to another, the concept it referenced was sometimes slightly different, which is evidence of semantic shift. So, although a Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creole food term might resemble an original African, European, Indigenous or South Asian item, there were sometimes differences in terms of ingredients or preparation. *Accra* is one example of this: In Trinidad, this fritter contains dried salt fish whereas in West Africa, no fish is usually used in the batter. The variety of spellings in different texts over time often seems to have coalesced around one main spelling in current publications. The reason for this would require more detailed investigation, but if spelling can be said to reflect pronunciation, then this might represent convergence.

Buljol and *paimé* are examples of words derived from Trinidadian French lexifier Creole, having come originally from French. These forms provide evidence of divergence

away from French. However, over time, variations in pronunciation and spellings, converged to lexical forms that are fairly standard in Trinidad and Tobago publications in print such as cookbooks.

Another interesting set of terms in the data include *guava season*, *callaloo culture*, and *cousoumeh music*, where the borrowed or loan word changes its lexical category and is used as an adjective. In a sense, all three can be considered examples of metaphorical language use. The advertisement for a televised panel discussion on the 2016 national budget bore the phrase *guava season* as a caption under the picture of a guava to highlight the fact that the budget called for austerity measures. A newspaper article discussing the experiences of *douglas*, citizens of mixed African-South Asian descent, used the expression *callaloo culture* as the headline to express the diversity of this aspect of the national cultural landscape. *Cousoumeh music* first appeared in the media in 2016 in reference to an approach or philosophy applied to music. The original word came from French via French lexifier Creole to describe a way of cooking. Its use in reference to music was a semantic extension suggesting a distillation of different genres to create a new sound. It is also included in the name of a music group. The longevity of the use of *cousoumeh* in this context will be determined by the extent to which this type of musical fusion gains acceptance nationally and internationally, but it is demonstrative of the dynamic nature of language and the processes that operate in language shift and language change.

270 When a new word is needed to describe a specific cultural innovation for which no previous word existed (for example, *doubles*, a culinary innovation of using two *bara* to form a sandwich-like delicacy with curried channa in the middle). Instead of any of the South Asian terms normally used to refer to its ingredients, the word *doubles* has been taken from English to refer to this new culinary phenomenon. At the surface, this could be considered a straightforward case of convergence towards English nomenclature. But at the level of morphology, *doubles*, like the Bhojpuri derived term *bara* is invariant for number, with the same form being used in both the singular and the plural, which is divergent from English, but convergent toward Caribbean English lexifier Creoles, where nouns are also often invariant for number.

In contrast to the case of Haitian French lexifier Creole, there is no common, consensus-based orthography for Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creole. If such an orthography existed, the spelling of food terms would surely have exhibited less variation in print. It is reasonable to conclude that with the current trend toward increased communication among the diverse speech communities in Trinidad and Tobago, and with the present tendency toward increased use of Trinidad and Tobago English lexifier Creole in print, there will be increased convergence in the spelling and perhaps pronunciation of food related terms and other lexical items (Allsopp & Allsopp, 2003: xliii), just as William Caxton's printing press encouraged more convergent standardized spellings of English words (Fromkin, Rodman & Hyams, 2007: 475).

REFERENCES

- Allsopp, Richard & Jeannette Allsopp (2003, [1996]). *Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage*. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press.
- Allsopp, Jeannette & John R. Rickford (Eds.) (2012). *Language, culture and Caribbean identity*. Kingston: Canoe Press.
- Auer, Peter, Frans Hinskens & Paul Kerswill (Eds.). *Dialect change: convergence and divergence in European languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brereton, Bridget (1996). *An introduction to the history of Trinidad and Tobago*. London: Hodder International.
- Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago. (2011). *Census Demographic Report* retrieved from <http://cso.gov.tt/>
- Dougherty, Debbie, Sacheen K. Mobley & Siobhan E. Smith (2010). Language convergence and meaning divergence: a theory of intercultural communication. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, 3, 2, 164-186.
- Fromkin, Victoria, Robert Rodman & Nina Hyams (2007, [1974]). *An introduction to language*. Boston: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Hi-Lo Food Stores. *Savour*. Port-of-Spain: Phoenix Communications Ltd.
- Hinskens, Frans (1998). Variation studies in dialectology and three types of sound change. *Sociolinguistica*, 12, 1, 155-193.
- Hinskens, Frans, Peter Auer & Paul Kerswill (2005). The study of dialect convergence and divergence: conceptual and methodological considerations. In Peter Auer, Frans Hinskens & Paul Kerswill (Eds.), *Dialect change: convergence and divergence in European languages* (pp. 1- 48). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- James, Winford & Valerie Youssef (2002). *The languages of Tobago: genesis, structure and perspectives*. St. Augustine: UWI School of Continuing Studies/Open Campus.
- Mahabir, Kumar (1991). *A dictionary of common Trinidad Hindi*. San Juan, Trinidad: Chakra Publishing House.
- Mendes, John (2010, [1986]). *Côté ci côté là: Trinidad and Tobago dictionary*. London: New Millennium Publishers.
- Mohan, Peggy (1978). *Trinidad Bhojpuri: a morphological study*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan.
- Nagy, Naomi (2014). Heritage languages as new dialects. Retrieved April 2017 from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/292953846_Heritage_Languages_as_New_Dialects
- Naparima Girls' Alumnae Association (2002). *The multi-cultural cuisine of Trinidad & Tobago & the Caribbean*. San Fernando, Trinidad: Naparima Girls' High School.
- Rahamut, Wendy (2002). *Caribbean flavors*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Limited.

- Torres Cocoulllos, Rena & Catherine E. Travis (2015). Gauging convergence on the ground: Code-switching in the community. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 19, 4, 365-386.
- Trudgill, Peter (1986). *Dialects in contact*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Warner-Lewis, Maureen (1997). *Trinidad Yoruba: from mother tongue to memory*. Kingston: The Press University of the West Indies.
- Williams, Eric (1964). *History of the people of Trinidad and Tobago*. London: Andre Deutsch.
- Winer, Lise (2007). *Badjohns, bhaaji & banknote blue: essays on the social history of language in Trinidad and Tobago*. St. Augustine: The University of the West Indies.
- Winer, Lise (Ed.) (2009). *Dictionary of the English/Creole of Trinidad & Tobago: on historical principles*. McGill: McGill-Queens University Press.

GHANA ‘PONA’ YAM: A POTENTIAL PRODUCT FOR GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION STATUS

GERVASE KUUWAABONG

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, WA CAMPUS, GHANA

Introduction and theoretical considerations

Consumers all over the world are interested in food products that are locally grown and connect with the environment or local land use systems in historically organic ways. Ghana is endowed with a diversity of landscapes and agricultural traditions, which have an influence on the quality of the agricultural food products produced there. These products thus have potential to qualify for Geographical Indications (GI) labelling under the laws of the European Union (EU), but this potential has been under exploited. A relevant question therefore is whether Ghana is in the position to exploit the benefits of GI status in the same way that many European Union countries have in order to gain additional monetary returns from food products registered with protected Geographical Indications labels.

This article argues that the pona yam, which is grown in the savannah region of Ghana, has all the qualities needed for registration as a GI product. The product has a unique taste and smell compared to other yams, it has a good reputation among consumers, it has been produced for centuries in a defined geographical area, and it also has a specific production process which is embedded in local cultural traditions. The number of pona yam production related local jobs is high, with a very positive effect on the local economy. The article concludes that there is a potential for pona yam from the northern savannah areas of Ghana to be registered under the GI regime, perhaps with a name such as “Ghana Savannah Yam”.

The demand for food produced in a localized environment and bearing a Geographical Indication label is growing. Consumers in Europe in particular are increasingly demanding such products. There are many reasons for this surge of interest in origin-labelled products. As Intellectual Property, GIs have become a useful marketing instrument in the food industry. Many food shops and supermarkets in Europe now have become explicit about the sources of their food products (Hughes, 2009; Josling, 2006; Bramley et al., 2009; Reviron et al., 2009).

Geographical Indication identifies a product as “originating in a delimited territory or region where a specific quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin and/or the human or natural factors there” (Giovannucci et al., 2009). According to Vandecandelaere et al. (2009), specific quality means that some characteristics differentiate a product from other products of the same category and consumers see it as such, irrespective of whether the market is local, national or international. The territory factor in GI designation refers to the geographical area that has the bio-physical and human resources with which the unique product is associated. Producers of registered GI products have collective ownership of the GI label and are expected to do everything possible to conform with the GI product characteristics according to which the product has been registered. The ability to make a GI product value creation process trustworthy and acceptable by all depends on how motivated, willing and skillful local producers are.

The potential of a product to acquire GI status is based upon its unique qualities which depend upon a unique combination of both natural and human resources. The criteria for determining GI designation therefore include: a recognised uniqueness, a territorial link to product uniqueness, a delimited geographical production area, a specific production process, a name with a good reputation, marketability of the product and collective ownership. Products that have these characteristics are potential GIs, even if they are not protected by any legislation (Reviron et al., 2009). There are arguably many food items produced in Ghana that meet all of these criteria, but Ghana has yet to take advantage of the GI process in the same way many EU countries have.

Yam is one of the key agricultural staple food products in Ghana. Yam is cultivated all over Ghana but the dominant production areas are in the savannah zones of the country. After Nigeria and Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana is the third biggest producer of yams in the world (MiDA, 2010). Currently, Ghana is the world’s leading yam exporter. In Ghana, many yam varieties are grown. Consumers both in and outside Ghana prefer the pona (sometimes called “puna”) variety. Consumers’ demand for pona yam is high and sometimes it is expensive and difficult to find, especially in off-season from May to August (Otoo et al., 2010). Despite the fact that the product has a high demand, its producers are still among the most impoverished people in Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Labelling it as a GI product could increase its value and incomes for its producers. However, pona yam cannot just be registered as a GI product with a label if key actors (producers, traders and consumers) do not first identify it as a unique product.

Culture economy and cultural embeddedness are key concepts used in this article. Culture economy involves an attempt by actors to localise economic control (Ray, 1998). The idea of a culture economy focuses on the production side: local territory, local cultural systems and the network of actors that construct a set of resources to be used in the best interest of the local community. GI status can be linked to the culture economy as it also focuses on the local territory and local actors. The culture economy system

also recognises exogenous or extra-local actors. The exogenous actors in the culture economy are sometimes traders and consumers. The recognition of traders and consumers and their value are key to the status and success of GI products, because if there is no consumer or trader interest for value added products then there is little purpose for GIs. Cultural economy theory recognises that there is a desire amongst consumers for value added products such as products that are linked to place. However radical versions of the free market does not account for this desire because it does not allow for the protection of place-based products (Ray, 1998). Culture economy is based on a decentralised system that draws on local knowledge and local resources for production processes. This ensures sustainability because the local community is more likely to use their own local resources in a sustainable manner than for example, a large agrobusiness corporation.

Karl Polanyi (1957) the key creator of embeddedness theory, says that free market capitalism must be subject to social and environmental constraints if it is not to destroy the basis of the economy itself. Allen and Kovach (2000) express similar views to Polanyi, when they recognise the relationship between producers and nature, a relationship they say is hidden if food is only considered on its face value as a commodified object. Murray and Raynolds (2000) also stress the importance of the social and environmental relations on which the economy depends. Quality labelling such as GIs attempt to reconnect consumers to non-market values such as value of place, value of tradition, value of production methods and value of diversity (Barham, 2003).

275

Through their connection to non-market values, GIs acknowledge the value of the relationship between the product, the producers and nature. Rather than being a protectionist reaction against unfettered markets, embedded systems of production can provide for the maintenance of traditions and sustainable rural development while allowing for consumer choice and encouraging competition among producers. Culture economy and embeddedness theory all provide motivation for the protection of GI designated products in the market place. These theories agree that there is a need in the market for products to contain not only quality ingredients and but also added value, such as value of place that reflects the value of the community and systems involved in their production process. This mechanism encourages producers to invest in and add value to their products, and this value is based on nature conservation, respect for the environmental, human health and food safety, traditional methods, etc.

The present study

The study which forms the basis for this article started by identifying and short list of 20 food products in Ghana that have GI potential, based on the literature as well as on informal interviews with experts. This survey of products was carried out based on a comprehensive set of selection criteria that included product uniqueness, territorial link to product uniqueness, existence of delimited geographical production area, cultural

embeddedness of production processes, collective ownership, the reputation of the product and demand for the product relative to products of the same category. Once this list was drawn up, a market survey of all 20 products was conducted with a total of 60 experts, sellers and consumers in the open air markets in Accra, Kumasi, Tamale and Techiman. These markets were purposefully selected to represent the four major ecological zones of the country. Using the assessments of the respondents, the 20 products were ranked using the selection criteria, and it was found that pona yam was among the top scoring products. A more focused survey was then conducted of pona yam producers, sellers and consumers in the Krachi and Salaga districts of the main pona yam producing part of the savannah zone of Ghana (Yin, 2015).

Pona Yam belongs to the white yam species called *Dioscorea rotundata*. The tuber is roughly cylindrical in shape and the skin is smooth and brown. The flesh is usually white, and firm in its raw form. However, when pona yam is cooked, roasted or fried, its texture is soft and smooth in the mouth and fingers. Figure I shows a pile of freshly harvested pona yam.



Figure 1 Freshly harvested pona yam. Source: Field work by author, 2017

Results: uniquely high value of of pona yam

Even though the consumers interviewed know that other yam varieties exist, the only name that they readily remembered was pona, because it is associated with quality and uniqueness. Interviewees said that pona yam is different from other varieties because of

its mild sweet taste, as well as its soft and smooth texture in the mouth when eaten boiled or fried. They also said the product has an inviting aroma that makes it different and unique from other yams. Some the opinions that they expressed concerning pona yam are as follows:

I have been a lover of puna [pona] yam since I can remember. I recollect as a way of teasing ... me, my siblings use to sneak and put a tuber in my chop [food] box when I was to go to the boarding school, though they knew I will have no use for it in secondary school. [Because I like it so much] my parents would also say “Aaah you, one day you will give birth to yam” or they go like “One day, yam will grow in your tummy”. Puna is a popular name for a ... species of yam which is also called *larebuuguu*, especially in northern Ghana. Puna yam whether cooked, boiled, roasted with soup or sauce has been my favorite dish since my basic school days till date. I like puna yam so much that when is off season I will not want to eat any other type [such as dente, serwa and water yam]. Puna yam has unique characteristics that make it special among yam species. Puna is starchy when boiled. The starchy nature of the yam makes water from the boiled yam also thick and starchy unlike other yams where the water after boiling still remains light and normal. Because it is starchy, I also prefer using puna for fufu and not any other yam. The taste of puna is one of a kind. It tastes sweet to the extent that one could eat all yam slices when served without necessarily taking it with sauce. Sometimes people wonder whether sugar is added to the yam when cooking it but that is the normal taste. Because of the unique taste of puna, it is the only best option for food vendors who are into roasting of yam and plantain by way side and because it tastes better eating it without soup or sauce. You can tell from a distance when someone is boiling pona yam. Its aroma is so inviting, my brother. Yam generally is such that is difficult to eat it when is cold because it gets harder and cannot be enjoyed, but puna is still enjoyed even served cold because the taste remains same and it still feels soft. Though most people are not able to distinguish it from other species by simply looking at it, the difference is noticed when cooked. Well I do know the difference by simply looking at it (A pona yam consumer, September, 2017).

Pona is unique in many ways such as the taste, texture, the colour and smell or aroma, especially when it is cooked. Among the variety of yam I have eaten, pona has a very good taste. It has got this sweetness or mild sugar taste so that it can be eaten without sauce or stew and this makes me chose it over any other yam. On texture, pona is my most preferred yam. Usually cooked pona comes out sticky and very soft and makes eating it very easy. The colour and aroma of pona are some of the qualities that make me chose pona yam over any other yam.

Cooked pona appears creamy white coupled with appealing smell that makes one salivate (A pona yam consumer, December, 2017)

Pona yam is highly reputed compared with other yams because of its unique taste. It is usually my first choice in choosing yam. Puna [pona] is not only my favorite, it is a preferred yam variety in Ghana. People generally (rich, middle class or low class) all prefer to eat puna to any other type of yam. Puna is the most preferred for boiling, roasting, frying and for fufu especially in the northern part of Ghana. If yam is to be offered as gift then what is most cherished is puna yam. (A pona yam consumer, November, 2017).

Pona yam is so different from other yams. It has a unique mild sweet taste that other yam varieties don't have. When you cook it, my brother, it looks more appealing and appetizing as compared to other yam varieties. Most people who eat yam can tell whether a particular yam cooked is pona or not because it appears more juicy than other yam varieties (A pona yam farmer, June, 2017).

These remarks are corroborated in the literature, where opinions such as the following can be found: "In Ghana, many yam varieties are grown, but the white yams, especially the Pona variety, are preferred by both the domestic and export market. Pona is so desirable that it is often difficult to find enough Pona tubers, especially during June and August, when it is off season" (Otoo et al., 2010).

Results: unique territory for traditional pona yam cultivation

Although much of the yam production in Ghana has moved toward the mid-forest zone and the Afram Plains, a participatory mapping exercise with pona yam farmers during a focus group discussion conducted as part of the present study revealed that the best place for producing pona with the unique qualities that people know and prefer is the mid-south eastern part of the savannah areas of northern Ghana, which is circled on the map in Figure 2. As shown on the map, the area that they identified covers south the eastern parts of the Northern region, the eastern part of Brong Ahafo region and the northern part of the Volta region.

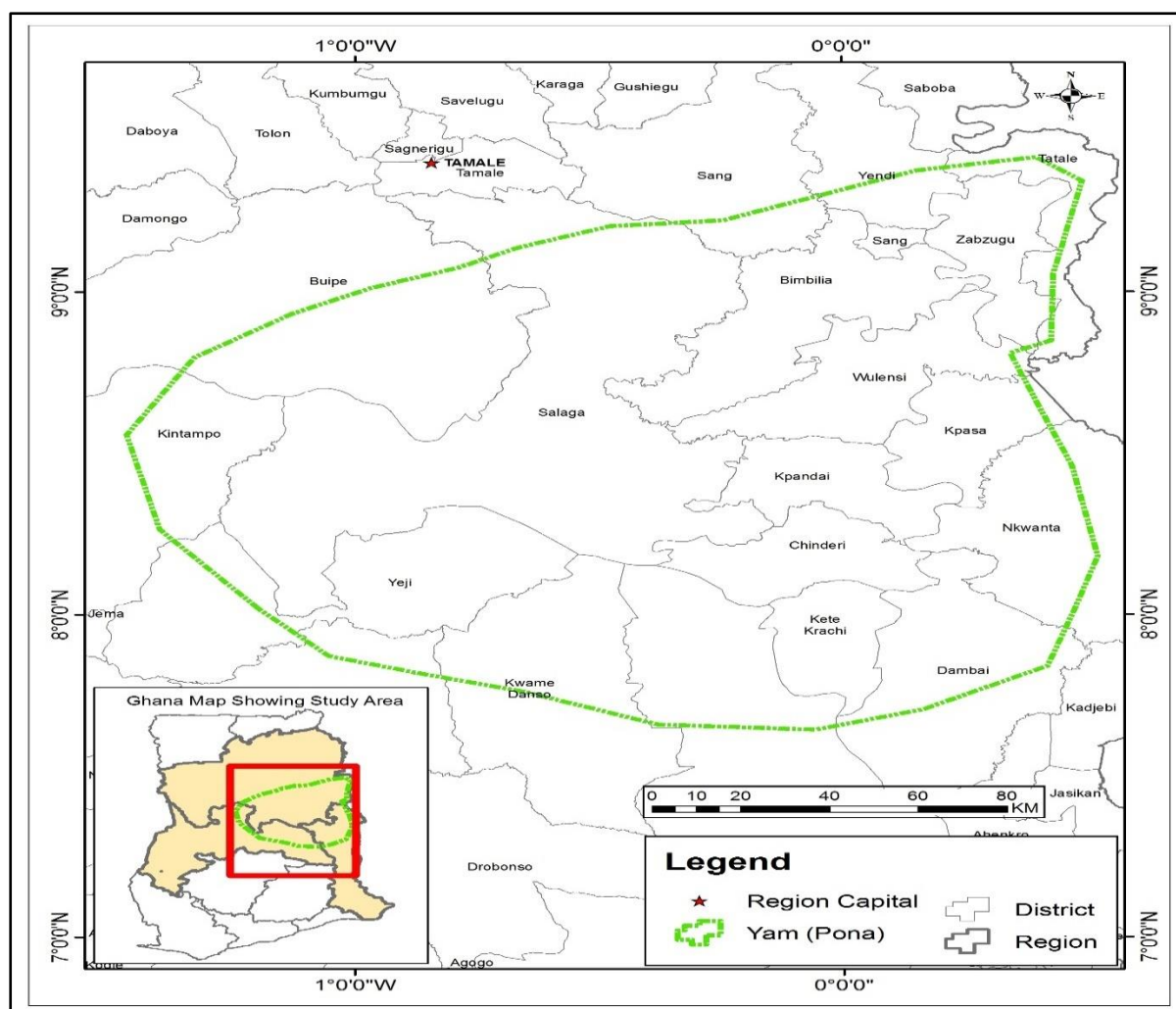


Figure 2 Optimal pona yam production area, identified by Interview Participants

The area identified as optimal for pona yam production by the focus group was also singled out by interviewees as the area where the best pona yams are produced:

Pona is a variety and can be grown anywhere in Ghana but there is a vast difference in taste when you eat pona produced in the middle savannah areas in Ghana. It really tastes sweeter and more starchy compared to same variety produced let's say in the western Region (A pona yam farmer, August, 2017)

When people talk about good pona yam, they indirectly refer to pona yam grown in the savannah areas in northern Ghana. Every yam seller knows pona yam comes from the north (A yam seller in Konkomba Market, 2015).

The interviews with pona yam producers indicated that soil type and rainfall patterns are very important in pona yam cultivation. Producers reported that the type of soil best suited for pona yam cultivation is deep and moderately drained sandy rich loamy soil.

They also said during the interviews that best results are obtained if rainfall is moderate and evenly distributed over six to seven months period:

If the soil was not suitable for yam cultivation we would have moved on. The soil here is the most suitable for the production of pona yam. The soil is sandy deep but rich in humus. We cannot tell you which specific minerals and in what combinations are found in the soil here but we know through experience that the soil here and the rainfall pattern and amount is best for pona yam production as compared to other ecological zones in Ghana. (Pona yam farmers focus group discussants, 2017).

An examination of various maps (area elevation, organic material of the soil, soil depth, soil drainage, soil texture and temperature) confirmed that the area identified by the interviewees constitutes a unique physical environment distinct from other ecological areas of Ghana. The maps revealed that on average, the depth of soil in the area is greater than 20cm, the presence of organic material in the soil is greater than 2,2 %, soil drainage is moderate, soil texture is medium to light, temperature is 27°C to 28°C and annual rainfall is 1000-1300mm (see <http://gis4ghagric.net>).

Results: traditional cultural practices and pona yam production

Not only did interviewees specifically mention districts like Salaga, Yendi, Kpandai, Techiman, Kintampo, Atebubu, Zabzugu, and Krachi in the Northern, Brong Ahafo and Volta Regions as the best for pona yam production, they also observed a special bond between local identity and the cultivation of pona yam in those districts:

You cannot call yourself a yam farmer in this area if you do not farm pona yam. In this area yam farming is all about pona yam. That is what brings money (A pona yam farmer, 2015).

Interviewees agreed that pona yam's unique characteristics are linked to both the physical and cultural environment of the production area. According to them, pona yam is produced by many small to medium scale size farmers using traditional knowledge and methods. People living in the savannah zone of Ghana, particularly the Konkomba ethnic group, are known to have mastered and preserved traditional pona yam production better than other groups. According to interview participants, pona yam farming has a long history among the Konkombas.

We have been living here since ancient times. The traditional knowledge and method in the production process of pona from start to finish is embedded in our culture and cannot be learned by a stranger overnight. People think pona yam farming is easy, it is not at all. The reason why some people think it is easy to farm it is because it is common during the harvesting season. You see, it is not everywhere or in every soil in the savannah area that you can grow pona yam. You must be an experienced pona yam farmer to know this. Producing the seeds, raising the mounts and the timing is traditional knowledge. When to sow, how

to sow, harvesting and storage are all linked to traditional yam farming knowledge and practices by our people. It is our way of life". (A pona yam producer, June, 2017).

Interviewees reported that access to land for pona yam farming is either through family ownership or rent. Most yam farmers families' traditionally own the land, so that family members do not have to rent land at any cost to produce pona yam. Those who rent are non-natives. Land access and acquisition for yam farming follow strict traditional rules:

Most of us come from this area and our families own the land we farm on. We do not rent. Non-natives do rent but they are very few here. Even those who rent lands to farm yam, the process is not complicated. A piece of land can be hired from family land owners at a price in kind or in cash. The price may include cash, schnapps, ware [seed] yam or ram depending on the family rules. (A pona yam producers' focus group discussion, August 2017).

Farmers said that they prefer virgin lands for cultivation every year even though they admitted it is practically impossible to get access to such land these days.

It is every pona yam farmer's dream to get virgin area to farm. The reality is that it is difficult to find it. Most of us move on to a new plot of land each year that has already been used before and leaving plots farmed to lie fallow for between two to five years to recover fertility levels naturally. (A pona yam farmer, September, 2017).

The reason why farmers usually prefer virgin lands is that such land contains an abundance of organic matter and staking material when initially cleared for use. Yam requires high levels of nitrogen for leaf and canopy formation and potassium to achieve consistently acceptable yields.

According to pona yam farmers who took part in the interviews, once land is acquired, preparation begins with uprooting of grass, removal of three branches and burning what has been uprooted and cut down. This traditional slash and burn process of land preparation is known by every serious yam farmer and is essential to achieve high quality and high yields:

What I know is that farmers here are using the traditional mounds technology for production. Mounds are made after which stumps are uprooted or burnt to avoid regrowth. On an average, an acre of land takes about 100 to 1,500 mounds. Land preparation is often done in October and November when the land is still wet but others raise their mounds in April to May when the early rains set in. Mound raising is done mostly through utilizing communal exchange of labour. Some people also go for hired labour but they are few here. Mound raising is the most tedious of all the stages in pona yam cultivation (A pona yam farmer, December, 2017).

Interviewees demonstrated how inputs and management practices adopted by pona yam farmers in the savannah areas are unique and traditionally embedded. To manage the

soil, farmers said that they did mixed cropping (yam, beans, okra, and maize) and crop rotation (yam, then cassava and then maize) before leaving a specific plot to lie fallow. Both mixed cropping and crop rotation have been shown in literature to be very efficient and climate smart traditional farming practices that improve soil fertility and plot yields. Pona yam farmers categorically stated that they do not use industrial chemical fertilizers in pona yam production but rely on natural soil fertility and mulch:

Many of us here basically use land, hoe, cutlass, labour and seeds. Some people have introduced tractors to help the turn and mix the soil before they raise the mounds (A consensus statement resulting from a focus group discussion with pona yam farmers, November, 2017).

It was revealed during the study that pona yam is farmed once a year but could be harvested twice. The farmers interviewed stated that the milk yam is harvested mainly in July and August to allow for yam seed production while the final harvest is done in November/December. According to the farmers, the best time for planting pona yam seeds is in the early hours of the day (6:00-10:00am) utilizing communal labour exchange. Planting is done using cut-setts from ware tuber. This is done a day before planting. The setts or seed tubers are subjected to treatment with wood ash to prevent damage by fungus and other diseases when buried in the soils:

The setts are planted at a depth of about 10 centimeters with the cut face or head facing up at an angle of 45%-65%. The setts could be from one's own seed-yam produced through milking from the previous year's production. The seeds could also be bought from the market or from other farmers or borrowed. Determining the quality of a pona yam sett and knowing all the processes and steps required is based on experience and traditional knowledge. Once you grow up in a yam farming family and have practiced the farming processes over time you will naturally gain the experienced (A pona yam farmer, December, 2017).

Self-supplied seed yams were reported to be preferred by farmers due to their reliability and growth performance. Pona yam seeds are planted either in December-January or in April- May. According to respondents, the direction of the sun is an important determinant in planting pona yam seed in a mound:

No experienced pona yam farmer will plant his yam facing east or west. The north and south positions of the mounds are considered to be the best places to sow the seed with respect to the apparent movement of the sun. This is done to prevent exposure to direct sun rays or to reduce excessive heat reaching the seed (A pona yam farmer, December, 2017).

Some amount of sett mortality can be expected, particularly in farms planted in December and January. For this reason, replanting is done usually about two months after spouting. Mounds with no sprouts are checked with the hoe to see if there are rotten

setts which should be removed and replaced with new ones. Unsprouted setts that are not rotten are not replaced because they still can produce sprouts later.

According to interviewees, mounds are traditionally mulched in order to reduce soil temperature, conserve soil moisture and suppress weed growth:

We search for dry grasses, fresh leaves, rice straw and other similar materials and then place them on top of the mounds after which we weigh down the material with balls of mud. The mulching is made thick (about 10 cm) so that it will not rot completely within four or five months (A pona yam farmer, December, 2017).

During land preparation, smaller trees and bushes are trimmed, so that their branches can be used as stakes. According to farmers, pona yam is traditional staked to ensure better yields. Plants are staked before vines start crawling on the ground. Traditionally, recommended stake length is one to two meters:

We cut tree branches, smaller trees and any similar material that can support the yam vines for at least seven months and used as stakes. Staking is not done any how but comes with skills and experience. Stakes are drilled into the side of each mounds and slightly tilted towards the vine. Wind direction is considered in positioning stakes to avoid easy flattening during storms (A consensus statement resulting from a focus group discussion with pona yam farmers, November, 2017).

The availability of staking materials is directly associated with land use patterns.

Pona yam production in this geographic area could be said to be organic, because there is no use of industrial chemicals as fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides. During the interviews, pona yam farmers stated that yam farms are weeded manually and herbicides are not used.

We do manual weeding three or four times in a year depending on the rate of weed growth. When yam canopies are formed by the vines and leaves and covers the space between rows, they partially suppress weed growth. The tools we use for weeding are the hoe and cutlass. When vines start crawling on the ground, they are trained to climb their respective stakes by placing them on the appropriate stakes (A consensus statement resulting from a focus group discussion with pona yam farmers, November, 2017)

Interviewees added that pest and disease control is done by farmers naturally, such as by removing residual soil on the tuber/sett by brushing. Farmer do not use any form of industrial chemical pest control. Forage pest are naturally controlled by rains. According to farmers, the application fertilizers in pona yam production is avoided, because it would result in the early rotting of tubers and negatively affect taste.

Compared to other yam varieties, pona yam is harvested early because it matures early. The harvesting is done traditionally, with early harvesting (milking) being done 5-6 months after planting, and late harvesting being done 8-9 months after planting, mostly

in October – December. Late pona harvesting is done when its foliage is already yellowing or drying up. Harvesting is done before the vines become dry and the soil becomes dry and hard:

Hoes and machetes are used to excavate tubers or yam ware from raised mounds. After the tuber is dug out, then it is lifted and clinging soil particles are removed. The vine is cut at the base. After tubers are cleaned and placed on the mounds where they are removed, women immediately collect and arrange them in layers in basins to avoid jolting when transporting by head to the storage barn or a temporary shed for sorting out before storage. Healthy and diseased tubers are separated at the shed (A pona yam farmer, December, 2017).

Ware surface damage during harvesting was cited by study participants as a significant cause of on-farm storage loss. Harvesting therefore requires time and care to obtain ware with no or very little damage. Medium scale farmers use very experienced yam harvesters during harvesting, because they can pay for their services. While the basic tools used for harvesting are the cutlass and the hoe, sticks are preferred for milking. The basic conditions to consider during pona yam storage and constructing a storage facility include: temperature, humidity, air circulation, proximity of clean ware to damaged ware, exposure to sunlight, contact with ground/soil and exposure to rodents: During focus group discussions, this was how farmers described the traditional storage process:

284 Storage is often done ... in barns, on the bare ground under shady trees or in pits. These storage facilities are made from sticks, grasses, stalks and tree branches. The barn is a hut made of wood and straw. The floor is lined with dry grass to cushion the tubers. It has high aeration and is not expensive to construct. In the case of the bare ground under shady tree storage method, a shady tree on the farm is identified. The ground is cleared and lined with dry grass. Tubers are clamped onto the tree and covered with dry grass and tree branches. With this method, farmers are able to provide high aeration and easily control sprouts. Storage is also done through burial in pits. The pit is a cylindrical hole dug in the ground and lined with dry grass on the floor and sides. Tubers are put in and covered with grass. This practice protects ware from high temperatures. During storage, yams are arranged vertically with the heads upward to allow for good ventilation. Sprouts are regularly checked and removed from the yam heads to avoid losses if they are not seed yams (A statement from a focus group discussion with pona yam farmers, November, 2017)

The marketability of pona yam and sustainable rural development

The aim of the GI concept hinges largely on increasing market premium and incomes for producers. The successful marketing of any potential GI designated product has to be considered at the beginning of the application process for GI status (Vandecandelaere

et al. 2009). Interview participants unanimously agreed that there is tremendous demand for pona yam both locally and internationally, as compared to other yam varieties.

Pona yam is what every farmer farms most in this locality not only because the environment is good for its growth but also because of the high demand for it. Some traders are even refinancing some yam farmers to farm only pona and sell to them. (A pona yam farmer, September, 2017).

A yam trader said that one common question that consumers usually ask when they come to buy yam is whether they sell pona yam.

Ghana leads is the world leader in exporting yams (MiDA 2010), as indicated in an interview with a deputy CEO of the Ghana Export promotion authority:

We have not compiled the current (2017) figures yet, but our estimates show that Ghana is currently exporting between 25,000 metric tons to 30,000 metric tons of yam annually which no other country does. The export figures have been increasing steadily over the past 10 years. The amount of Ghana pona yam going into countries within the west African region and other countries in Africa is not even known. (Deputy CEO of the Ghana Export Promotion Authority, 2017).

Between 2000 and 2008, the yearly compound yam exported had grown by an average of 6.6% (MiDA, 2010). Much of the yam produced in Ghana, particularly pona yam, is exported to Europe. The European countries that lead in the importation of Ghanaian yam include the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Italy and Germany. According to the experts interviewed, the UK alone imports about half of Ghana yam exports. Within the West African sub region, countries like Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso were also said to be importing large quantities of Ghana yam:

I don't sell my yams in Europe or America. I sell them in Burkina, Niger and Mali and there are many yam exporters like doing that. I get good market there (An exporter of pona yam, September, 2017).

Since the 1950s, the population of West Africans in Europe and in the United States have been increasing steadily, and this has created an export market for Ghana yam (MiDA, 2010). It was revealed during the study that while pona yam prices fluctuate seasonally, they have been increasing steadily on an annual basis. This increase in price, however, has not lead to a decrease in demand for the product. This is therefore an opportunity for pona yam farmers to increase their profits if the product is registered as having GI status.

One of the biggest problems facing many families and communities in the northern areas of Ghana is unemployment, particularly among the youth. While many young people throughout Ghana are moving to urban centers in search of non-existent white-collar jobs, this is surprisingly not the case in traditional pona yam cultivating areas identified by the present study. Interviewees attributed this promising trend to the security and reward people get for engaging in farming pona yam compared to doing menial

jobs in the cities. In the opinion of the participants, pona yam farming is the most important livelihood activity in the region, providing hundreds of thousands of jobs. The study also indicated that pona yam farmers use their income from the sale of their yams for the good of their families and communities, instead of on the individualized and addictive consumption that typifies town life:

There is no family in this area that does not farm pona yam. Even government workers here are all into farming pona. Yam farming is the main livelihood activity Young people hardly leave to the cities to stay and work. In most instances, when you find them in the cities, they are there to sell their yam wares. Yam farming is tedious but it is more secured, dignifying and rewarding than most jobs in the cities people are doing. The income we earn from the sale of pona yam is used to do household purchases including clothing, pay children school fees, buy other food stuff to supplement the family's food needs, pay for medical bills, perform funerals of dead relatives, pay bride prices and support all the social and cultural activities that are a way of life in our communities (A statement from a focus group discussion with pona yam farmers, November, 2017).

Interviewees were of the opinion that a GI designation for pona yam will help increase prices, and this increase in profits will help young people in the rural areas and attract energetic urban youth back home to farm. They also agree that GI status will help maintain and sustain the age-old traditions of pona yam farming.

Conclusion

The present study provides convincing evidence that pona yam from the savannah areas in northern Ghana has all the core characteristics required for its designation as a Geographical Indications product, namely: a recognised uniqueness compared with other similar products, a long and traditional historical link to a unique territory, a delimited geographical area of production, a specific production process, a good reputation among consumers, and proven local and international market potential . In an era of food crisis throughout the world, pona yam makes an important contribution to food security in Ghana and West Africa. In an era of rural depopulation and urban stress, the production of pona yam is providing viable livelihoods for hundreds of thousands of people in the rural areas of Ghana. Based on the evidence gathered in this study, it seems reasonable to conclude that GI status for pona yam would enhance its capacity to further increase levels of food security as well as to further increase the number of stable, well-paying jobs in the countryside, especially for young people.

REFERENCES

- Allen, Patricia & Martin Kovach (2000). The capitalist composition of organic: the potential of markets in fulfilling the promise of organic agriculture. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 17, 3, 221-232.
- Barham, Elizabeth (2003). Translating terroir: the global challenge of French AOC labeling. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 19, 1, 127-138.
- Bramley, Cerkia, Estelle Biénabe & Johann Kirsten (2009). The economics of geographical indications: towards a conceptual framework for geographical indication research in developing countries. In *The economics of intellectual property* (pp. 109-145). Geneva: World Intellectual Property Organization.
- Dickson, Kwamina B., George Benneh & R.R. Essah (1988, [1970]). *A new geography of Ghana*. London: Longman.
- Ghana Statistical Service (2014). Poverty Profile in Ghana (2005-2013).
- Giovannucci, Daniele, Tim Josling, William Kerr, Bernard O'Connor & May T. Yeung (2009). *Guide to geographical indications: linking products and their origins*. Geneva: International Trade Centre.
- Government of Ghana (2003). Geographical Indications Act, (ACT 659).
- Hughes, Justin (2009). *Coffee and chocolate – can we help developing country farmers through geographical indications?* Washington: International Intellectual Property Institute.
- Josling, Tim (2006). The war on terroir: geographical indications as a transatlantic trade conflict. *Journal of agricultural economics*, 57, 3, 337-363.
- MiDA, (2010). *Commercial seed yam production*. Accra: The Millennium Development Authority (MIDA) in conjunction with the United States Millennium Challenge Corporation.
- Murray, Douglas L. & Laura T. Raynolds (2000). Alternative trade in bananas: obstacles and opportunities for progressive social change in the global economy. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 17, 1, 65-74.
- Otoo, Emmanuel, Mavis Numafo & Bright O. Asante (2010). Yam production, marketing and utilization. Kumasi: CSIR-Crops Research Institute.
- Polanyi, Karl (1957, [1944]). Societies and economic systems. In *The great transformation* (pp. 43-55). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Ray, Christopher (1998). Culture, intellectual property and territorial rural development. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 38, 1, 3-20.
- Reviron, Sophie; Erik Thevenod-Mottet & Nadja El Benni (Colls.) (2009). Geographical indications: creation and distribution of economic value in developing countries. *National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) Trade Working Paper* 14.
- Vandecandelaere, Emilie, Filippo Arfini, Giovanni Belletti & Andrea Marescotti (2009). *Linking people, places and products: a guide for promoting quality*

linked to geographical origin and sustainable geographical indications. Rome:
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).
Yin, Robert K. (2015). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. Guilford Publications.
New York: Guilford Press.

**TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY
OF SOCIETY AND HISTORY IN THE
GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND**

RECONSTRUCTING SAINT LUCIAN BOYHOOD: A TRANSNATIONAL APPROACH

JANICE COOLS

MISSOURI WESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

In this essay, I use Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus to discuss the cultural patterns of male-female relationships which I experienced and observed growing up in Saint Lucia and its impact on boys.. I use my observations and experiences to discuss gender performance in Saint Lucia and its implications for socializing young boys. I begin by painting a brief picture of the cultural dynamics which inform gender roles and the rhetorical moves made by men and women in Saint Lucia. I then adopt a transnational approach in discussing how Saint Lucian masculinities might be reset so that young boys do not grow up to be the type of men whom I observed and interacted with in my youth, who both women and children feared and tried to escape. To examine the possibilities for change and for re-scripting young boys, I use a Men's Studies approach, focusing mainly on Michael Kimmel's work as setting a framework that can be applied to Saint Lucian boyhood.

Women attempting to leave men, whispers about women being beaten, women coming together to support each other against the men, what my mother saw as a child seemed no different from what I saw as a child growing up in the predominantly Afro-Caribbean Eastern Caribbean island of Saint Lucia. Saint Lucian men felt privileged. This privilege which men firmly embraced was reflected not only in beating women, but also in their lack of responsibility and fidelity. While fidelity was rare even when it was coupled with disrespect, abuse and irresponsibility were not. When the men were not around making demands, the women were left to continue the mothering and fathering of their children.

Many women did not see the men with whom they were involved for days on end, and these women had to figure out how to feed the children, how to get them to school, how to ensure that they had a better future. The men, it seemed, were almost always somewhere else. They could be found at work, in the rumshops, with older boys hanging out on the street corners, or in other women's houses. Men stood on the sidelines. Women responded to this situation by creating networks and support for each other.

Relegating men to outsider status, women, in many ways, reinforced and re-inscribed the status quo of male/female relationships in Saint Lucia. There seemed to be a vi-

cious cycle in which women found support with each other and unwittingly accepted many of the stereotypes and men played them out. This cycle was often reified in how a great number of boys were socialized in Saint Lucia.

Boys and models of manhood

Although this did not happen in mine, in many households chores were divided along gender lines. Boys worked outside cleaning the yard; they were allowed to stay out late, while girls were expected to stay in, to wash the dishes, cook meals, do the laundry and help to take care of the younger children, a situation which Barry Chevannes' research indicates is also typically found in Jamaica and other Caribbean islands. Boys it appeared had more time on their hands and were being reared to be less responsible. This was not the only problem I observed with boys. While some boys in the neighbourhood attended school regularly there were many others who dropped out, appearing to suffer from what Chevannes calls "male alienation from the school system" (p. 66).

Two of the sons of our closest neighbour dropped out of school and started selling drugs, eventually becoming drug addicts themselves. The son of another neighbour followed the same path and dropped out of school as well. Dropping out of school of course meant that it was almost certain that these boys would be unable to secure jobs and would be financially unstable men, in essence perpetuating a cycle. Boys, like men, were often in public spaces, rallying together, socialized not only by their mothers, but also by their peer groups. It was not uncommon to see all the boys and young men in the neighbourhood at various points sitting on the ledge at the side of the road, joking around, in fact creating a male space, one which intimidated girls like me. These boys, it seemed, would grow up to be the poor examples of men that both I and my mother's generation had observed and experienced.

The particularly dissatisfying relationships I saw in St. Lucia were also present when, after completing my high school and my A levels, I went to Jamaica to pursue a Bachelor's degree in literature. Writer Patricia Powell in her essay, *A search for Caribbean masculinities*, provides first-hand experience as she reflects on her observations growing up in Jamaica:

Women were the ones raped, beaten, violated, betrayed, left, and often with their brood of children they raised single-handedly. That's what I saw around me. They were the ones mired in poverty because of their children, they were the ones trying to make ends meet, they were the ones caring for their children, they were the ones working like dogs to hold their families together. They were the ones silenced in church. Silenced in their marriages, silenced in what seemed to me like every important moment of their lives. Who would want that kind of life? I did not want it. (p. 21)

That life that Powell describes was still prevalent in the 1990s and early 2000s and some of it was evident in Dancehall music, a genre of music popularized by Jamaican artistes, played on the radio and dancehalls across Jamaica and throughout the Caribbean. Singers like Elephant Man, in keeping with normative masculinity were proud to let the world know that they had over twenty children. Women were still viewed as commodities, thus for Buju Banton in “Love mi browning” love was tied to his woman being the skin color with the most cache in the society, just short of passing as Caucasian. As Donna Hope points out, the violent masculinity which was a part of the wider Jamaican society was reproduced in Dancehall music.

My experiences navigating Kingston attested to some of what I had heard through song. As I walked through the streets of Papine and Half Way Tree, it was evident that men felt no qualms about trying to touch me as I walked past them. Moving through the streets of Kingston, for whatever short length of time that I did, I would often have to put my headphones on, pretending to listen to music so that I would not be able to hear men calling out their deepest sexual desires to me.

In Saint Lucia (and I suspect in Jamaica too), many young girls and grown women around me believed “men will be men” or “men are dogs”; however, I needed a more nuanced view. I refused to accept that this was all I was to expect from men and more so from the boys, like my brothers who would become the future “men”. I refused to believe too that being abusive and irresponsible was what most men expected of themselves. This deep-felt belief during my teenage years was also informed by my observation of other, albeit, limited models of less abusive male/female relationships.

There were, for example, men who rejected normative masculinity, choosing instead to be responsible and caring husbands and fathers. Our next door neighbour Coco was the paragon of a great father. He doted on his girls. He provided for them. It was evident to me as a young girl that Coco enjoyed being with his girls and enjoyed taking care of them. He could be seen doing the laundry, hanging out clothes, playing with his daughters, going off to work in the morning, combing his daughters’ hair; he loved his family.

My desire for a different set of expectations from men also came from my realization, around age fourteen, that men were capable of emotional engagement. They could get their hearts broken. This was startling to me. The narrative that had been reinforced around me was that men were dogs, horrible creatures who did not feel and did not care and who needed to be taken advantage of before they took advantage of women, as they surely would. I would often hear on the local news, or from the grownups around me, of a man who had might come home to find his girlfriend or wife with another man or who might discover that his wife had someone else who would resort to drinking gramoxone, an herbicide, to deal with his heartache and heartbreak. There were tales of this occurring in Trinidad as well.

From observation to the classroom

It appeared that what I had observed in my everyday experience of masculinity was manifested in the literature classroom. This became most evident when I was in the final year of completing my undergraduate degree in Literature at the University. I took an African American Women Writers course. We read stories like *Our nig*, by Harriet Wilson and *Their eyes were watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. In this course one of the literary frameworks we used to analyze the texts, as one would expect, was feminism. As part of our reading we examined women's lives and focused on showing how women were victims, oppressed by men and the patriarchal system. The following semester we had a companion course, where we focused on African American Male writers, including Ralph Ellison's *Invisible man*, Richard Wright's *Native son* and Charles Chesnutt's *The marrow of tradition*. Although our Professor was a man, when we discussed the writers and characters, they were situated in a very general African American context, but manhood was left out. There was no examination of how masculinity featured in the writers or the characters.

There was a parallel between how men had featured in my life and how men were approached in literature. Feminism as a literary theory, for the most part seemed to be like the women I saw growing up, who, having had enough of men, had retreated and formed their own networks and areas of support, uniting against the common enemy. In addition, the absence of a literary approach to men reminded me of my mother and the other women of her generation. They believed that there was no need to talk about men. There was an assumption that as young girls, we already knew men for what they were, and a conversation was not needed. Literary criticism, it appeared from my literature classes, rested on the same assumption. My observations and experiences in and out of the classroom led to questions and set me on a trajectory to Men's Studies. Were my brothers and the brothers of other young girls in Saint Lucia or Jamaica or the rest of the Caribbean doomed to grow up to be like my father, with too little sense of responsibility and too much sense of privilege? Further, how could issues of masculinity be foregrounded in the literature classroom to begin a conversation about men?

One of the central arguments of Men's Studies is that, as Harry Brod has suggested, we need to stop treating men as the "universal paradigm for human experience" (Harry Boyd qtd in Franklin: 172). Such an approach, they argue, renders masculinity invisible, and rests on the assumption that we already know what the male experience involves. Men's Studies advocates state that leaving masculinity unmarked risks perpetuating the privilege which man hold in many societies because masculinity is not opened up to scrutiny. Kimmel for example, writes that being:

...unaware of the centrality of gender in men's lives only helps to perpetuate inequalities based on gender in American society. This ignorance keeps in place the power of men over women, and the power of some men over other

men, both of which are among the central mechanisms of power in our society (1997: 186).

By interrogating masculinity and making it visible, Men's Studies then, provides a foundation for beginning a conversation about Caribbean boys and who or what is responsible for many young boys in the Caribbean turning into the men from whom my mother's cousin, my aunt, my mother and many other women tried to escape.

As in North America, the dominant discourse on boys in the Caribbean and how they become men is underpinned by the belief that women are at "fault, either as feminists, as mothers, or as both," for the crisis with boys or for what's happening with boys (Kimmel, 2006: 65). Women are seen as responsible for keeping men away from their children (p. 68), and the school experience is seen as feminizing boys (p. 70). Errol Miller, for example, in his 1986 *The marginalisation of the Black male: insights from the teaching profession* and in *Men at risk* (1991) argues that it is women and the system set against Caribbean men and, by, extension, young boys, which has led to a crisis in masculinity in the Caribbean. Having opened masculinity and boyhood to scrutiny makes it possible to see, as Odette Parry has shown, that the "female as villain" thesis" is misplaced in the Caribbean. This is not the main reason why boys embrace dissatisfying forms of masculinity, drop out of school or become criminals. The notion that the absence of a father as the major contributor to the problem has also been dispelled. Instead, again, in the Caribbean as in North America, the major culprit for boys is how normative masculinity is defined and achieved in the countries in which they live (Chevannes; Kimmel).

So how can a country like St. Lucia attempt to redefine normative masculinity so that young boys do not become the dreaded men? One solution which many Caribbean islands have explored is the legal route. During my father's time there were no legal ramifications for a father's lack of financial support for his children. There were men, like my father, who had as many as seventeen and twenty children. Today in many Caribbean islands, fathers can be taken to court and child support is legally mandated. So, my mother would today have had a legal means of getting my father to pay up and, if he had had to do so for 20 children, then responsibility tied to his pocket might have sobered him up. What this also means is that Caribbean boys can now see that there are financial implications for irresponsibility. This may not necessarily change boys' behaviors, but it does highlight some of the consequences for them.

Another legal route has been to rename various Women's Affairs departments to Gender Affairs, for example in Dominica and Barbados (Ellis: 161). Some countries have done so, not only in an attempt to validate men's concerns but to "increase sensitivity to gender issues, to deepen understanding of factors that contribute to gender inequality and discrimination and to incorporate a gender perspective into their work" (Ellis: 161). Putting legal measures in place to include masculinity in gender affairs can only

set a positive model for young boys and it again opens the doors to begin sensitizing young boys and young men to the implications of their masculinity.

But what are the other ways in which Saint Lucian boys can become better men? Apart from the legal system, the school system is a place where boys can be socialized to grow up to be better men. Some have argued that paying attention to boys risks overlooking girls, but, as Kimmel has pointed out, gender is not a zero-sum game (2013: 690). The reality is that catering to boys allows them to see their concerns and experiences reflected in the curriculum and may also be a useful component in helping boys see how their masculinity(ies) are connected to young girls' and women's lives. One way in which this can be achieved is through approaches to class content, for example in the areas of literature and composition, which many young boys in the Caribbean believe are female domains.

Boys have been notably absent in literature classes in higher education (Kimmel; Chevannes) and a contributing factor to this may be that literary theory makes provisions for analyzing women but does not appear to make any for men; thereby further reinforcing the notion shared by many young boys that literature and women's lives are not relevant to their own realities. Caribbean scholar, Michael Bucknor, provides further proof of this notion. He notes how his Jamaican students responded to his attempt to introduce feminism into a high-school class. In an interview he states:

I was formally introduced to feminism as a critical lens. When I tried it out with the boys, they immediately tried to re-contain any gender revolution by claiming that I was teaching a new method to attract girls: "Sir," Charlie said to me, "are you just trying out this 'sensitive to women's feelings thing' as a new strategy to get more girls." He smirked and produced a verbal high-five. (p. 1)

It's clear that these boys saw feminism as something far removed from their realities, to be used only as a tool to make a young boy more attractive to girls. This is perhaps part of the reason why in my A level literature class, there were 16 students and only 2 of them were male. In my undergraduate literature classes at UWI, there was a similar pattern with women far outnumbering men.

What if Bucknor had said to his students, "today we are going to focus on manhood – how it is shaped, how it is represented?" or "We are going to focus on both feminist and masculinist readings of our novels." Including masculinity into a discussion of the novels would most likely draw the boys in, allowing them to feel that they had something to bring to the conversation. Robert Connors' response to discovering Men's Studies is perhaps indicative of how such an approach might be received. Connors writes:

When...I ran into some writings by people now identified with men's studies or the men's movement...I was surprised to find myself much more personally affected by what they were saying. I found an emotional connection in the ways that men's movement writers explored gender issues...the women's

movement gave support for bringing these issues out of the darkness, but the actual discussion that went on in feminism were nearly always about how these issues impinged women's lives" (p. 143).

Bringing masculinity as a lens or framework into literature would undoubtedly engage boys, allowing them to bring their lived realities into their engagement with literary texts, in a way that feminism would not. Like James Riemer states that "[j]ust as the erroneous belief that male experience equals human experience affected literary criticism's treatment of women as characters and authors, so has it restricted our perceptions about men in literature" (p. 289). Wouldn't it be sensible to discuss manhood when focusing on male characters? Discussing Bigger, not as an everyman, but a young black male who, just out of adolescence, experiences both sexual attraction and a level of hate toward Mary surely enriches our experience of *Native son*. Examining the representations of masculinity and experiences of masculinity in *Their eyes were watching God* provides a deeper understanding of the protagonist Janie and the novel. In the Caribbean school system, composition studies serves as another example of an area in which schools can engage boys. When he states that: "Military, political, scientific, or literary figures are treated as if their gender, their masculinity, had nothing to do with their military exploits, policy decisions, scientific experiments, or *writing styles* or subjects" (p. 186) [my emphasis] Kimmel (1997) is suggesting that there may be a male writing style. It is no secret that many Caribbean boys, as do some American boys, see writing as a female domain; for example, Carmeneta Jones observed that male students who participated in a year-long literacy study perceived writing as a feminine task (p. 270). My own conversations with male students in my composition classes and in my dorm in Jamaica when I was a graduate student reinforced this perception. Additionally, in teaching I have found that my male students have more difficulty developing and constructing arguments and often write shorter essays. I found this not only in my classrooms in Jamaica, but would later find it in my classrooms in New Mexico and South Florida. How to address this issue is not a question men's studies can answer, but not attempting to address it will handicap some of these young men and their future prospects.

Integrating gender [masculinity] into the curriculum holds potential not just for literature and composition classes but also for gender studies classes. Leith Dunn, Senior Lecturer/Head at UWI Institute for Gender & Development Studies Mona Unit, for example, states with the creation of:

more courses incorporating issues faced by male students, including parental rights and the role of men in traditionally female-populated occupations [at] UWI, men have emerged from these classes more committed to gender equality and more aware of gender... Men previously uninterested in the subject are increasingly committed to promoting human rights and overturning oppressive practices of female subordination (Dunn, 2015).

Making school more appealing to boys begins to tackle the problem of the irresponsible abusive men which women like my mother had to deal with. If boys are more critically engaged, if they have the skills needed to function more meaningfully in society; if they are able to communicate better they may perhaps be better men.

Nevertheless, the Caribbean is not a place where men can be simply re-socialized at the level of the mind, especially since the reality is that many young boys of the lower classes drop out of school, choosing not to defer one of the dimensions of manhood access to money. How then do we appeal to those boys, like my neighbours' sons who preferred selling drugs to going to school? Or even to those who have attended schools and have gone on to higher education, those who know better and in fact don't do better. The reality as the 2000 UNDP report highlights is that "sexual assault and domestic violence are prevalent regionwide and create high levels of insecurity among women (p. 31). One reason for this, they indicate, is that "... there are entrenched attitudes held by men and women according to which it is justified to use violence in response to violations of expectations about gender roles (Greig et al.: 31).

Men's Studies offers a solution for this in the form of Profeminism, a perspective that acknowledges the violence which men use against women, seeks to find solutions to men's abuse of women and supports feminist causes; however, such an approach is most likely too abstract for men like my father or my uncle or the many other men in Saint Lucia and other Caribbean islands who serve as role models for young boys. Addressing culturally entrenched values is a very difficult task.

What we do know is that women must raise the bar on men; we need to find specific ways by which we can help young boys become the type of men we would like to date. As Kimmel points out, we need to hold boys to a higher standard "shrugging our collective shoulders in resignation and saying "boys will be boys" sets the bar much too low. Boys can do better than that. They can be men" (Kimmel, 2006: 70). Chevannes similarly states that instead of using the word "underachievement" in relation to boys he would say "under-participation" (2005: 64). To ensure our young boys do not grow up to become the "men" who we dread, Caribbean women need to demand more both from boys and from the men they become. We need to raise expectations so that boys and men can demand more of themselves. Until boys realize how dissatisfactory the current model of relationships is to both women and themselves they will grow up to be the men who we dislike.

REFERENCES

- Brod, Harry (1998). To be a man, or not to be a man – that is the feminist question. In Tom Digby (Ed.), *Men doing feminism* (pp. 197-211). New York: Routledge.
- Bucknor, Michael A. (2013). On Caribbean masculinities. *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal*, 10, 2, 1-5.
- Chevannes, Barry (2005). Boys left out. In UNICEF, *Gender achievements and prospects in education*. (pp. 64-67). New York: UNICEF.
- Connors, Robert J. (1996). Teaching and learning as a man. *College English*, 58, 2, 137-157.
- Dunn, Leith (2015). No men, no cry. *VoiceMale:Men@work*. Retrieved February 2017 from <http://voicemalemagazine.org/2015-spring-men-at-work/>
- Ellis, Pat (2003). *Women, gender and development in the Caribbean: reflections and projections*. London: Zed.
- Franklin, Clyde II (1987). Surviving the institutional decimation of black males: causes, consequences, and intervention. In Harry Brod (Ed.), *The making of masculinities: the new men's studies* (pp. 160-176). Boston: Allen & Unwin.
- Greig, Alan, Michael Kimmel & James Lang (2000). Men, masculinities & development: broadening our work towards gender equality. Gender in Development Monograph Series, 10. United Nations Development Programme.
- Hope, Donna (2006). Dons and shottas: performing violent masculinity in dancehall culture. *Social and Economic Studies*, 55, 1/2, 115-131.
- Jones, Carmeneta & Vivette Milson-Whyte (2012). In Charles Bazerman et al. (Eds.), *International advances in writing research: cultures, places, measures* (pp. 267-284). Fort Collins: The WAC Clearing house and Parlor Press.
- Kimmel, Michael (1997). Integrating men into the curriculum. *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy*, 4, 1, 181-195.
- Kimmel, Michael (2006). A war against boys? *Dissent*, 53, 4, 65-70.
- Kimmel, Michael (2013). Is it the end of men, or are men still in power? Yes. *Boston University Law Review*, 93, 689-697.
- Miller, Errol (1994, [1986]). *Marginalization of the Black male: insights from the development of the teaching profession*. Mona: Canoe Press.
- Miller, Errol (1995, [1991]). *Men at risk*. Kingston: Jamaica Publ. House.
- Parry, Odette (2004) Masculinities, myths and educational underachievement: Jamaica, Barbados, and St Vincent and the Grenadines. In Rhoda Reddock (Ed.), *Interrogating Caribbean masculinities: theoretical and empirical analyses* (pp. 167-184). Kingston: University of West Indies Press.
- Powell, Patricia (2013). A search for Caribbean masculinities. *Anthurium: A Caribbean Studies Journal*, 10, 2, 21-29.

Riemer, James D. (1987). Re-reading American literature from a men's studies perspective: some implications. In Harry Brod (Ed.), *The making of masculinities: the new men's studies* (pp.289-300). Boston: Allen & Unwin.

VIEWS OF THE DESCENDANTS OF THE ENSLAVED IN MARTINIQUE ON THE QUESTION OF REPARATIONS

ROSELINE ARMANGE

ÉCOLE PRATIQUE DES HAUTES ÉTUDES (EPHE), PARIS, FRANCE

Nous, descendants des anciens tenants de l'esclavage, nous croyons qu'il est aussi vain de se boucher les yeux que de se battre la poitrine. Un pays emprunte les voies et les moyens que son temps lui permet, et il n'y a nulle manière de revenir sur un parcours historique, sinon par les évidences qu'on y projette et par le partage de ces évidences entre toutes les consciences. (Glissant, 2007: 140)

Introduction

The Caribbean community is a melting pot of complexions, and we are all linked by the past and the present, the know and the unknown. This article was written to help open up critical new spaces in our discourse regarding a complex subject: reparations for slavery. For several decades, the confrontation of the colonial metropolises with their past has given rise to major debates around the demands for reparations, formal apologies and restitution by the descendants of those whom they enslaved and others who suffered injustice at their hands (e.g Barkan, 2001; 2003; Camus, 2006; Thompson, 2002; Ehrenfreund, 2007; Rensmann, 2004). Barkan states that:

The very countries and leaders which shaped the policies of a new internationalism – Clinton, Blair, Chirac and Schroeder – have all apologized and repented for gross historical crimes in their own countries, and for policies which ignored human rights. These actions did not wipe the slate clean and were not total novelty or unprecedented. Yet, the dramatic shift produced a new scale: moral issues came to dominate public attention and political issues, and displayed the willingness of nations to embrace their own guilt. This national self-reflexivity is the new guilt of nations (2000: 2).

The initial political commitments made by the United States government towards the Jewish and Japanese victims of its racist policies toward them during the Second World War encouraged other communities, such as the descendants of the enslaved, to plead for the full acknowledgement of the devastation that the US inflicted through slavery and the slave trade, and to demand full reparation for these past injustices. First steps

towards the process of reparation were made in a number of countries with a history of racialized enslavement, by leaders such as William Clinton in the US in 1997, Jacques Chirac in France in 1998, and Lula Da Silva in Brazil in 2005 (e.g. On 29 July 2008, an “unprecedented” resolution of apology was adopted by the US House of Representatives “for the institution of slavery, and the subsequent Jim Crow laws that for years discriminated against blacks as second-class citizens in American society” (National Public Radio, 2008).

In the context of increasing acknowledgement of these past injustices, in 2001 the United Nations declared at the Durban conference that:

Nous reconnaissons que l'esclavage et la traite des esclaves, en particulier la traite transatlantique, ont été des tragédies effroyables dans l'histoire de l'humanité, en raison non seulement de leur barbarie odieuse, mais encore de leur ampleur, de leur caractère organisé et tout spécialement de la négation de l'essence des victimes; nous reconnaissons également que l'esclavage et la traite des esclaves constituent un crime contre l'humanité et qu'il aurait toujours dû en être ainsi (Nations Unies, 2001: 7).

More than a political debate on the issue of slavery, the Durban conference came to signify the moral obligation of nation states to engage, through transitional measures, acts to open paths of reconciliation and healing.

Even though official recognition of past injustices is a fundamental step in the reparations process, the consistency of the commitment of the French State towards this process remains subject to debate. An official apology is a political act chosen by states to respond to the past injustices committed by previous political regimes (Amstutz, 2005), and constitutes a moral and political act of recognition for both the victims and the nation (Govier & Verwoerd, 2002). Thus, an official apology is a fundamental step in the recognition of truth, as it allows: 1) the rehabilitation of truth in all its authenticity; 2) the reintegration of truth into collective history; and 3) the recognition of *une justice naturelle* as a fundamental part of history within the collective memory (Armange, 2016). This political and moral act requires a certain degree of sincerity, as a “guarantee” of the commitment of the state (Cunningham, 2004), and its obligation to carry out any further actions that result from this undertaking.

Steps toward redress and compensation towards the victims of past injustices are key to the over all reparation process, in the sense that it involves moral questions concerning the notions of fairness and equity (Armange, 2016). As Minow (1998: 117) observes: “Reparations offer money or resources in symbolic redress for violations. Apologies explicitly acknowledge wrongdoing and afford victims the chance both to forgive or to refuse to forgive [...] If unaccompanied by direct and immediate action, such as monetary reparations, official apologies risk seeming meaningless.”

Redress means putting into place a coordinated set of gestures or actions to compensate for, remedy, or alleviate the consequences of actions that have caused grievous harm

and damage. At the level of international justice:

Adequate, effective and prompt reparation is intended to promote justice by redressing gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law. Reparation should be proportional to the gravity of the violations and the harm suffered. In accordance with its domestic laws and international legal obligations, a State shall provide reparation to victims for acts or omissions which can be attributed to the State and constitute gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law (United Nations Human Rights, 2006).

Although the definition of reparations is legally well formulated at the international level, it remains complex and open to debate when it refers to the political positions of each nation state and when it applies to the field of collective and historical injustice. For example, the international definition is confined to individual redress on a case-by-case basis, instead of at the collective level. Therefore, from a national perspective, it seems appropriate referring to redress, as a “political project” (De Greiff, 2006: 5).

French national politics regarding reparations for slavery

In French politics, the issue of reparations for slavery was officially brought to the forefront of the political scene in 2001, with the passage of the Taubira law. In the lead up to this event and beyond, the young voices of the French Caribbean community were increasingly advocating the opening of a space to reconcile the truth from the past to the present. In Paris in 1998 a long march of more than 40,000 people was organized by several associations from the Caribbean diaspora. During the pre-Taubira law period, an implicit and progressive reintegration of the memory of slavery and the slave trade began to be engaged in public spaces. Forty-two museums were to be found in Martinique in 2001, seven times more than in 1986 (Chivallon, 2006 ; Hourcade, 2013). This increase which can be attributed in part to the project launched in 1994 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to ensure universal and common awareness of histories, especially those which have suffered erasure. The Taubira law broke the national silence concerning the French empire’s complex history of injustices, by resuscitating the voices of the enslaved and their descendants from the past, present and future. The result has been an awakening in French overseas departments such as Martinique from a long period of political amnesia and denial concerning the traumatic history of slavery and the slave trade. This “unparalleled” law, legitimated the recognition of slavery as a crime against humanity and helped to consolidate “the emergence of a black political consciousness” (Camus, 2006).

Before 2001, the true story of slavery was excluded from official narratives in France. Until 1946, Martinique was a colony of France, and, for most of its history since the French established themselves on the island in the 1600s, the French empire exploited slave labor there. French historians tell us that *La France* was one of several countries

dominating and coordinating the Transatlantic Slave Trade between Africa and the Caribbean and, while it is true that *La France* abolished slavery in 1848, no official undertaking was made to begin to reconcile the French people with this history until the 1980s. Not only did the Taubira law give national recognition to slave trafficking and slavery as crimes against humanity (Camus, 2006; Löytömäki, 2014). The law also stressed the role of historians in establishing the truth about slavery. This means that the state has the responsibility for integrating conscious scholarly work that is produced about slavery into the national curriculum, so that it can have an impact on what students learn in school. The law also enabled appeals for justice by the descendants of the enslaved, to the extent that they are allowed to prosecute any persons who deny the official nature of slavery in France. This law has thus been considered one of the first steps in the reparations process in France.

In terms of rectifying past injustices, however, there have been some significant challenges since 2001. The Taubira law was offset in 2005 by *la loi tendant à la reconnaissance de la nation et la contribution nationale en faveur des rapatriés*. Article 4 of this new law exalted French colonial history; it promoted colonialism by painting French colonists in a positive light. According to this new law, colonists brought economic and social development throughout the French empire (Camus, 2006; Löytömäki, 2012). Authors of this new law were determined to challenge the Taubira law, so their solution was to promote the benefits of colonialism in the school curriculum.

304 The descendants of the enslaved who live in the French Caribbean islands such as Martinique continue to question the French government's policies as they relate to slavery and reparations. It is important to mention that after the emancipation of French slaves in 1848, former slave owners received compensation for the loss of their slaves. This was not the case for the newly freed slaves. In 2018, nearly two decades since official national recognition of slavery as a crime against humanity, the national discourse about reparations for past injustices still remains problematic and complex, in no small way because of the racial question that lies at its heart. Because of the acknowledgement of the ethno-racial nature of the genocide perpetrated by Germany against the Jews and the Roma during the Second World War, transatlantic slavery can also be legitimately linked not only to crimes against humanity in general, but also to the "the terrible consequences of racial prejudice" (Ehrenfreund, 2007: 131), as a fundamental and additional factor for reparations. In the United States, racial prejudice against the descendants of the enslaved has persisted since the abolition of slavery to the present day, preventing the integration of African-Americans in the social, economic and political spheres. Approximately half of the citizens of Brazil are African descended, and their socio-economic conditions remain extremely precarious (Saillant, 2009).

In France, "*le gouvernement français a toujours connu une certaine réticence à accepter le rôle de la dimension raciale dans la construction de la République*" (Vergès, 2010: 95). The question of race has given rise to numerous debates on the question of

its validity as a concept to be included in the French constitution, with reference to Eurocentric legislation beginning with *Le Code Noir* (1685). In 2002, a petition to remove the term of “race” from the constitution was submitted to the government (Calixte, 2007) and in 2013 that request led to the approval by the National Assembly of a proposal to definitely remove the term “race” from article 1, of 1958 of the French Constitution, all in the name of the “evolution” of national political positions based on a republican ideology promoting an uni-cultural and “single-colored” nation consciousness (Le Monde, 2013). But this suppression of the term “race” risks the erasure of a history of racially-based injustices, and a denial of continued racism in France (Calixte, 2007; Fassin, 2002), potentially negating some of the first official steps made by the French government “to establish a first form of symbolic recognition of the gravity of the facts and the suffering caused by slavery” (Hourcade, 2013: 8).

The French overseas départements such as Martinique are still characterized by a racially-based hierarchical structure resulting from colonization and slavery, and racial, social and legal inequalities have never ceased to widen the gaps between the descendants of European owners of slaves (called *békés*), the descendants of mestizos or free colored people (called *gens de couleur libres*), and the descendants of African slaves (Larcher, 2009). While the transition from the status of colony to that of French overseas department in 1946 somewhat reduced the social and economic differences between the metropole and the colonies in areas such as health, education, and social assistance, the racially based inequalities of the past persist and, in some respects, have increased.

At the national level, the debate concerning the reparation process is still treated with undue sensitivity and political correctness toward the more reactionary and racist elements in France. This was recently exposed in the 2016 report of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance which strongly recommended that France develop an adequate response to the complaints of the descendants of the enslaved regarding the non-existence of public policy measures designed to ensure the continuity of the reparations process undertaken since the Taubira law.

Functional Measurement Theory and a survey on the question of reparations

Research regarding public opinion about reparations for slavery are rare. Three major studies conducted in the United States (Campo et al., 2004; Craemer, 2009; Dawson & Popoff, 2004) reveal how the US population (African descended, European descended and others) views reparations, probing opinions on questions such as: 1) Should there be an official apology for slavery and the slave trade? 2) Is it necessary to develop a program of reparations for slavery and the slave trade? 3) What types of reparations are called for? and 4) Who is responsible for making the reparations? (Armange, 2016).

In the present study, I use Functional Measurement Theory (MFT) to assess how descendants of the enslaved perceive and assess reparations policies undertaken in French politics. Developed in the field of psychology by Anderson (1996; 2008; 2013), MFT

has proved to be an effective method for determining the processes used by people in the formulation of their attitudes. MFT allows us to objectively quantify the subjective processes involved in decision-making, judgment and opinion. The application of the MFT to the field of political ethics has been increasing in recent years, where it has been used to explore:

a large set of moral issues, including blame, punishment, and legal judgment (e.g. Hommers, 1988); deserving, equity, and fairness/unfairness (e.g. Farkas & Anderson, 1979); lies and deceit; and gratitude and forgiveness (e.g. Girard & Mullet, 1997) [...] a theory of human judgment in daily life -a convenient tool for examining the way people intuitively balance the pros and the cons in such circumstances when determining whether it is fair to attribute guilt to offspring of perpetrators of a genocide; whether it is, in time of civil war, a betrayal to forgive the perpetrators of violence against family members; or whether rape is so disgusting that serial rapists deserve the death penalty (Mullet et al., 2016: 3-4).

The present research has focused on the opinions of descendants of the enslaved in order to amplify the voices of this disenfranchised people in France; voices who are part of African diasporic history; voices of those whose families have been directly impacted by slavery in Martinique. In France, there is no scientific research that incorporates race (ethnicity) as a significant sociodemographic element in the expression of opinion. Indeed, French opinion polls integrating “the racial origin of respondents” are strictly forbidden, privileging “*l’invisibilité statistique [...] des descendants d’immigrés, originaires des DOM*” [the statistical invisibility of the descendants of immigrants, the citizens of the overseas departments...] (Bataille et al., 2008: 68). The French law of 6 January 1978: “Prohibits the collection or processing of personal data which reveal, directly or indirectly, racial or ethnic origins, political, philosophical or religious opinions or trade union membership, or relating to health or sex life” (Legifrance, 2017). However, “*Une simple déclaration impliquant des statistiques supposées ne constitue donc pas en soi un délit; il faut avoir constitué un fichier recensant ces données sensibles*” (Le Monde, 2015). In April 2013, the first opinion poll on reparations was conducted for the Representative Council of Black Associations of France (or CRAN) by the French Institute of Public Opinion (or FIPO), in contrast to the United States, where almost sixteen opinion polls were conducted between 1997 and 2002 (Craemer, 2009) on the issue (Armange, 2016).

In the present study, 298 survey questionnaires were collected from people who self-identified as descendants of the enslaved in Martinique. The study selected an epistemological framework that was ethical in its approach by creating an experimental protocol using the Functional Measurement Theory and by creating an ethical protocol for collecting the data, ensuring the anonymity of each participant. Participants were selected

according to several criteria, such as age (minimum 18 years old), declaring oneself to be a descendant of the enslaved, being able to read French (which is the official language of Martinique, although Creole is often spoken for daily communication). Verbal consent was obtained from each participant. Participants were presented with narratives, describing different reparations policies modeled on international cases involving collective past injustices. Participants were asked to rate the acceptability of each policy according to four factors:

- (1) The participant's perceived level of economic integration with two modalities: not well integrated vs. well integrated
- (2) The participant's perceived level of social integration with two modalities: not well integrated vs. well integrated
- (3) The participant's preferred future policy concerning past colonization and slavery on the island with five possible modalities: 1) a policy of full acknowledgment by the government for the injuries and formal apologies offered by the official leader to the victims of slavery; 2) a policy of material compensation for the victims of slavery without acknowledgment by the government of the injuries of slavery and without formal apologies; 3) a policy integrating both (1) and (2); 4) a policy of total amnesia; and 5) a policy of exaltation of the colonial past and an official discourse highlighting some "positive" contributions of the former colonists
- (4) The participant's estimation of the percentage of descendants of the enslaved who are currently living on the island and thus potentially impacted by the policy (20% vs.1%)

307

The responses concerning factor (3) above concerning preferred policy are shown in Figure 1 (Armange, 2016):

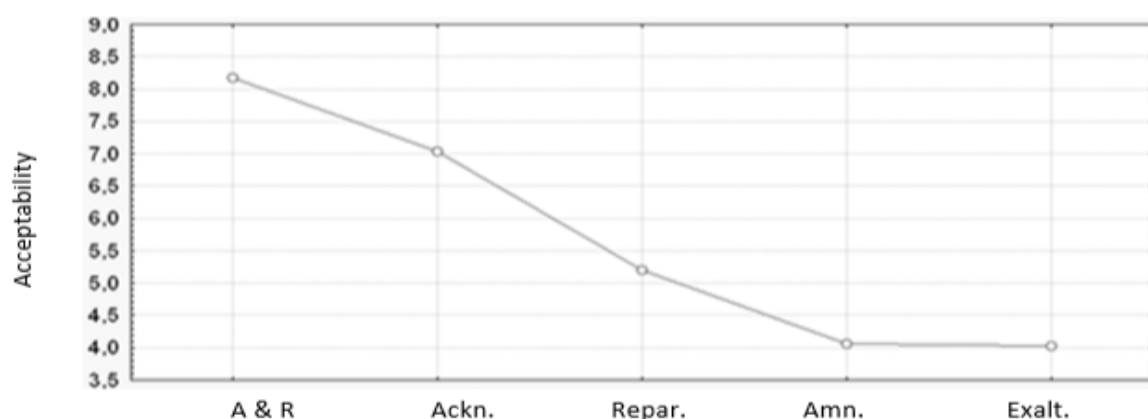


Figure 1 Levels of acceptability of national policy (A & R = Acknowledgment and reparations; Ackn.= Acknowledgment without reparations; Repar. = Reparations without acknowledgment; Amn. = Political Amnesia; and Exalt. = Exaltation of the colonial past)

Figure 1 demonstrates that the plurality of the descendants of the enslaved in Martinique in the sample prefer a comprehensive policy that includes full recognition of and full reparations for the injustices of slavery, and although a formal apology for past offenses is considered important, it remains insufficient (Amstutz, 2005). These results were consistent with the findings of Dawson and Popoff in 2004 in the US, which indicated that more than two-thirds of African Americans believe that the US state should fully acknowledge slavery as a crime against humanity and commit itself to concrete reparations for that injustice. The results of Craemer's (2009) research with African Americans are also in agreement with those obtained in the present study: African Americans tend to support policies that integrate both a full acknowledgement of the harm of slavery, a formal apology by the state and the establishment of a reparations process. Figure 1 also indicates that a policy of full acknowledgement for the harm of slavery and formal apologies by the official leader of the government to the victims of slavery without reparations is the second most acceptable policy option, while a compensation policy without official acknowledgement by the state is the third most acceptable choice. The substantial difference in the level of acceptance between these two modalities demonstrates the importance of an official apology as a primary element in the process of reparation. This finding is consistent with the research of Wolfe in 2014 concerning the way that offended populations judge the redress process for collective harm, which suggests that in order to achieve a sense of full reparation, the state must make formal apologies in first place (p. 286). Thus, both the descendants of the enslaved in both Martinique and the US seem to be of the opinion that the provision of material compensation remains a meaningless act without an apology by the perpetrators of the injustice of slavery.

Another similarity of the present findings with those of Wolfe (2014) is the inacceptability, in descending order, of policies that promote complete amnesia or the exaltation of the colonial past, including any official discourse highlighting some "positive" contribution of the former colonists. In sum, for the descendants of the enslaved in Martinique show a clear preference for policies that are those based on attitudes of profound responsibility and repentance, and a clear rejection of policies based on attitudes of denial, non-sincerity or justifications (Halabi, Nadler & Dovidio, 2012; Philpot & Horsney, 2008 ; Wohl et al., 2011; Zebel et al., 2008; Giner-Sorolla et al., 2008).

A more detailed analysis of the responses in the present study is shown in Figure 2 (e.g., Arrange & Mullet, 2016; Mullet et al., 2016):

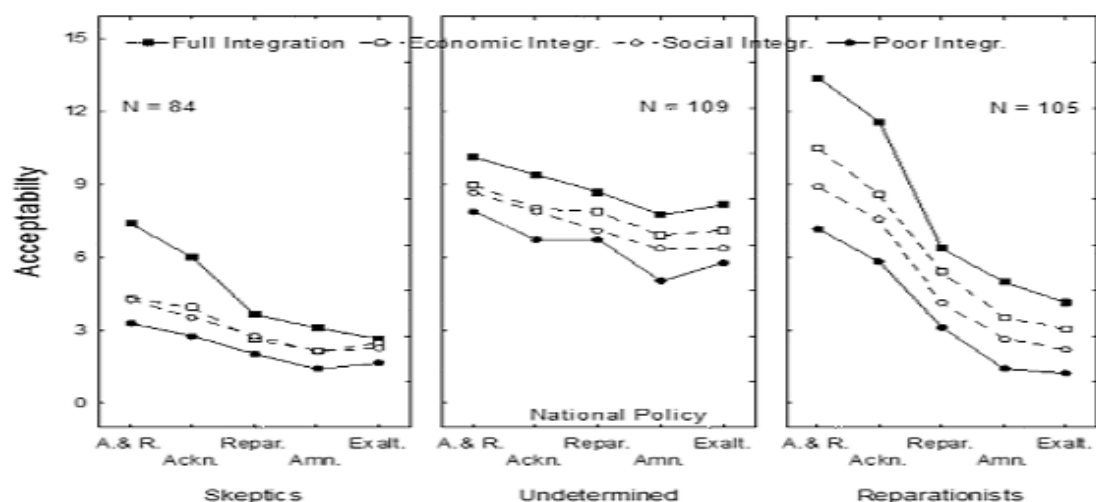


Figure 2 Detailed analysis of levels of acceptability of national policy (A & R = Acknowledgment and reparations; Ackn.= Acknowledgment without reparations; Repar. = Reparations without acknowledgment; Amn. = Political Amnesia; and Exalt. = Exaltation of the colonial past)

Figure 2 indicates interesting patterns in the opinions of the descendants of the enslaved in our Martinican sample. In the first instance, there is a consistent correlation between the level of social and economic integration and strength and nature of their responses: the more socially and economically integrated the participant, the stronger their feelings that the state can and must act to redress past injustices, while the less socially and economically integrated the participant, the weaker their feelings that the state might act to redress past injustices. These correlations interact in important ways with patterns in the data that effectively divide the participants into the three clusters depicted in Figure 2: an initial cluster of 84 respondents designated as “Skeptics”, a second cluster of 109 respondents designated as “Undetermined”, and a third cluster of 105 respondents designated as “Reparationists”. Membership in these three clusters can to some extent be correlated with three socio-demographic variables, namely: education, religious commitment, and historical memory of slavery in one’s family.

The “Undetermined” group made up 37% of the sample. These participants are called “Undetermined” because of the difficulty they experience in clearly expressing their personal views on this complex subject. Several possible reasons for this were suggested by their responses, including the fear of publicly expressing an opinion and/or the perception of a lack of information and knowledge on the issue (Johnston Conover, Searing & Crewe, 2002). The “Undetermined” cluster represented the majority of people in the sample who reported having strong religious beliefs, those with the least amount of formal schooling in the French education system; and those for whom the memory of slavery is not mentioned in the family. The “Reparationists” cluster accounted for 35% of the sample and, as their name suggests, their position on national policies in regard to reparation for slavery was strong and definitive. The “Reparationists” reported the

lowest levels of religious commitment in the sample and had the highest level of education in the French system, with 44 % of them holding at least a Master's degree. The "Skeptics" cluster accounted for 28 % of the participants. According to the results, no reparation policies were acceptable to them. This means that for them, there is no way to heal the injustices of slavery.

Slavery and the Atlantic slave trade are among the most massive and egregious crimes against humanity in the history of the world, involving tens of millions of enslaved captives and hundreds of millions of their descendants who continue to live in communities severely damaged by their poisonous legacy. The economic, social and racial footprints that slavery and the slave trade have left on our contemporary world make it imperative for the French state to harmonize its political positions and actions with the concerns and needs of the descendants of the enslaved in Martinique and others of its overseas departments. Instead of positioning themselves as marginalized victims, Martinicans are ready to engage in the debates necessary to define concrete public policy regarding reparations, in accordance with the recommendations put forward by the United Nations since the opening of the International Decade of People of African Descent in 2015, as well as with the recommendations of the International Scientific Committee of the United Nations to strengthen the Durban declaration in the specific area of reparations (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015).

REFERENCES

- Amstutz, Mark R. (2005). *The healing of nations: the promise and limits of political forgiveness*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Anderson, Norman H. (1996). *A functional theory of cognition*. Mahwah: Erlbaum.
- Anderson, Norman H. (2008). *Unified social cognition*. New York: Psychology Press.
- Anderson, Norman H. (2013). *Moral science*. Retrieved Dec 2015 from http://functionalmeasurement.vub.ac.be/publications/Moral_Science.pdf
- Armange, Roseline (2016). *Point de vue des descendants d'esclaves concernant les politiques nationales de réparations : une perspective martiniquaise*. Retrieved from *Annuaire de l'École pratique des hautes études (EPHE), Section des sciences religieuses*. (Accession No. 2016EPHE5054).
- Armange, Roseline & Etienne Mullet (2016). Slave descendants' views regarding national policies on reparations: a Martinican perspective. *Social Science Information*, 55, 4, 511-530.
- Barkan, Elazar (2001, [2000]). *The guilt of nations: restitution and negotiating historical injustices*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Barkan, Elazar (2003). Restitution and amending historical injustices in international morality. In John Torpey (Ed.), *Politics and the past: on repairing historical injustices* (pp. 91-102). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

- Bataille, Philippe, Alban Bensa, Daniel Borrillo et al. (2008). Point de vue: statistiques contre discriminations. *French Politics, Culture & Society*, 26, 1, 67-70.
- Campo, Shelly, Teresa Mastin & M. Somjen Frazer (2004). Predicting and explaining public opinion regarding U.S. slavery reparations. *The Howard Journal of Communications*, 15, 2, 115-130.
- Calixte, Sylvie (2007). La loi reconnaissant la traite négrière et l'esclavage des noirs dans les possessions françaises d'outre-mer en tant que crime contre l'humanité. *Pouvoir dans la Caraïbe*, 15, 198-248.
- Camus, Jean-Yves (2006). The commemoration of slavery in France and the emergence of a black political consciousness. *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms*, 11, 6, 647-655.
- Chivallon, Christine (2006). Rendre visible l'esclavage: muséographie et hiatus de la mémoire aux Antilles françaises. *L'homme*, 180, 7-41.
- Craemer, Thomas (2009). Framing reparations. *Policy Studies Journal*, 37, 2, 275-298.
- Cunningham, Michael (2004). Prisoners of the Japanese and the Politics of Apology: a battle over history and memory. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 39, 4, 561-574.
- Dawson, Michael. C & Rovana Popoff (2004). Reparations: justice and greed in Black and White. *Du Bois Review*, 1, 1, 47-91.
- De Greiff, Pablo (2006). Introduction – Repairing the past: compensation for victims of human rights violations. In Pablo De Greiff (Ed.), *The handbook of reparations* (pp.1-17). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ehrenfreund, Norbert (2007). *The Nuremberg legacy: how the Nazi war crimes trials changed the course of history*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Farkas, Arthur J. & Norman H. Anderson (1979). Multidimensional input in equity theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37, 879-896.
- Fassin, Didier (2002). L'invention française de la discrimination. *Revue Française de Science Politique*, 4, 52, 403-423.
- Girard, Michèle & Etienne Mullet (1997). Forgiveness in adolescents, middle-aged, and older adults. *Journal of Adult Development*, 4, 4, 209-220.
- Glissant, Edouard (1997, [1981]). *Le discours antillais*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Govier, Trudy & Wilhelm Verwoerd (2002). The promise and pitfalls of apology. *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 33, 1, 67-82.
- Halabi, Samer, Arie Nadler & John F. Dovidio (2012). Positive responses to intergroup assistance: the role of apology and trust. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 16, 4, 395-411.
- Hommers, Wilfried (1988). Averaging and fractionizing of fault: implicit psychological theories of legal thought on sentencing and liability. In Peter J. van Koppen, Dick J. Hessing & Grat van den Heuvel (Eds.), *Lawyers on psychology and psychologists on law* (pp. 67-82). Amsterdam : Swets & Zeitlinger.

- Hourcade, Renaud (2013). L'esclavage dans la mémoire nationale française: cadre et enjeux d'une politique mémorielle en mutation. *Droit & Cultures*, 66, 71-86.
- Johnston Conover, Pamela, Donald D. Searing & Ivor M. Crewe (2002). The deliberative potential of political discussion. *British Journal of Political Science*, 32, 1, 21-62.
- Larcher, Sylviane (2009). *Les Antilles françaises ou les vestiges de l'Empire? Les aléas d'une citoyenneté sociale outre-mer*. Retrieved Oct 2015 from <http://www.lavie-desidees.fr/Les-Antilles-francaises-ou-les.html>
- Legifrance (2017). Loi n° 78-17 du 6 janvier 1978 relative à l'informatique, aux fichiers et aux libertés. Retrieved April 2017 from <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000886460>
- Le Monde (2013). L'assemblée nationale supprime le mot "race" de la législation. Retrieved Feb. 2016 from http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2013/05/16/l-assemblee-nationale-supprime-le-mot-race-de-la-legislation_3272514_823448.html
- Le Monde (2015). Quatre questions sur les statistiques ethniques. Retrieved April 2017 from http://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2015/05/06/quatre-questions-sur-les-statistiques-ethniques_4628874_4355770.html
- Löytömäki, Stiina (2012). Law and memory: the politics of victimhood. *Griffith Law Review* 21, 1, 1-22.
- Minow, Martha (1998). *Between vengeance and forgiveness: facing history after genocide and mass violence*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Mullet, Etienne, Wilson López López, Lonzozou Kpanake et al. (2016). Functional measurement in the field of Ethics in Politics. *Universitas Psychologica*, 15, 3.
- National Public Radio (2008). Congress apologizes for slavery, Jim Crow. Retrieved April 2017 from <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=93059465>
- Nations Unies (2001). Conférence mondiale contre le racisme, la discrimination raciale, la xénophobie et l'intolérance qui y est associée. Retrieved Jan. 2016 from http://www.un.org/french/WCAR/durban_fr.pdf
- Philpot, Catherine R. & Matthew J. Horsney (2008). What happens when groups say sorry: the effect of intergroup apologies on their recipients. *The Society for Personality and Social Psychology*, 34, 4, 474-487.
- Rensmann, Lars (2004). Collective guilt, national identity, and political processes in contemporary Germany. In Nyla R. Branscombe & Bertjan Doosje (Eds.), *Collective guilt: international perspectives* (pp.169-190). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Saillant, Francine (2009). Droit, citoyenneté et réparations des torts du passé de l'esclavage: perspectives du mouvement noir au Brésil. *Anthropologie & Sociétés*, 33, 2, 141-165.

- Thompson, Janna (2002). *Taking responsibility for the past: reparation and historical injustice*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (2015). Slave Route Project: Resistance, Liberty, Heritage. Meeting of the International Scientific Committee (ISC). Retrieved April 2017 from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002443/244371E.pdf>
- United Nations Human Rights (2005). Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law. Retrieved April 2017 from <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/RemedyAndReparation.aspx>
- United Nations Human Rights (2006). Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 2005. 60/147. Basic principles and guidelines on the right to a remedy and reparation for victims of gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law. Retrieved Jan. 2016 from http://www.un.org/fr/documents/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/60/147
- Vergès, Françoise (2010). There are no Blacks in France: Fanonian discourse, ‘the dark night of slavery’ and the French civilizing mission reconsidered. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 27, 7/8, 91-111.
- Vergès, Françoise (2013). La «ligne de couleur». Esclavage et racisme colonial et post-colonial. In Sylvie Laurent & Thierry Leclère (Eds.), *De quelle couleur sont les blancs?* (pp. 76-87) Paris: La Découverte.
- Wohl, Michael J. A., Matthew J Horsney & Catherine R. Philpot (2011). A critical review of official public apologies: aims, pitfalls, and a staircase model of effectiveness. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, 5, 1, 70-100.
- Wolfe, Stephanie (2014). *The politics of reparations and apologies*. New York: Springer.
- Zebel, Seven, Anja Zimmermann, G.Tendayi Viki & Bertjan Doosje (2008). Dehumanization and guilt as distinct but related predictors of support for reparations. *International Society of Political Psychology*, 29, 2, 193-219.

THE DANISH WEST INDIES: PATERNALISM AND POVERTY¹

ELIZABETH REZENDE

UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, ST. CROIX CAMPUS

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, CHRISTIANSTED HISTORICAL SITE

Introduction

On March 31, 1917, US President Woodrow Wilson's Secretary of State, Robert Lansing handed a check for \$25,000,000 to be paid in gold coin to the Danish ambassador, Constantin Brun, as the purchase price for the Danish West Indies. The civil and political rights of the new US territory's inhabitants, which were not part of the treaty formalizing the transfer, were left to the US Congress. Their citizenship was unclear, and the health and social services of the people were the most pressing issues the US Naval officers encountered when they took over shortly after the transfer ceremony.

In 1917, Rear Admiral James Oliver, the territory's first naval governor, in his *Annual Report of the Governor of the Virgin Islands to the President of the United States* (August 1917), was most concerned with the lack of clean running water, the collection of night soil and the condition of the roads. He stated that the people of the islands were in a state of poverty, malnutrition, and unemployment. Six years later in 1923, Governor Captain Henry Hough attempted to identify the root cause of the problem: "Frequent drought, irregular rainfall make St. Croix's agricultural (effort) difficult." The climatic and physical conditions of the land negatively impacted the yield of the sugar cane, and thus determined the wages paid and the number of laborers motivated to cut the cane. Without adequate wages and steady employment, laborers lacked income to provide their families with food and shelter: Thus, the high rate of disease and malnutrition. Most alarmingly, there was a high incidence of infant mortality. A report by Dr. Hindhede quoted by Lewis, stated that there was a 64 per cent rate of infantile deaths between the ages of 1-5 years (Lewis, 1972: 38).

With the lack of employment, migration into the towns caused dense residential living conditions. After the Emancipation of 1848 and the Fireburn revolt of 1878, laborers and their families migrated from the country to the towns, to live with relatives and friends in the long row outbuildings in the courtyards of town houses. Each long row had at least three one-room units, each of which housed a family. In St. Croix, these

¹ Portions of this article have appeared in the *Virgin Islands Daily News*.

dire physical and social conditions were persistent during both the Danish and the American Naval periods of rule.

In the traditional three-tiered slave society in the Caribbean, inhabitants of each class had a set occupation and their family members were kept firmly on their rung by a series of stringent laws. There was little possibility for advancement. Owners of the estates oversaw the entire self-contained system. They selected overseers to hire drivers who kept the enslaved on task in the fields. After the 1733 revolt in St. John, legislation by Governor Philip Gardelin (1732-1736) put into place a set of draconian punishments for infractions against the plantation system: acts of stealing, running away, or raising a hand to a white person were some of the infractions for which punishment was severe. The enslaved performed back-breaking work from sunup to sundown, for which they received no wages, were given meager housing, received rations of food and clothing, were allowed the use of provision grounds and sometimes received a meager Christmas gift (Stick: 2017). Owners of enslaved persons were mandated by law to care for them throughout their bondage. Thus, the general manumitting of the old and sickly, leaving them to be vagrant on the streets was strictly forbidden.

At Emancipation in 1848, the newly free persons who had organized in front of Fort Frederik were sent back by the soldiers to the plantations to work for another 30 years under a contract system. While the contract limited the hours and days of work for the laborers, it continued to furnish housing. However, food and clothing allowances and medical attention were now the responsibility of the worker. In gaining greater civil rights, the formerly enslaved had lost key economic rights “and the employers did not increase the price of labor appreciably” (Lewis: 112). Thirty years later in the Fireburn of 1878, the laborers rebelled against wages too low for survival and poor working conditions.

The middle class emerged from relationships between members of the planter class and the slave population. In St. Croix, once freed, formerly enslaved African descended people were allowed to live in the urban Free Guts neighborhoods adjacent to the gutters that drain the town, and their everyday lives were limited by a multitude of prohibitive ordinances (Hall, 1992: 148). The general rule was that when they were manumitted, the owner had to assure the authorities that the newly-freed were engaged in meaningful employment. The majority of the free-colored class preferred to emulate the planter class in dress and customs, “with lavish social display and without radical thought” (on the civil and political aspects of their lives) (Lewis: 29).

Migration, Poverty and Public Assistance

Migration to the towns meant that former field laborers had to double up with relatives residing in marginal neighborhoods, and to continue earning low wages as day laborers, porters, water carriers, night soil collectors, washers, domestics, etc. The census of 1880 showed large numbers of residents in Christiansted town, especially in the Water Gut

and Free Gut neighborhoods, seeking shelter in passageways and courtyards of already overcrowded row houses. Despite these conditions, moving into town gave former field laborers a sense of “vigorous individualism and self-confidence, well-known components of urbanized life-styles” (Lewis: 28).

The colonial administration created the earliest public poor funds, using a Poor Law based on those of the towns of Denmark. Poor funds were derived from taxing liquor sales at shops and taverns and levying fines for disorderly conduct among patrons of those establishments. From these taxes and fines, the colonial government’s Poor Commission comprised of police masters and church wardens apportioned poor funds to the four main churches (Lutheran, Anglican, Moravian and Roman Catholic) to disperse (Temporary Regulations for Poor-law Authorities in St. Croix 1825). Churches, therefore, were the first to take on the burden of the large numbers of poor people. Ministries which had primarily focused on European descended people in need, now realized that both their free colored and enslaved congregants had fallen through cracks of the colonial administration’s system and now numbered among the needy.

The records of the St. John’s Anglican Church, Christiansted vestry, a group of church members elected to represent the congregation, attest to this group’s allocation of small amounts of money to the needy. The church received a total of approximately \$800 per year (allotted quarterly) from the government’s collection of taxes and fines, deposited in the public Poor Commission Fund (St. John’s Vestry Records 1817-1825). In addition, the Anglican Church took up collections for the poor during its Sunday services. Whatever the source of the funding, the vestries in turn were to determine who among their congregants were most needy. Based on their direct knowledge of their parishioners, the vestry made decisions regarding the distribution of funds.

In the St. John’s Anglican Church vestry records, it was initially the impoverished European descended members of the congregation who were to be identified and supported. These individuals typically were widows or widowers without children who had lost their estates or their businesses due to indebtedness and had found themselves living with relatives and without the means of supporting themselves. One such church member was Mrs. Frances Stridiron, wife of an East End estate owner, J.D. Stridiron, with two marginal estates: Lowry Hill and Petronella, which together had over 100 enslaved Africans (*Statistics Regarding Sugar Production*, Nos. 35 and 4n). Upon the estate owner’s death, his two brothers sold the property to pay off his debts, and Mrs. Stridiron found herself homeless, as her in-laws considered that they were not legally obligated to support her. Having no other option, Mrs. Stridiron turned to her former enslaved domestic, Mary Zidska, whom she had freed many years before. Mary allowed Mrs. Stridiron to live with her and her husband, John Zidska, a free-colored master tailor who operated a sewing shop at Providence House in Estate Richmond and employed several free-colored tailors and seamstresses (Census 1841). The small amount of money Mrs.

Stridiron received from the St. John's Church went to cover her expenses in the Zidska household.

Later, around 1825, a second set of names was to be found; that of the needy free colored congregants of the St. John's Church. Among this group were widows or widowers without children, who were unable to support themselves. They received grants from the vestry, but less funding than the initial group of European descended church members. A final group of recipients, whose names were not even written on a formal list, was composed of the few needy enslaved church members who were given some financial consideration. The money allotted to them was not given to them directly, but instead it was given to the clerk of the church who passed it on to them.

Unfortunately, there was not enough money to satisfy the needs of all who required assistance. To stretch the funds so that all of the less fortunate members of the congregation could get something, the vestry juggled its monthly distributions. Thus, a person who might receive \$1.00 one month would have to do with \$0.50 the following month (Vestry Records). In her essay examining philanthropy in 19th century Barbados, Millington quotes Anthony Brundage who noted that "close cooperation by the local poor law authorities and charitable organizations was a hallmark of the early Victorian period" (Millington: 158).

A custom that seemed to be particular to the Danes, since it has not been mentioned in the literature pertaining to the other colonial powers in the Caribbean, was that of the collecting of alms while upper class invitees were participating in celebrations for the royal family, usually hosted by the Governor. Births, weddings, anniversaries and birthdays of the royal family were marked annually by the governor and his cabinet and were celebrated either with a toast or with a festive party. In whatever manner the event was celebrated, a collection was routinely taken up among the participants for the express purpose of giving to the poor. Each donor's name and the amount contributed was recorded and the money was then deposited in the local government treasury. Once the interest had accrued on the principal, portions of the interest (called legacies) were announced periodically in the newspaper, so that church wardens might apply for sums to be distributed to their designated recipients.

On St. Thomas, the Governor's wife and on St. Croix, the head judge's wife served as chairpersons of the local Ladies Association for the Indigent, Sick and Infirm. This organization was started in 1825 in England (Millington: 158), and spread first to the British and then to the Danish Caribbean islands. "Through the holding of a number of tambolas, cantanas, and other socials, the women collected funds which were distributed to churches of different denominations" (Sixto, 2017: 146).

From the establishment of St. Croix as a Danish colony in 1755 until 1800, the State of Denmark established and developed "a complete health service designed after the health service in Denmark fundamentally designed to take care of the needs of the Euro-Caribbean inhabitants" (Thode Jensen, 2012: 56). Thus, a hierarchy of Danish-trained

doctors worked primarily in the towns. There were military doctors and surgeons in the barracks for the enlisted men and officers. Doctors were assigned to the town's military-turned-communal hospitals, which admitted both military men and civilians in life-threatening cases. In addition, there were Danish-trained nurses to assist civilians.

In the country, however, each plantation enlisted its own physician (many times shared with neighboring plantations). These doctors were "government-authorized in private practice" (Thode Jensen: 56). Generally, these professionals had received their medical degrees from schools in England and Scotland. They were paid to be on call when needed. Throughout the Danish regime, the few medical personnel who trained in the North America, such as David Canegata, who had returned after having graduated from Mc Gill University in Canada in 1904, could not practice medicine in the Danish West Indies without traveling to Denmark to take the Danish medical examination. Finally, there were two royally-appointed and trained midwives sent out to serve the Danes and other European descended women in the towns.

There was a health commission responsible for managing periods of quarantine and a system for vaccinating against small pox. Supervising this hierarchy of medical personnel was a royally-appointed Landfysikus (head physician), who reported periodically to the health commission and sent annual reports to Copenhagen. Besides overseeing the work of the doctors and nurses, he was to monitor the quality of food and water and the sanitation of the district he supervised (Thode Jensen: 57). In Christiansted, the government operated a sick house/prison at Estate Richmond, which was constructed in 1827, and a military hospital moved to Peter's Farm from Hospital Street in 1815. In Frederiksted, first on Hospital and then on Strand Streets, was a military-turned-communal hospital. All were staffed with doctors and nurses certified in Denmark, according to Danish regulations.

Just how well the doctors served the patients they were attending to is unknown, but we do have some anecdotal evidence. In 1913, D. Hamilton Jackson, former teacher, outspoken advocate of and leader of the field laborers with whom he was to establish the St. Croix Labor Union in 1913, criticized the health system. In an editorial to the *West End News*, owned by former Danish soldier Axel Ovesen, Jackson criticized the patronizing manner in which Dr. Paul Emile Kalmer, Landfysikus and Colonial Council member, treated native patients at the Peter's Farm Hospital. Jackson's editorial was seen by the Danish Parliament, and Kalmer was fired from his position (Olsen, 2010: 58-59). Kalmer had been in the islands since 1870 and was over 65 years old at the time (Census 1911). In 1915, Jackson gained the attention of Hans Nielsen, a member of the Social Democratic Party in the Danish Parliament by decrying the low pay given to laborers in St. Croix and the poverty they endured because of these paltry wages. (Olsen, 2010: 58-59).

To fill the gap in public services offered by the colonial administration and the churches, non-governmental agencies established and maintained institutions based on charity

from donors in the metropole. The most noted of these was the Queen Louise Home for Children, created in 1904 in Frederiksted by the Queen of Denmark with a capacity for 30 children (Lawson-Hiath & Ellis, 2004: 11). Four years later, an additional building was designated as the Ebenezer Orphanage for Girls, also for 30 children, and a child-care center servicing 30 children was situated in Christiansted. Two Danish deaconesses, trained in nursing and teaching, staffed each facility. They also went into the country areas to instruct mothers regarding childcare and sanitation. They emphasized the benefits of feeding babies milk (preferably breast milk) or powdered milk made with boiled water, rather than traditional bush tea (Holm-Meier, 2016).

In 1912, the Danish Odd Fellows Organization built and furnished a leprosarium in the Richmond area. That same year, an insane asylum was created, headed by a Danish nurse (Larsen, 1950: 60). Thus the Richmond area was the site of a number of institutional services: a prison, an insane asylum, a sick house, and a leprosarium. This was the case up until around 1958, when about a dozen remaining leprosy patients were transferred to a facility in Louisiana, and the mentally ill were transferred to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D. C. (Annual Report of the Governor 1958).

Throughout the history of St. Croix, there were never sufficient facilities nor funds to support the numbers of poor people who needed assistance. Peter's Farm Hospital expanded to accommodate the general populace. While these were government-run institutions, there were gaps. After Emancipation in 1848, the estate owners turned their elderly and sick laborers out onto the street. Hungry, homeless and poor, most did not qualify for institutional support, since they were not lepers, insane, or prisoners. Thus, the churches were left to provide services to them.

Another way that individual churches tended to their sick and poor was by acquiring long row houses, each of which held a series of one room housing units. Each allotted room was the sleeping quarters for a household, whether there was one person or a large family living there. All household activities such as cooking, washing, and cleaning fish and chickens took place outside on the stoop or in the courtyard formed by a series of long rows grouped together (St. Croix Landmarks Exhibit on Long Rows). In both Christiansted and Fredriksted, each church denomination had its own long row or "poor yard," as it was called. Elderly Crucians explained that despite their circumstances, people residing in long rows were referred to kindly in relation to their residence there, "She's out of Catholic Church Poor Yard" (Doward, interview 1/24/16).

Committees of church elders of each denomination determined which of their congregants were to be housed in such accommodations. Over many decades, 14 Queen Street, Christiansted was the site of the Catholic Church poor yard. Pastor Guilot was the owner of the property and when he was transferred to another diocese, he turned the property over to the church (Records of Deeds 1950). A number of people had been living there since 1880 (Census 1880). Usually the church congregation provided housing, but not monetary benefits. For such funds, congregants had to apply to their vestry for monthly

living allowances. In the hopes of distributing funds more equitably, “Most of the alms were distributed in paltry doles contributing to ‘chronic pauperism’ rather than providing meaningful aid” (Millington: 160). In each district’s Colonial Council’s budget, a line item was set aside for the Poor Commission.

The Danish State Transfer Commission of 1916

Just before the three islands were sold and handed over to the American government, a special Danish ‘Commission of 1916’ was appointed to oversee the transfer and to ascertain the conditions and the needs of the islands. Three delegates from each of the two Colonial Councils traveled to Copenhagen to appear before the Commission. In both districts two Danish born or Danish descended persons and one non-Danish descended delegate were selected to go to Denmark for this purpose. Despite, or maybe because of his outspoken advocacy for the people of the islands, D. Hamilton Jackson was not selected. When they reached Copenhagen, they were expecting to be asked a general range of questions, but this was not the case. The parliamentarians who were serving on the Commission were focused on a recent strike by the field laborers on St. Croix. Dr. Viggo Christensen, who had worked over 30 years in St. Thomas insisted nonetheless on documenting the health and social conditions on his island. Funding was subsequently sent to Jackson to telegraph his answers to Copenhagen (Tidende, Nov. 2016). As a result, a “Winding-Up Act’ was passed, whereby three groups were targeted for allotments of transitional funds: government workers who required retirement pensions; the victims of the 1916 hurricane who were left destitute; and the poor who were to be the beneficiaries of a portion of this “extraordinary” sum. Law 374 of 1917 granted 75,000 kroner - about \$12,500 in today’s money - “for the support of needy men and women of all classes of the present population in the islands and for the temporary support of private institutions with a charitable purpose, especially when such institutions will in the future lose their support from Denmark” (Law 374 July 13, 1917).

The grant was for an unspecified number of years, but cautioned, “the amount will decrease every year” and no one already receiving funds from either the rum fund or annual legacies (monies from the royal celebrations) were to be considered. At the National Archives (Rigsarkiv) in Copenhagen, there are six large boxes of applications. Each box contains 400 requests from all three islands, with the bulk being from St. Croix. Besides giving the applicant’s name, age, address, parents’ and spouse’s names, there was room for the applicant (or their medical or spiritual advisor) to write a justification of need. The applications were collected by the applicant’s church, and some are signed by the pastor or a doctor. Others were written by scribes who assisted applicants in writing the paragraph of justification. One scribe encouraged his clients to stress their “Danishness.” He thought that the more Danish one’s roots and background were, the more one stood to benefit. As might be expected, there were several women who applied on behalf of their children whom they claimed to have had by gendarmes, the

Danish military policemen who served in the islands from 1904-1917, who they stated, “have up and left for home.”

One of the most interesting aspects of this entire process is that the institutionalized had to apply for their own living expenses. Thus, a six year old orphan at the Ebenezer Home for Girls in Frederiksted needed to apply for daily expenses, and a young pregnant woman suffering from leprosy who had lived at the leprosarium had to do the same. Certainly, it appears that it was the heads of these institutions who were making such requests on behalf of their clients. The applications were put into four groups, with Group I being composed of those presumed to be the neediest. Up to 450 kroners - \$65 in today’s currency - was set aside yearly for these applicants. At the other end, Group IV was comprised of those who were judged to be least in need, and they received up to 200 kroners- \$36 in today’s currency - per year (Law 374 July 31, 1917).

Conclusion

The records reveal that for a number of years before the transfer of sovereignty to the U.S., the Danish State had distanced itself from the needs of the poorer population in its West Indian colonial holdings. Poverty was exacerbated by the wage-slave system that had replaced chattel slavery since Emancipation in 1848 and had driven many to overcrowded and depressed urban areas. The State insured that military hospitals were set up in the towns, and thus the medical needs of Danish soldiers were met. Midwives were made available for Danish women and other women of European descent. It was not, however, until the staggering death rates among adults and especially children of non-European descent were made known to the larger public that officials took notice. Around 1888, the year in which international attention finally focused on the shocking lack of sanitation and medical care on the islands, the Colonial Council created a line item for the poor commission in its annual budget for each district. Even then, the sum allotted to the poor had to be distributed through the churches and was deemed insufficient. Funds collected from taxation, issuing licenses, and levying fines were also less than what was necessary to assist the numbers of destitute people migrating in from the countryside. In the towns, military- turned-communal hospitals could not attend to all the population’s health needs. Non-governmental organizations recognized that specialized institutions had to be created for those individuals who required treatment away from the general population. The philanthropically-minded individuals who sponsored these institutions raised funds in the metropole and oversaw their establishment.

It was not until the transfer of sovereignty over the Danish West Indies to the U.S. in 1917 that more appreciable amounts of money were finally allocated by Denmark as part of the “Winding Up Act” of July 1917, but on a time-limited basis. It should come as no surprise, then, that nostalgia for the paternalistic regime of the Danes soon evaporated after the Danish West Indies became the U.S. Virgin Islands.

REFERENCES

- Hall, Neville A.T.; Barry W. Higman (Ed.) (1992). *Slave society in the Danish West Indies: St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix*. Mona: University of the West Indies Press.
- Holm-Meier, Sara (2016). *The deaconesses and their role in social services on St. Croix 1904-1917*. Paper presented at the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Society of Virgin Islands Historians.
- Jarvis, J. Antonio (1941, [1938]). *Brief history of the Virgin Islands*. Philadelphia: The Art Shop.
- Larsen, Jens (1950). *Virgin Islands story: a history of the Lutheran States Church, other churches, slavery, education and culture in the Danish West Indies, now the Virgin Islands*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Lawson-Haith, Juanita & Susan Ellis (2004). *It all began with children: the first century of Queen Louise Home and Lutheran Social Services of the Virgin Islands*. Frederiksted: [s.n.].
- Lewis, Gordon K. (1972). *The Virgin Islands: a Caribbean Lilliput*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Millington, Claire (2006). The creation of the general hospital: examining philanthropy in 19th century Barbados. *The Journal of Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, 155-176.
- Olsen, Lensa Gjedde (2010, [2008]). *Rødder i nord og syd: grønlandsk og dansk-vestindisk kolonihistorie*. Copenhagen, Allgo Press.
- Sixto, Adolph (2017, [1904]). *Time and I*. St. Thomas: Virgin Islands Humanities Council.
- Stick, Aske (2017). *The complaint as a “voice” – slave complaints on St. Croix, 1800-1850*. Paper presented at The Transfer Centennial Conference, Jan. 24, 2017, St. Croix.
- Thode Jensen, Niklas (2012). *For the health of the enslaved: slaves, medicine and power in the Danish West Indies, 1803-1848*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Archival Records, Kongens Bibliotek, Copenhagen:

Collegial Tidende No 24 & 25 p. 1826 Temporary regulations for the poor-law authorities in St. Croix, April 13, 1825.

Collegial Tidende July 1917 Undertegnede ansogerom at mAEtte komme I betragtning Ud delelingen af dene Lov. No 374 at July 31, 1917ommeldte underst otlelse af vAErdige trAEngende paa de tidligere Danish Vestindien Oer. (Winding Up Act).

St. Croix Landmarks Society (SCLS) Frederiksted, St. Croix:

St. Thomas Tidende 1916-Mar. 31, 1917. Microfilm

St. John's Anglican Church, Christiansted, St. Croix. Vestry Records 1817-1825.

St. Croix Data Population Base. Virgin Islands Social History Associates. Census 1880, 1911.

Annual Report of the Governor of the Virgin Islands to the President of the United States, 1958.

VI Lt. Governor's Office, Recorder of Deeds. *Deed book* 1950.

Interviews: Gerard Doward "Long Rows." Jan 24, 1916.

THE CARIBBEAN IN WORLD HISTORY: CARRIBEAN IMPACTS ON GLOBAL STRUGGLES FOR FREEDOM

BERNARD BIERLICH

ST. CROIX FOUNDATION, UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS,
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

I made up my mind that I would write a book in which Africans or people of African descent instead of constantly being the object of other peoples' exploitation and ferocity would themselves be taking action on a grand scale and shaping other people to their own needs
(James, 1980: v).

Introduction

The citation above is from the Trinidadian historian C.L.R. James' 1980 seminal work *The black Jacobins* on the leader of the Haitian Revolution, Toussaint L'Ouverture. James' writings have inspired my present focus on African agency as well as my thesis about the interconnectedness of world history, in which events in one place connect with events unfolding elsewhere.

Issues of freedom, colonialism and imperialism are central to people living in the Caribbean as they are essential to any attempt to understand the region. These issues are also critical to understanding the Civil Rights Movement in the US mainland, the Pan-African Movement and struggles for emancipation throughout the world. Freedom and emancipation characterize the Caribbean as a hot bed for revolutionary thought with far-reaching effects. Arguably, many global struggles for emancipation have their origins in the freedom struggles of slaves in the former Danish West Indies (modern day US Virgin Islands composed of St. Croix, St. Thomas and St. John) and Saint-Domingue (modern day Haiti). In this respect, the slaves fought on behalf of all African descended peoples and for improved civil rights on a global scale.

Yet, in their immediate context, slaves fought for their own freedom and equality. The revolt of slaves on the small island of St. John in the former Danish West Indies in 1733 was a precursor of the eventual emancipation of slaves on this island 115 years later. However, already in 1791, the freedom struggles of slaves in the larger French island of Saint-Domingue, a little less than 500 miles west of the Danish West Indies, led to the first independent state formed by former slaves in 1804. The French Revolution that took place in the same period, 1789-99, was also undeniably connected to events

in the Danish West Indies. As a result, the freedom struggles of slaves in the Caribbean became the symbol for global freedom and equality. Their agency also influenced our understanding of freedom as a word which resounds through global history occurring as part of a polarity including freedom, equality, and democracy on the one hand – and repression, inequality, and autocracy on the other.

This article contextualizes the struggles for freedom and equality by slaves on the small island of St. John in 1733-34 and the uprising of slaves in the larger slave colony of Saint-Domingue about sixty years later. It explores the significance of these struggles as they connect to the French Revolution that took place in Europe, 1789-99. It focuses on how the Caribbean influenced struggles for freedom world-wide, with particular reference to a supra-regional concept of interconnected humanity among African descended people which influenced events such as the Civil Rights Movement in the mainland US in the 1960s and resonates with African descended peoples up to this day. The Caribbean effect can also be seen in the concurrent Pan-African struggle for independence in Africa, and in anticolonial struggles in Asia.

The article stresses the inter-connectedness of the world and recognizes that small places in the Caribbean brought about and shaped much larger struggles for freedom elsewhere. The argument is specifically that the struggles in St. John and Saint-Domingue shaped a larger, transnational and transatlantic agency that is best illustrated by events in Europe during the French Revolution, events in the mainland US during the 1960s, and events in African during the Pan-African independence movement. Caribbean agency and events are therefore part of a global, transatlantic history and discourse around the fight for freedom against oppression. Furthermore, the fights for freedom on the islands of St. John and Saint-Domingue have become a symbol of global freedom, equality and citizenship.

A number of sources inform this article, such as the Danish historian Thorkild Hansen who wrote about the Danish West Indies in 1970; the Trinidadian historian C.L.R. James whose work I have cited above; the American sociologist and Pan-Africanist W. E. B. Du Bois who wrote *The souls of black folk* (1980, [1903]); and the Martinican psychiatrist, philosopher and revolutionary Fanon who wrote *The wretched of the earth* (1963, [1961]) about the freedom struggles in Africa in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The slave revolt in the Danish West Indies 1733-34

The slave revolt of 1733 in the Danish West Indies and the subsequent emancipation of slaves there effectively contextualize this study. The Danes transported nearly 100,000 slaves between the 17th century until the beginning of the 19th century to their West Indian colonies. Although by no means the country that exploited the most people of African descent during this period, Denmark occupies seventh place in the list of (predominantly European) nations that participated in the transatlantic slave trade, a trade

which is estimated to have trafficked at least 12.5 million Africans (Bierlich, 2009; Eltis & Richardson, 2010).

The many sugar cane plantations in the Danish West Indies, virtually all of which operated almost exclusively on slave labor, were the cornerstones of the colonial economy. The slave plantation called “Annaberg” on the small island of St. John gives clear insight into slave-labor practices in the production of sugar and how such practices significantly influenced the region. Anthropologist Sidney Mintz (1986) notes how sugar production and export contributed to the growth of European economies but led to disaster for the Caribbean and Africa. The Caribbean became depopulated as the indigenous population was driven out or slaughtered so that sugar could be grown on the land that the Europeans had seized. When these populations proved insufficient to work the plantations, Africans were captured, enslaved and shipped to the colonies to supply the necessary labor to grow the cane and process the sugar.

Slaves experienced famine and harsh living conditions in connection with drought, bad crops and serious hurricanes. They also endured extremely brutal punishments laid down by Governor Philip Gardelin in a harsh slave code that prescribed the mutilation and torture of “disobedient” and escaped slaves (maroons). The slave code of the Danish West Indies arguably advocated for some of the most cruel practices in the Caribbean, North American and South American slave systems, and as a result, African descended people in this system experienced some of the most cruel treatment and breaches of human rights on record (Hansen, 1970: 89-139). These horrific conditions triggered an uprising in 1733 among the slaves on the island of St. John.

Another trigger for the 1733 uprising was the arrival of slaves who were members of a West African (Ghanaian) military elites. Danish slavers, cut off from their customary slave suppliers on the Gold Coast in the 1730s, procured captives from local military elites who had taken them from rival nations as prisoners of war. Among these elites who became the new slave arrivals to St. John preceding the 1733 uprising were, according to reports, a “king”, four “princes”, and several “royal wives” from what were said to be three Ghanaian nations: the Amina, the Aquambo and the Adambe. Several of the new arrivals collaborated with those already on the island to escape and form maroon communities on St. John. The 1733 uprising was organized by these maroon communities who prepared detailed plans to overtake St. John and communicated with each other (and remaining plantation slaves) via talking drums. The plan drew on collaboration among distinct African peoples who operated under the leadership of Bolombo, an Adambe king; Aquashi, an Aquambo prince; and Kanta, an Amina nobleman (ibid.: 89-139). The objective of the revolt, according to the Danish historian Thorkild Hansen, was to eradicate the European descended population of the island, establish a traditional West African polity, and retain some of the remaining African descended population as slaves (ibid.: 89-139).

The 208 European descended settlers on the island in 1733 were a minority compared to the 1,087 enslaved, and this demographic, a characteristic of most other Danish and European slave colonies, meant that a revolt by the slaves was always feared among the European descended plantocracy. Their worst fears were realized on the morning of November 23, 1733, when approximately twelve slaves entered the small Danish fortress of *Frederiksfort* on the mountain top of *Fortsberg* on the pretext of bringing bundles of wood for fuel. The rebel slaves had hidden sugar cane knives in the bundles, however, and killed all of the soldiers in the fort save one who hid under a bed and ultimately escaped to neighboring St. Thomas to inform Governor Gardelin of the insurrection. After taking control of the fort, the rebels then fired the garrison's cannon as a prearranged signal to the slaves throughout the island to rise up and kill their masters.

Within hours of the revolt, a core rebel force of approximately 100 killed several European descended people on the island and destroyed about 50 plantations and many sugar fields. Soon the insurgents ruled almost the entire island, but not all slaves participated in the revolt and slaves who resisted the revolt tended to be creole (born in the West Indies) and descended from nations other than those of the rebel leaders. Some of those who did not rebel (potentially under the assumption that they would remain as slaves) warned European descended inhabitants who escaped with them to St. Thomas or camped with them in a plantation in the northwest of St. John that served as stronghold for the planters.

The standoff between the rebels and the Danish continued for six months, during which time the Danish sought help from English forces. However, armed troops brought by Captain Taller and later Captain William Maddox were repelled by the rebels. Eventually, in May of 1734, running low on ammunition and recognizing that they would be overpowered by French soldiers arriving from Martinique, many of the St. John rebels chose suicide over capture. The French and Danish forces slaughtered several of the surviving rebels; others were publicly tortured and executed, including slaves who had surrendered with the promise of pardon. After these events, plantation work resumed. Of great significance in the last phase of the uprising is the movement of around 20 remaining insurgents to Newfound Bay in the most easterly part of the island. Hansen explains the significance of this location: "Ahead is the open ocean horizon, no sight of land before Africa. Newfound Bay runs into the easternmost point on St. John and thus on all the Danish islands. Here in Newfound Bay you are as close to Africa as you can get in the Danish West Indies." (ibid.: 131). Hansen also explains why the rebels had gone to this point: "They had gone to St. John's easternmost point, not because it was closest to Tortola [a neighboring British controlled island], but because it was closest to **Africa**. 'I came to die, I ran home to my country' – in the words of a survivor" (ibid.: 134, emphasis mine). An idealized concept of "Africa" was in the hearts of the

insurgents and has been a key symbol in this and other slave revolts in the Caribbean as well as in modern freedom struggles both in a US and Pan-Africanism context.

In summary, almost sixty years before the Haitian Revolution, a group of West African slaves gained control of the island of St. John and held it for six months against Danish and English forces. Over a decade later, in 1746 and 1759, two incipient slave rebellions in the Danish West Indies were suppressed. However, the revolt on St. John was one of the first and most successful uprisings in the Caribbean. This event showed the slaves on St. John and the other Danish islands of St. Thomas and St. Croix that rebellion could be effective. Emancipation came to all three Danish islands one hundred years later, in 1848.

The slave revolt in Haiti and the French Revolution

Arguably the most successful slave revolt in history, the Haitian Revolution began as a revolt by slaves in 1791 and ended with the founding of an independent state in 1804. The island's slave trade, especially out of the French port of Nantes, then came to a halt (Bierlich, 2001-2). Although European plantation regimes had been successfully overturned in the Lower Guinea Islands of Annobom and Principe off the coast of West Africa during the 1500s, the Haitian Revolution was the only slave uprising that led to the founding of a state, which was both free from slavery, and ruled by free African descended people, some of whom were former captives. This revolution and its effects on the institution of slavery were felt throughout the Americas. The forceful ending to French administration and the emancipation of former slaves was followed by their successful defense of the freedoms they won. In collaboration with people of mixed African and European descent, former slaves took their independence and ended rule by Europeans and European descended people (Taber, 2015).

The Haitian Revolution is widely seen as a defining moment in the history of racism in the globalized Atlantic world, i.e. a global space of interactions among the peoples and empires bordering the Atlantic Ocean, in Europe, Africa, and the Americas. The Haitian Revolution occurred during the same period as many other Atlantic revolutions, such as North America's emancipation from Britain of 1776-83, the French Revolution of 1789-99, and the revolutions in Spanish America of 1810-25 (Bender, Dubois & Rabinowitz, 2011).

In 1789, Saint-Domingue produced 60% of the world's coffee and 40% of the world's sugar imported by France and Britain. The colony was the most profitable possession in the French Empire. Saint-Domingue was also the wealthiest and most prosperous colony, for the plantation owners at least, of all the colonies in the Caribbean. At that point, European descended people numbered 40,000, free African descended people and people of mixed African and European descent numbered 28,000; and enslaved African descended people numbered a much larger (estimated) 452,000. The most vulnerable and exploited group in the colony, these enslaved workers outnumbered all of

the other groups by a margin of over six to one (Rogozinski, 1999: 164-165). The supporters of the Haitian revolution were the enslaved and free people of African descent who were treated unequally in society and by the law. Cap Français, a northern port in Saint-Domingue, had a large population of freed slaves, and these men would later become important leaders in the 1791 slave rebellion and subsequent revolution (James, 1980; Dubois, 2004).

Inspired by the egalitarian philosophy of the French Revolution, *Liberté, égalité, fraternité*, [liberty, equality, brotherhood] African descended slaves launched an organized rebellion in April 1791 that killed thousands of European descended residents of the island, set fire to sugar plantations, and gained control over the northern areas of Saint-Domingue. Toussaint L'Ouverture was a key agent in the Haitian Revolution and familiar with the ideology of the Enlightenment within the context of European imperialism.

James' (1980, [1934]) text places the Haitian Revolution in the context of the French Revolution, whose effects were not limited to Europe but had far-reaching, global consequences. James also focuses on the European influenced leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture, who was born a slave but rose to prominence espousing the French revolutionary ideals of liberty and equality. Given his origins as a slave in a colonized land, and the unmistakable current of French revolutionary ideology he imbibed and upheld, Toussaint L'Ouverture became not merely the extraordinary leader of an island revolt, but "the apogee of the revolutionary doctrines that underpinned the French Revolution" (Lowe & Lloyd, 1997: 231-32).

L'Ouverture attempted to strike a balance between implementing the ideologies of Western Enlightenment as a necessary means of winning liberation, but not propagating the notion that European thought was morally superior to the experiences and knowledge of African descended people in Saint-Domingue (James, 1980). L'Ouverture wrote a constitution for a new society in Saint-Domingue that abolished slavery and foregrounded the ideals of freedom and equality. Although many French revolutionaries did not necessarily think their ideals of freedom, equality and brotherhood also pertained to African descended people in their colonial possessions, these ideals were, however, according to C.L.R. James, taken very seriously by the former slaves and in the constitution.

In 1801, L'Ouverture established himself as governor of the island but was captured the following year by Napoleon Bonaparte's imperial forces, who sought to restore slavery. In response, the free African descended population of the island again seized arms and, led by Lieutenant Jean-Jacques Dessalines, they defeated the French forces in the Battle of Vertières in 1803. The following year, Dessalines became the first head of state, proclaimed the former slave colony independent and established it as the new Republic of Haiti. One of the Republic's first significant documents was Dessalines' "Liberty or

Death” speech, which established and justified the permanent abolition of slavery in Haiti and circulated broadly in the foreign press (Geggus, 2011).

According to the *Encyclopedia of African-American politics* (Smith, 2003), between 1791 and independence in 1804 nearly 200,000 people of African descent died, as did thousands of people of mixed African and European descent in addition to as many as 100,000 French and British soldiers. The conflict was undoubtedly bloody, but Smith claims that Yellow Fever did most of the killing (2003: 166), most probably because of the mosquito-infested camps that many people inhabited during the conflict. Regardless, the news about the first successful revolt by slaves and the only slave revolt in history that ended with the founding of a new country has since inspired countless other struggles in the United States, the Caribbean, as well as the Pan-African liberation movement that led to a largely independent Africa by the 1960s.

Revolts by slaves and global freedom movements

The histories of Africa, Europe, and the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas are inextricably intertwined, with each region influencing the others in complex ways. For example, according to C.L.R. James, the Haitian revolution is the culmination of the ideology of liberty and equality that characterized the French Revolution. We must problematize, however, approaches to historical events that imply or directly state that European events occurred at an ideological epicenter and effects were felt in expanding waves of influence elsewhere. According to Edward Said, the events in France and Haiti mutually affected each other, so much so that “black slaves participated in the destruction of European feudalism” (Featherstone, 2008: 24-25). As non-property owning French workers built their resistance to the local tyranny, they also ideologically became passionate advocates for the freedom of slaves in colonial possessions.

African descended people in the US mainland are routinely harassed and killed by European descended people, often police officers. The racism of European descended people is persistent, as the African American sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois already pointed out (Du Bois, 1994 [1903]). Racism is historically linked to the contested humanity of African descended people, illustrated by the slogan ‘Am I Not a Man and a Brother,’ which was used by campaigners of the Society of Friends, for the abolition of the slave trade and slavery in 1787 (Du Bois, 1903, no pages, Kindle Edition). However, divisive thinking continues to mis-inform Eurocentric racism based on feelings of superiority vis-a-vis African descended and indigenous peoples, to such an extent that lines of difference are created and held to be self-evident as Du Bois illustrates in his foreword, “...the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line” (Du Bois, 1903: Forethoughts). Du Bois also coined the term “double consciousness” to illustrate the idea that African descended people must have two fields of vision at all times. They must be conscious of how they view themselves, as well as being conscious of how the world views them (Du Bois, 1903, no pages, Kindle Edition).

Du Bois introduced the metaphor of the “veil” (i.e. the African American predicament). According to Du Bois, this metaphorical veil is worn by all African-Americans because their view of the world and its potential economic, political, and social opportunities are so vastly different from those of European descended people. This veil is a visual manifestation of what others have called “the color line” (Du Bois, 1903). He goes on to emphasize the importance of education to challenge the disadvantaged situation of African Americans and lauds the creation of a number of historically black institutions of learning such as Clark Atlanta University and Howard University. He cites the fact that the 30,000 African descended teachers created in one generation after the Civil War (up to 1880) “wiped out the illiteracy of the majority of the black people of the land” (Du Bois, 1903). Du Bois heralds the “melody of the slave songs” as the “articulate message of the slave to the world.” They are the music, he contends, not of the joyous African slave, as a good many Europeans have misread them, but “of an unhappy people, of the children of disappointment; they tell of death and suffering and unvoiced longing toward a truer world, of misty wanderings and hidden ways” (Du Bois 1903). At the same time, these songs also symbolize a Pan-African longing to act independently and in solidarity with other people of African descent.

Pan Africanism

Du Bois’ biographer Manning Marable captures the impact of Du Bois’ *The souls of black folk* very well in terms of how it reinforces Pan-African sentiment:

Few books make history and fewer still become foundational texts for the movements and struggles of an entire people. *The Souls of Black Folk* occupies this rare position. It helped to create the intellectual argument for the black freedom struggle in the twentieth century. “Souls” justified the pursuit of higher education for Negroes and thus contributed to the rise of the black middle class. By describing a global color-line, Du Bois anticipated pan-Africanism and colonial revolutions in the Third World (Marable, 2006: 96).

Du Bois’ notion of “Black Humanity” connects the struggles for freedom by Caribbean slaves within a context of an idealized “Africa” and “African culture”. Africa as a symbol has helped give the struggles in the past and the more recent liberation struggles on the US mainland and the African continent their full meaning and direction.

Pan-Africanism is a worldwide, global intellectual movement that aims to encourage and strengthen bonds of solidarity between all people of African descent. Largely based upon the idea of a common history dating back to the transatlantic slave trade, the movement extends beyond continental Africans, with a substantial support base among the African diaspora in the Caribbean, Latin America and the United States (Oloruntoba-Oju, 2012). At its core, Pan-Africanism is a belief that African peoples, both on the continent and in the diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common destiny

(Nkrumah, 1963). The movement promotes the belief that unity among African descended people is vital to economic, social, and political progress and that the fate of all African peoples and countries are intertwined.

Pan-Africanism exists at a governmental and grassroots level both in Africa and throughout the diaspora. Advocates of Pan-Africanism on the African continent include icons such as former Ethiopian emperor Haile Selassie; Tanzania's Julius Nyerere; Ghana's famous first President and founding member of the African Union, Kwame Nkrumah; and former President Thomas Sankara from Burkina Faso. Grassroots organizers in the diaspora include figures such as Marcus Garvey and Malcolm X in the United States.

Frantz Fanon and the Martinican connection

In April 1958, Kwame Nkrumah hosted the first All-African People's Conference (AAPC) in Accra, Ghana. This conference signified a monumental event in the Pan-African Movement, as it aspired to a political and social union between what was considered Arab-dominant North Africa and the rest of the continent. The Conference espoused a common African national identity, characterized by anti-imperial feeling. Journalist, freedom fighter and a member of the Algerian *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN), Frantz Fanon attended the conference as a delegate for Algeria (Adi & Sherwood 2003: 66) and helped to promote African unity. Under his guidance, attendees at the Conference agreed to support the struggle for independence in all regions of the continent under colonial oppression, particularly the armed struggle of the FLN against French colonial rule.

Frantz Fanon, born in 1925 in Martinique, was a psychiatrist, philosopher, revolutionary, and writer whose works are highly influential in the fields of post-colonial studies, critical theory, and Marxism. His work reminds us of the central position of the Caribbean in discourse about emancipation. Fanon was a political radical, Pan-Africanist, and Marxist humanist concerned with the psychopathology of colonization, and the human, social, and cultural consequences of decolonization (Fanon, 1963; see also Bulhan, 1985). In the course of his work as a physician and psychiatrist, Fanon supported the Algerian War of Independence from France and was a member of the Algerian FLN Party. For more than five decades, the life and works of Frantz Fanon have inspired national liberation movements and other radical political organizations in Sri Lanka, South Africa, and the United States (Macey, 2000).

In *What Fanon said: a philosophical introduction to his life and thought*, African scholar and contemporary philosopher Lewis Gordon remarks:

Fanon's contributions to the history of ideas are manifold. He is influential not only because of the originality of his thought but also because of the astuteness of his criticisms. He developed a profound social existential analysis of anti-

black racism, which led him to identify conditions of skewed rationality and reason in contemporary discourses on the human being (Gordon, 2015).

Fanon is perhaps best known for the classic analysis of colonialism and decolonization, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 1963 [1961]). This text, first published in 1961 with a preface by Jean-Paul Sartre, analyzes the role of class, race, national culture and violence in the struggle for national liberation. The book includes a chapter which focuses on the ideas of violence and decolonization and in which Fanon claims that decolonization is inherently a violent process because the relationship between the colonizer and colonized is a binary of opposites. In fact, he uses the Biblical reference, “The last shall be first, and the first, last,” to describe the process of decolonization. He explains that the situation of settler colonialism creates within the indigenous population a tension which grows over time and in many ways is fostered by the colonizer. This tension eventually becomes a catalyst for violence against the colonizer. This description of decolonization and how the conflicting populations interact over time has served as an academic and theoretical foundation for many revolutions and illustrates the interdependent connection between the Caribbean and the Pan-African Movement.

Conclusion

The islands of the Caribbean have great significance for understanding freedom movements among African descended people in North America, in Africa, and elsewhere in the world. As my former teacher and Director of the Cambridge African Studies Center, Professor Hart, once said, “If one wants to understand colonialism and national liberation movements in Africa better, one must consider the Caribbean and the freedom struggles by the slaves closely.” Of course, this is also true if one wants to understand the American Civil Rights Movement, the “Black Lives Matter” movement, as well as many other struggles for freedom and human rights around the world. Unfortunately, a Eurocentric misrepresentation of Caribbean isolation and insignificance perpetuates the erroneous opinion that Caribbean thought and Caribbean history have little global importance. Quite the opposite is the case.

REFERENCES

- Adi, Hakim & Marika Sherwood (2003). *Pan-African history: political figures from Africa and the diaspora since 1787*. London: Routledge.
- Bender, Thomas, Laurent Dubois & Richard Rabinowitz (Eds.) (2011). *Revolution!: the Atlantic world reborn*. London: Giles.
- Bierlich, Bernard M. (2001-2004). *Research notes: the medical history of the French slave trade*. London: Wellcome Trust.

- Bierlich, Bernard M. (2009). The competence of Danish surgeons in the Eighteenth Century, with reference to the slave trade. *Outre-Mers, Revue d'Histoire*, 96, 364/365, 229-248.
- Bulhan, Hussein A. (1985). *Frantz Fanon and the psychology of oppression*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Dubois, W.E.B. (1994, [1903]). *The souls of black folk*. New York: Bantam Classics.
- Dubois, W.E.B. (n.d., [1903]). *The souls of black folk*. Kindle Edition.
- Dubois, Laurent (2004). *Avengers of the New World: the story of the Haitian Revolution*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Eltis, David & David Richardson (2010). *Atlas of the transatlantic slave trade*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Fanon, Frantz (1963, [1961]). *The wretched of the earth* (Trans. Constance Farrington). New York: Grove Press.
- Featherstone, David (2008). *Resistance, space and political identities*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Geggus, David (2011). *The Haitian Revolution in Atlantic perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gordon, Lewis R. (2015). *What Fanon said: a philosophical introduction to his life and thought*. London: Hurst & Company.
- Hansen, Thorkild (1970). *Slavernes øer* [The Islands of the Slaves]. København: Gyldendal.
- James, C.L.R. (1980, [1938]). *The black Jacobins*. London: Allison & Busby.
- Lowe, Lisa & David Lloyd (1997). *The politics of culture in the shadow of capital*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Macey, David (2000). *Frantz Fanon: a biography*. New York: Picador Press.
- Marable, Manning (2006). *Living black history*. New York: Basic Civitas Books.
- Mintz, Sidney W. (1986, [1985]). *Sweetness and power: the place of sugar in modern history*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Nkrumah, Kwame (1963). *Africa must unite*. New York: Praeger.
- Oloruntoba-Oju, Omotayo (2012). Pan Africanism, myth and history in African and Caribbean drama. *Journal of Pan African Studies*, 5, 8, 190-209.
- Rogozinski, Jan (1999, [1992]). *A brief history of the Caribbean*. New York: Facts on File.
- Smith, Robert C. (2003). *Encyclopedia of African American-politics*. New York: Facts on File.
- Society of Friends (1787). "Am I not a man and a brother?" Available at <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/2h67.html>
- Taber, Robert D. (2015). Navigating Haiti's history: Saint-Domingue and the Haitian Revolution. *History Compass*, 13, 5, 235-50.

**TIDAL SHIFTS IN THE STUDY
OF LITERATURE IN THE
GREATER CARIBBEAN AND BEYOND**

THE ANACHRONISMS OF EXILE: COUNTER-NARRATIVE, MEMORY, TIME AND REMEMBRANCE IN GEORGE LAMMING'S *IN THE CASTLE OF MY SKIN*

RAÚL JAVIER VÁZQUEZ VÉLEZ

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, RÍO PIEDRAS

Lamming's novel tells the story of G., a young man who recounts his childhood and adolescence in colonial Barbados throughout the nineteen-thirties and forties. As the most prominent among the novel's characters/narrators, G. illustrates the novel's concept of time as a marker of change within society and people. Lamming's protagonist does not merely recall how he became aware of being a colonized Afro-Caribbean male subject living in Barbadian society during the thirties and forties: his acts of remembrance reveal a growing consciousness that crept into his life and those of his friends when they began to question the colonizer's official discourses about their origins, along with the unofficial stories that accompanied them as they grew up.

In the Foreword to the 1991 Ann Arbor edition of the novel, Sandra Pouchet Paquet describes *In the castle of my skin* as "an autobiographical novel of childhood and adolescence" that serves as "a narrative of reconnection and repatriation" which recreates "the written self" as "a developing sensibility within native community": fused "anagogically" with its community, this sensibility creates "a myth of childhood" that unearths "the underlying attitudes, thought systems, and ideals of a whole society" deformed by colonialism and racism (p. ix). Pouchet Paquet interprets this past as ". . . a network of values" that refashions "the sociocultural processes of the colonial Caribbean as facets of childhood", which in turn endows said childhood with "mythic status as evidence and symbol of those sociocultural processes at work" (p. ix). Lamming's novel explores the dynamic interplay of agency, marginality, and alienation as well as the ways they unfold in the lives of colonized persons of Afro-Caribbean descent. Its plot stems from the life of colonized peoples of Afro-Caribbean descent who must come to terms with time and remembrance through acts of (re)writing and (re)narrating from their position as subaltern subjects.

In her Introduction to *Alien-nation and repatriation: translating identity in Anglophone Caribbean literature*, Patricia Joan Saunders elaborates on a type of neo/postcolonial writing akin to his novel:

While seemingly cliché, the need to "go back" to a source or originary narrative is of singular importance for understanding the implications and the need for

black subjects to reimagine their selves and their being-in-the-world continuously. However, this return is not simply a desire to trace narratives of origin. Rather, it is a critical perspective that acknowledges the countless ruptures of history, time, culture, identity, and Being. [...].

The act of looking back or reflecting is not an effort to return to a romanticized linear narrative of forward progress, but an effort to reverse into Selves that have been buried and silenced within the recesses of institutional discourses on identity and being. (p. 3)

In the castle of my skin unfolds through critical reassessments of the times, places, persons, and discourses G. knew while growing up, yet this text should not be read as a search for a more or less vaguely defined object to be found if the desires of readers and analysts are to be fulfilled.

While acts of (re)writing allow G. to approach what he remembers of his community, time, and history through self-critical scopes that question colonialist discourses and narratives dealing with the origins of Barbados and its peoples, his counter-discourse exhibits a tenuous relationship with memory, time and remembrance, as evinced by the flood that struck the semi-fictional Creighton's Village on the day of G's ninth birthday. Looking back, the narrator-protagonist sees this event as something other than one among many natural disasters that beset the lives of colonized people of African descent barely a century after the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade and Emancipation: "No one seemed to notice how the noon had passed to evening, the evening to night; nor to worry that the weather had played me false. Nothing mattered but the showers of blessing and the eternal will of the water's source" (Lamming: 9). The flood has transformed the village and time itself into points of alterity: as Creighton's uneasily floats, seconds liquefy into minutes that give way to hours, which in turn evaporate into another twilight unrooted within the dark-clad night.

As he ponders upon his disappointment of having yet another birthday swept away by divine "consolations," G. recalls "those legendary waters which had once arisen to set a curse upon the course of man" and thus fashions the flood into a dubious angel sent to throw the lives of his people into disarray (p. 10). By comparing the flood to the Biblical deluge, the narrator confers personality and agency to an atmospheric event that interrupts the flow of time and memory those at Creighton's Village are used to. This disruption throws the villagers' vision of themselves into upheaval:

As if in serious imitation of the waters that raced outside, our lives – meaning our fears and their corresponding ideals – seemed to escape down an imaginary drain that was our future. Our capacity for feeling had grown as large as the flood, but the prayers of a simple village seemed as precariously adequate as the houses hoisted on water. (p. 10)

God Himself has visited this place: the divine downpour unhinges persons, animals and buildings, placing them on a plane of existence that equalizes waves with seconds and translates mudslides into lethargic forever.

The flood also uncovers the shaky ground upon which the villagers must build their lives as a new Nile unseats them from the black land and dooms them to another forty years of wondering, grasping at everything and nothing as nature, colonial powers and official narratives set another course upon the curse of men. Narrative and counter-narrative are at work during the celebrations of Empire Day at the school G. and friends attend. The following exchange proves how easy it is to fill in the gaps of history through narrative:

Three hundred years ago, more than the memory could hold, Big England had met and held Little England and Little England like a sensible child accepted. [...]. Barbados or Little England was the oldest and purest of England's children, and may it always be so. [...]. Little England remained steadfast and constant to Big England. [...]. The hand of the Lord played a great part in that union. [...]. One day before time changed for eternity, Little England and Big England... might hand-in-hand rule this earth. In the '14 war they went side by side together, and they would go again any time. Big England had only to say the word, and Little England followed. [...]. (Lamming: 37)

Their origins bastardized by colonial brainwashing, colonial Barbadians learn to see themselves as "sensible children" who accept England's gracious aid and remain loyal to her while other islands fall to other metropolises. This fragment portrays England's rule over "Little England" as an act of providence enacted and sanctioned by God Himself, who desires that Britain and its colony become eternal rulers of the world.

However, the pageantry of the occasion cannot conceal the turmoil that looms over the horizon, as demonstrated by the school inspector's address to the student body:

We are living, my dear boys, in difficult times. We wait with the greatest anxiety the news of what is happening on the other side of the world. Those of you who read the papers may have read of the war in Abyssinia. You may have seen pictures of the King of Ethiopia, and the bigger boys may have wondered what it's all about. The British Empire, you must remember, has always worked for the peace of the world. This was the job assigned to it by God, and if the Empire at any time has failed to bring about that peace it was due to events and causes beyond its control. But, remember, my dear boys, whatever happens in any part of this world, whatever happens to you here in this island of Barbados, the pride and treasure of the Empire, we are always on the side of peace. You are with us, and we with you. And together we shall always walk in the will of God. (p. 38)

The inspector's speech invites the audience to regard the Second Italo-Ethiopian War of 1935-6 as a disturbance to the British Empire's divine mission of peace. By reading

an armed conflict between metropolitan powers as an act in keeping with England's providential role as ruler and protector of God's Earth, the speaker preys upon the naïveté, apathy and ignorance of the audience to present the Mother Country as a benign, civilizing superpower that is doing what it must to restore peace to the world: if other nations challenge the Lord's chosen one, England has no choice but to safeguard what Providence has entrusted to her. Furthermore, if Britain is fulfilling her God-given mission, Barbados/Little England should be a "sensible child" and aid its mother to the best of its abilities, as is expected of all children worthy of their parents.

In the castle of my skin exposes the underlying falsehoods inherent in official narratives. Although he seems to know little, if anything at all, about world history, politics, and twentieth century capitalism, G. has learned enough to cast doubt on the Empire's account of the history of Barbados, as shown in his exposition on the origins of Creighton's Village:

An estate where fields of sugar had once crept like an open secret across the land had been converted into a village that absorbed some three thousand people. An English landowner, Mr. Creighton, had died, and the estate fell to his son through whom it passed to another son who in his turn died, surrendering it to yet another. Generations had lived and died in this remote corner of a small British colony, the oldest and least adulterated of British colonies: Barbados or Little England as it was called in the local school texts. (p. 25)

342 Time and chance have turned this precarious space into an embodiment of greed and pillaging, irreconcilable with the fictions-turned-history that G., his friends, and their forebears learned at school. The underlying realities that G. presents contradict the official imperial history taught at a time most people lacked the self-knowledge and critical apparatus necessary to question what they learned through discursive coercion. Saunders elaborates upon the prospects faced by authors who create counter-discourses tasked with commanding credence in the face of misinformed conformity masquerading as democratic consensus:

When historians are faced with the prospect of constructing histories from their own perspectives, this requirement of "factual support" remains the major pitfall for Caribbean historians. The demand for "evidence" that is supported by factual accounts assures that the experiences represented in most histories of the Caribbean are barred from consideration in the academic annals of History. In response to this demand, generations of Caribbean writers have set out to construct their historical perspectives through fictional accounts culled from oral accounts recorded in historical documents. (Saunders: 9)

Although unsupported by "factual accounts", *In the castle of my skin* is a powerful counter-narrative of life in colonial Barbados precisely because it illustrates the hidden power of marginalized and alienated subjects who challenge official history through the

mere act of speaking about their lives and experiences, as shown when a boy in the local school takes a discussion about kings and pennies to a whole other level:

[The boy] said he heard someone say something about slaves. An old woman said that once they were slaves, but now they were free. And she said that's what the good and great queen [Victoria?] had done. She had made them free. The small boy was puzzled. [...]. He asked the teacher what was the meaning of slave, and the teacher explained. But it didn't make any sense. [...]. ...[H]e couldn't understand how one man could buy another man. He told the teacher what the old woman had said. She was a slave. And the teacher said she was getting dotish. It was a long, long, long time ago. People talked of slaves a long time ago. [...]. ... [I]t had nothing to do with people in Barbados. No one there was ever a slave, the teacher said. It was in another part of the world that those things happened. Not in Little England. (Lamming: 57)

An idle discussion compels a student to question his teacher about a subject that school-books at the time seldom addressed. The instructor safeguards the discursive coercion of the metropole, yet he only deceives himself. The pupil, on the other hand, is filled with doubt, though he finds assurance in colonial education:

Thank God, he wasn't ever a slave. He or his father or his father's father. Thank God nobody in Barbados was ever a slave. It didn't sound cruel. It was simply unreal. The idea of ownership. One man owned another. [The children] laughed quietly. [...]. They would forget all about it since it happened too long ago. Moreover, they weren't told anything about that. They had read about the Battle of Hastings and William the Conqueror. That happened so many hundred years ago. And slavery was thousands of years before that. It was too far back for anyone to worry about teaching it as history. That's really why it wasn't taught. It was too far back. History had to begin somewhere, but not so far back. And nobody knew where this slavery business took place. The teacher had simply said, not here, somewhere else. Probably it never happened at all. The old woman, poor fool! You could forgive her. She must have had a dream. A bad dream! (pp. 57-58)

Hearing the old woman talk about slavery compelled the lad to put the matter before his teacher. Being a good son of Little England, he accepts the version of events presented by a representative of England and laughs at the poor woman's folly. This young man may remain bound to discursive coercion, but the mere act of asking questions might sooner or later allow him to decolonize his mind.

G. and his fellow students may be powerless to change their country for the better, yet their disquisitions fill in the gaps left by official history. Similar to what Lewis R. Gordon states about Lamming himself, G. "exemplifies the complexity of the Caribbean spirit that defies a singular conclusion" (p. 3). Being a little beyond themselves as they face the monumental endeavor of (re)writing peoples and places elided by Eurocentric

history into a narrative of their own, author and character call to mind the “fundamental incompleteness” common to the human condition (p. 3). Forced to explain his life and reality along with his community’s in terms of cause-and-effect, before-and-after, etc., G. realizes that human memory and knowledge are provisional means of making sense of histories that do not belong to him any more than they belong to his mother, his friends, or the inhabitants of Creighton’s.

Having their images and accounts of who and what they are co-opted by colonial discourses and early twentieth century capitalism, these people resolve into puddles of flesh-made-liquid, paralleling Gordon’s definition of water, namely

[t]he fluid so free that it is the metaphor of freedom, and as such, it brings forth other metaphors in its constant flow that ushers in its paradoxical roles of life and spirit. As life, it flows through us and is most of us; as spirit, it overcomes us in its propensity, as many Romantics saw at many seas’ edge, to become sublime. (p. 4)

The sublime comes into play during the day at the beach. Just as the boys are about to reenact the legend of King Canute, Boy Blue refuses to repeat the mantra of “Sea Come No Further” until the next wave arrives for a most telling reason: “I fin’ when I repeat a thing, a word, for example, it sound after a time as if it ain’t a word, but just a kind of noise” (Lamming: 118). Perhaps the child feared that careless repetition would strip the words of power, similar to how taking the Lord’s name in vain trivializes the divine and disrespects the sacred. Boy Blue’s reluctance is also linked to the disruption water suffers when it becomes slime, which Jean-Paul Sartre describes in *Being and nothingness* as “the agony of water” that lacks “the permanence within change that water has.” Upon completing an “accomplished break” into “fixed instability,” slime becomes an unwieldy mess that denies itself as an agent of change: being neither liquid nor solid, it can only melt into itself (Sartre quot. in Gordon: 4-5).

Time, memory, remembrance, water and slime are no different from colonized subjects: G’s passion of remembrance transforms his recollections into dreaming rivers that decant into territories of astonishment, leaving the dazed and beleaguered villagers to clean up the mess nature and their fellow men have made of their lives. For that matter, rather than one among countless other rural and urban centers overflowing with people too poor to go anywhere else, Creighton’s Village is as much a character in G’s counter-narrative as its inhabitants: time signals its birth and death even as it marks the transformations it has lived through long before G. was born.

The changes G. and others experience may not be easily perceptible, but they constitute a reality that outlasts what any revolution could accomplish. The villagers occupy what Richard Wright terms a “life in the borders” in his Introduction to the 1954 McGraw Hill edition of *In the castle of my skin* (Wright quot. in Jeffrey: 437). G. and the inhabitants of Creighton’s Village are colonial subjects standing simultaneously together and alone at the seashore as they watch the tide ebb and flow with each passing generation.

These characters embody the trope of the littoral as a space for solitary and communal reflection, (re)creation of the self and one's understanding of the world, as K.K. Jeffrey explains:

. . . beach iconography reinforces a human reality that can give voice to new meanings and interpretations in a global reality. As examined in terms of [*In the Castle [of My Skin]*], these human insights can be acquired during moments spent on the shoreline. . . . [A]s is the case with Lamming and this novel, these positions at the beach may be sought as a postcolonial response to subjugation, and in these moments of defiance and resistance, the man or woman, standing on the brink, can contemplate the effects colonization has had on his/her identity at the same time that he/she (re)examines the history and means he/she has or needs to acquire in order to actualize a cultural identity separate from an imperial motherland. (p. 437)

This assessment also applies to G. throughout the novel. While standing at the coast of Trinidad as a young man, G. might have realized that the bounty of memory, time and remembrance is an endless sea of finitude: the ocean remains long after the passing of human beings, forever becoming one Middle Passage after another.

As it was before and since the transatlantic slave trade, the shore is a place where different peoples, discourses, languages, histories, cultures, etc., meet. Just as the coastline is both land and sea without ever becoming one or the other, G. and his community are not entirely African, Arawak, or European: they were sired by seeds planted long ago by others. Recalling the eve of his departure, G. looks back on those seeds that taught him the ways of memory, time and remembrance:

Then the pebble returned present in its image on the sloping sand under the grape leaf, and I thought of them all in turn. Trumper, Boy Blue, Bob. The High School, the village, the first assistant. They had all arisen with the pebble making the feeling of separation a permanent sickness. The thought of seeing things for the last time. . . . For the last time I looked at the spot where I had placed the pebble, and then quickly returned my thoughts to Trumper's letter. It was difficult to decide which was less perplexing. I repeated the sentence with which he ended the letter. 'You don't understand, you don't understand what life is, but I'll tell you when I come and I am coming soon.' (Lamming: 227)

In G's eyes, memory, time and remembrance are coupled with the consciousness of being severed and alienated from his island, his people and self. Even if he visits Barbados regularly, Creighton's and its people will always be something far different from what he had known until his departure. After the pleasures of exile grow stale, the narrator regards his past, present and future as things of slime because they lack water's capacity for flow and change, yet can never become entirely solid and immutable. G. might not feel fondness or regret over what he left behind, yet his nostalgia is no less

palpable: as far as the young man is concerned, memory, time and remembrance comprise a holy space within which he may find little joy or sorrow, yet he must revisit it, if not out of love or duty, then at least to come to terms with himself as he finds and creates his place in the world.

G's song of himself overlaps with the adage that begins V.S. Naipaul's *A bend in the river*: "The world is what it is; men who are nothing, who allow themselves to become nothing, have no place in it." The peasant-turned-narrator refuses to become nothing, so he wields time and remembrance to recreate himself through discourse and narrative. At one point or another, G's train of thought reaches a stage where yesterday, today and tomorrow bleed into one another and become a viscous creature that sings its aqueous agony via a mind, heart and entrails visible within a flesh of blurred crystal. G. can no longer keep this "monster" imprisoned within the recesses of his mind: when the beast breaks free and devours him, the youth goes down without putting up much of a fight, yet he does not perish. Reborn in the way of sargasso and seafoam, Lamming's protagonist lies on the shore, where he allows life and death to solve and coagulate their eternal enmity within himself, as it does with his friends and all others G. has ever known.

In the castle of my skin is a colonial novel rooted in rootlessness by the ways it deals with the life and history of an impoverished Afro-Caribbean community as presented by one of its members. Unable as it is to challenge the official narratives of colonial Barbados, G's account catches enough holes in the master narrative to call this hegemonic plot into question, shedding further light into the complex interplays between official and marginal discourses, as well as their ability to compel their subjects to acquiesce to subjugation and domination while also causing them to question themselves and the world they live in. Ever conscious of its own complexities, Lamming's work explains itself, yet doing so confounds rather than simplifies its *terrae incognitae*. This novel is a place of twilight: its light cannot sublimate its darkness, and the darkness can never fully become its Other because it is a littoral in itself, forever playing a contrapuntus of obscure radiance in honor of strange (un)becomings.

REFERENCES

- Gordon, Lewis R. (2008). George Lamming the existentialist. *Center for Africana Studies Working Paper Series* 006. Available at <https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/32742/WP006.pdf>
- Jeffrey, K.K. (2012). George Lamming's *In the castle of my skin*: a littoral figure discovers self-identity and authorial language. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 2, 4, 431-453. Available at <https://www.google.com.pr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwjZp4Cos77SA>

hWDRiYKHY7TCfAQFggfMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.davidpublish-
ing.com%2Fdownload%2F%3Fid%3D7028&usg=AFQjCNH1D4Amy-
tgsg9YRNnQl9m6kIa5bow&bvm=bv.148747831,d.eWE

Lamming, George; Sandra Pouchet Paquet (Ed.) (1991, [1953]. *In the castle of my skin*.
Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Pouchet Paquet, Sandra (1991). Foreword. In George Lemming, *In the castle of my skin*
(pp. ix-xxxiii). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Saunders, Patricia J. (2007). Introduction. In Patricia J. Saunders, *Alien-nation and re-
patriation: translating identity in Anglophone Caribbean literature* (pp. 1-24).
Lanham: Lexington Books.

THE IMPORTANCE OF GHOSTS IN EDGAR MITTELHOLTZER'S *MY BONES AND MY FLUTE* AND WILSON HARRIS' *PALACE OF THE PEACOCK*

MARITZA V. CARDONA ORTIZ

UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO, RÍO PIEDRAS CAMPUS

The Caribbean is haunted. The Middle Passage, slavery, and the questioning of identity are only some of the reasons why a Gothic Caribbean exists. History is often splintered and memories are often shattered; therefore, the Caribbean is full of ghosts. The ghost is one of the most popular characters in Gothic literature. In "Ghost stories, bone flutes, and cannibal counter-memory" by Graham Huggan, it is stated that "It seems appropriate, then that among the Caribbean the most prolific form is the ghost story both from African/Amerindian oral sources and from a repository of Western literary fantasy" (p. 353). Edgar Mittelholzer's *My bones and my flute* and Wilson Harris' *Palace of the peacock* use the figure of the ghost to demonstrate that this particular character forces people to travel back to the past to confront traumatic historical (un)memories and attempt to reconfigure a fragmented Caribbean identity.

Several Caribbean works use the landscape to evoke a sense of terror from the reader, such as Herbert G. de Lisser's *The white witch of Rosehall* (1929) and Wade Davis' study *The serpent and the rainbow* (1985). These works represent the Caribbean landscape as a gateway for evil. An example of this can be seen in Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) where Heathcliff feels trapped and suffocated in Jamaica. In Caribbean works of fiction, often one often finds that the region is used to create a false sense of danger, by which "... myths that [had] originated in British folklore become racialized when seen through the prism of Gothic conventions and moved to a colonial setting" (Paravisini: 231). In such novels, the colonizer considers natives to be uncultured and uncivilized, giving those who want to colonize an excuse to exercise monstrous acts upon the colonized and their land. In *Discourse on colonialism*, Aimé Césaire states that:

...I think that these heads of men, these collection of ears, these burned houses, these Gothic invasions, this steaming blood, these cities that evaporate at the edge of the sword, are not to be easily disposed of. They prove that colonization, I repeat, dehumanizes even the most civilized man... (p. 41)

The land has not been able to absorb all of the blood shed due to countless injustices and acts of violence. As the forces of colonialism suffocate the colonized, they decide to fight back. Even though they are fighting because of the many injustices inflicted on them, this villainizes them all the more, not only in the eyes of the colonizer, but also in the eyes of most authors who decide to write about these as well. Sadly, many authors or readers fail to understand why Caribbean literature overflows with violence or why the Caribbean is haunted with ghosts from the past. Both Mittelholzer and Harris give voice to the importance of a haunted landscape and the meaning of ghosts in their works. Mittelholzer incorporates a slave uprising (The Berbice rebellion) that sets the premise of his ghost story and Harris' tale graphically depicts all the conquistadors whose great ambition was to find *El Dorado* without caring who they had to plunder, enslave, rape, or kill in the process. Even though these two great Caribbean writers incorporate ghosts in their works and use gothic elements in their tales, this aspect of their work has not been given the scholarly attention that it deserves.

Ghosts are necessary in Caribbean fiction because writers can use them to expose untold or forgotten histories, problems, and truths in a way that is accessible to readers. Michael Cox and R. A. Gilbert write that:

in literature the ghost story offered a way of anchoring the past to an unsettled present by operating in a continuum of life and death. In personal terms, ghosts were obvious, though still potent images of the last past sins, past promises, past attachments, past regrets, and could be used to confront and exorcise the demons of guilt and fear (Introduction: IX).

Ghosts also represent past lives and a spectral future. Ghost stories evolved from the oral tradition into the written form, and constitute one of the most popular and oldest sub-genres of the Gothic because they link the past with the present and the speculative future.

Ghosts remind us of past transgressions and therefore have the ability to materialize our fears as they pierce the veil of death and situate themselves amongst the living. Arthur F. Redding claims that ghosts in fiction "demand that they be hailed and recognized as genuine presences, even if they are not fully material" (p. 6). Even though they are not living beings, they embody their preoccupations and transmit them to the living. Redding continues: "Ghosts have legitimate power, articulate real pains and desires, and refuse fully to be explained away as fragments of diseased or troubled imaginations" (ibid.). Ghosts are sentient. Even though they cannot be explained through scientific methods they are very well present. Just as Gothic Caribbean fiction does, ghosts mold themselves to fit the time and place where they are needed. Gina Wisker explains that:

The postcolonial Gothic doubly destabilizes. Unlike conventional Gothic, which disturbs but frequently restores order, the postcolonial Gothic shifts what could be seen as order. So, at the end of the text, the reader cannot remain with a worldview free from the haunting of a newly exposed silence and hidden past,

free from the haunting of ghosted voices replacing hidden histories and versions and of a sense of living in a parallel universe where other people from other cultures perceive, interpret, value, and express quite differently from the orthodoxies influencing a reader unaware of postcolonial context. That the tests are both Gothic and postcolonial means they trouble versions of reality in a manner that is culturally inflected and redolent with traces of history and expression ignored and denied by received versions of colonial, imperial histories. (p. 411)

Such specters are entities that make people uncover buried pasts, not to resolve problems and forget about them, but to re-problematize the problems themselves, so that we can never forget the events from which those problems emerged. These buried pasts are not meant to be forgotten; they are meant to create awareness so that history does not repeat itself. Ghosts are linked to history; they do not want to escape it and we cannot escape from them. This is the premise that Mittelholzer uses in his novel *My bones and my flute*.

This ghost tale was published in 1955 and Mittelholzer's aim for the novel was to write "a good thrilling old-fashioned ghost story, with the mystery solved at the end" (p. 49). Even though this novel emulates Western Gothic fiction, including classic ghosts and a two dimensional timeline, Mittelholzer was able to create a wonderful ghost tale. In *With a Carib eye* (1958), Mittelholzer writes that he feels that many ghosts live in the Berbice River due to its violent past: "The thrill of one about to penetrate into a territory of ghosts – the ghosts of eighteenth century Dutchmen and their slaves who had peopled the banks for the Berbice for a hundred miles up" (p. 159). Mittelholzer's trip through time and space up the Berbice greatly influenced *My bones and my flute*.

The novel is set in the deep forest near the Berbice River in Guyana during the 1930s. The novel revolves around the ghost of Jan Voorman and his cursed parchment that falls under the care of middle class and upstanding citizens Milton and the Nevison family. Voorman was a Dutch planter who died during the Berbice slave rebellion in 1763. He made a pact with evil forces and created a curse:

He who touches this parchment seals himself in a pact with me, Jan Pieter Voorman, to listen to my music, and later, when I beckon, to join me in death. They [the slaves] have robbed me and massacred my wife and children... I shall never rest till the day that my bones and my flute are found and interred with Christian rites. I place a curse and plague upon the person or persons who may touch this parchment. (p. 74)

Even though Voorman wants to have a Christian burial to lay his soul to rest, he is willing to curse anyone into submission for them do to his will and punish them if they disobey. Voorman cannot rest after death because he dehumanizes himself as he usurps indigenous land and enslaves Africans in order to build his plantation and in the process gets involved with demons. He is the one to blame for his own demise:

Voorman himself is more than a generic ghoul. He clearly has affinities with Guyanese Detchman ghosts – the unslaughtered spirits of Dutchmen and women who died during the Berbice rebellion and who have, since 1764, roamed the land, seeking ways to reclaim their property, to vindicate their ultimate deaths, and gain a proper burial. (Niblett: 57)

As a slaveowner, Voorman keeps trying even after death to regain the power he had before the Berbice rebellion. Voorman's ghost is the representation of the Dutchman's power in Guyana. Milton and the Nevisons, even though they are initially skeptics, ultimately come to believe in the curse and in the existence of ghosts, and decide that they must save their lives. In order to do so, they become slaves to Voorman's ghost, having history repeat itself in a spectral way. The protagonists have forgotten about their past and Voorman's ghost forces them to remember their history of slavery. At the end of the novel, Milton and the Nevisons need to fight back to free themselves of Voorman's ghost.

At the same time, Mittelholzer also turns Voorman into a slave. First, he becomes slave to the flute, which has Carib/Amerindian influences, not caring for his family or his plantation. Voorman becomes a slave to the demons he calls "The Blacker Ones" as well. During 200 years his ghost has been suffering, roaming the Guyana landscape, waiting for someone to free his soul. Just like his slaves, Voorman becomes trapped and waits for liberation. Niblett states that:

Mittelholzer's novel could be read seeking to stage a ritual encounter, the narrative provides the framework in which the Dutchman ghost can appear and make manifest the violence of the plantation complex and the significance of 1763 as a turning point in Guyanese history (p. 57).

Even though Voorman is the traditional Gothic villain, as he haunts and torments the main characters, he serves the purpose of forcing them, and the reader, to face their history and anxieties. By incorporating these elements in his novel, Mittelholzer transforms his work of fiction into a category on its own: A Gothic Caribbean ghost story. Five years later, similar themes arise in *Palace of the peacock*.

Wilson Harris is another great Guyanese author who incorporates ghosts and hauntings in his works. In the 1998 note to *Palace of the peacock* Harris writes: "I must confess I have been haunted since childhood in British Guyana, South America, where I was born, by vanished cultures and places and kingdoms" (p. 9). Like Mittelholzer, Harris remembers colonial onslaught and bloodshed as part of history. *Palace of the peacock* relates the story of the crew of an expedition looking for the mythical *El Dorado* during the 16th century.

Even though the novel takes place in Guyana it represents the entire Caribbean because the crew is composed of Amerindian, European, and African descended men. Donne, a white colonizer, travels with his crew into the Guyanese jungle to recapture slaves who escaped his plantation. Like in *My bones and my flute*, the ghosts presented in the story

force the crew to confront their demons. What is peculiar about Harris' novel is that the crew themselves are also the ghosts in the story, yet they are not aware of it. When Donne's men decide to look for the villagers, they pass by a gravestone upon which their names have been carved, "the odd fact existed that their living names matched the names of a famous dead crew who had sunk in the rapids, and had been drowned to a man, leaving their names inscribed on Sorrow Hill which stood at the end of the falls." (p. 26) Antonio Benitez Rojo argues that:

The crew begins to understand life itself as being like the other crew, the one that dies in making the same trip. Thus, it knows its trip towards death is also toward a rebirth toward a second chance on earth, and this regeneration implies a physis integration aiming to reduce the distance between the ego and the unconscious. (p. 190)

The crew needed to go through multiple deaths in order to create a new consciousness of the land, of the people they were trying to recapture, and especially of themselves. As ghosts, their purpose is to go through a trial – or purgatory – in order for them to arrive at the Palace of the Peacock, a place of unity and clarity.

Louise Parkinson Zamora writes that "Ghosts embody the realistic sense that reality always exceeds our capacities to understand." (p. 498) Ghosts are three dimensional characters who have motivations and regrets like living beings. The crew is repeating their deaths unknowingly; however, they need to do so in order to purge their sins and the injustices they inflicted on the colonized: "In a ways, *Palace of the peacock* is about resurrections and overcoming death. Harris' notion and constant mention of ghosts, for example, "He [one of the crew members] had become a relative ghost for all as all ultimately became a ghost for everyone," (p. 68) indicates that ghosts are a form of healing to obtain the freedom, whether spiritual or mental.

Suzanna Engman states that "Ghosts in Caribbean literature exemplify how the Caribbean reaches outward, backward, and forward in time and space, connecting with the other Americas though the shared experience of the forced contact of cultures" (p. 102). Through the search of *El Dorado*, the crew becomes one. The novel is a combination of layers of symbolism between African, Amerindian, and European cultures. "By using ghosts, Harris embodies Gothic doubles; life and death, conqueror and conquered, and they relate harmoniously to new worlds and old worlds" (Ramchand: 124). The crew are ghosts of hunger and occluded history. They refuse to accept that they are ghosts, therefore, they must embark on a spiritual journey in which they realize "the destructive legacy left by Western imperialism to the colonies." Whenever they refuse to see this, they die and their ghosts have to relive memories to achieve the ultimate cathartic experience of reaching the Palace of the Peacock.

Through their search for *El Dorado*, the colonizers Donne and Voorman brought untold pain and suffering to the colonized. The use of ghosts in fiction brings to life everything that the Caribbean represents: its peoples, its land, its nature, and its history. Through

the use of ghosts, one can see that even though the forces of colonization continue to attempt to mentally or physically enslave us, the ghosts of our Caribbean past will always find a way to fight back until order is restored, or perhaps until ‘order’ is subverted. Mittelholzer’s *My bones and my flute* and Harris’ *Palace of the peacock* are wonderful testimonies to why ghosts are important in Caribbean fiction. Ghosts are an essential element in Caribbean literature, not just because they are considered to be scary, but more importantly because in a region where histories and memories have been repressed, they will never forget, and they will constantly force us to remember, feel, and above all hold our haunted past close to our hearts. Ghosts forces us to look at our history, as do Milton, the Nevisons and the expedition crew, so that we can begin to reconfigure our identities. Mittelholzer and Harris brilliantly use the character of the ghost to try to restore a balance which was seriously damaged by colonization. Ghosts do not rest, nor do they let us rest, until our demons are squarely acknowledged and dealt with.

REFERENCES

- Benitez-Rojo, Antonio (1996, [1992]). *The repeating island: the Caribbean and the postmodern perspective*. (Trans. James Marannis). Durham/London: Duke University Press.
- Césaire, Aimé (2000, [1955]). Discourse on colonialism. (Trans. Joan Pinkham). New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Cox, Michael & R. A. Gilbert (Eds.) (1991). *Victorian ghost stories*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Engman, Suzanna (2010). Haunting literatures of the Americas: the ghosts in Wilson Harris’ *Jonestown* and Erna Broadber’s *Luisiana*. In Dorsía Smith, Tatiana Tagirova, & Suzanna Engman (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on Caribbean literature and culture*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Harris, Wilson (1998 [1960]). *Palace of the peacock*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Huggan, Graham (2000). Ghost stories, bone flutes, cannibal countermemory. In Ken Gelder (Ed.), *The horror reader* (pp. 352-363). London: Routledge.
- Mittelholzer, Edgar (1958). *With a Carib eye*. London: Secker & Warburg.
- Mittelholzer, Edgar (2015, [1951]). *My bones and my flute: a ghost story in the old-fashioned manner*. England: Peepal Tree Press.
- Niblett, Michael (2014). Specters in the forest: gothic form and world-ecology in Edgar Mittelholzer’s *My bones and my flute*. *Small Axe*, 18, 2, 53-68.
- Paravisini-Gebert, Lizabeth (2002). Colonial and postcolonial gothic. In Jerrold E. Hogle (Ed.), *The Cambridge companion to gothic fiction* (pp. 229-258). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Parkinson Zamora, Lois (2005, [1995]). Magical romance/magical realism: ghosts in U.S. and Latin American fiction. In Lois Parkinson Zamora & Wendy B. Farris

- (Eds.), *Magical realism: theory, history, community* (pp. 477-550). Durham: Duke University Press.
- Ramchand, Kenneth (1998 [1960]). Pursuing the palace of the peacock. In Wilson Harris, *The Palace of the peacock* (pp. 119-138). London: Faber and Faber.
- Redding, Arthur F. (2011). *Haints: American ghosts, millennial passions, and contemporary gothic fictions*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press.
- Wisker, Gina (2007). Crossing liminal spaces: teaching the postcolonial gothic. *Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Language, Composition and Culture*, 7, 3, 401-424.

THE COLONIAL GAZE AND THE SEX SCENES IN AMMA DARKO'S *BEYOND THE HORIZON*

KOFI DARKOH-ANKRAH
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON

Introduction

A popular saying among linguistics students at universities in the West African state of Ghana is this: “*Se wonni akokoduro a mennyɛ Twi*” which means: “If you are not courageous don’t dare to read [the Ghanaian language] Twi”. The premise of this saying is that mentioning the sex organs and discussing related issues in many of the ancestral languages of Ghana and the rest of West Africa is not the taboo that it has become in the standardized (and ‘sanitized’) European languages of our colonizers. Michel Foucault (1978) rightly observes that “if sex is repressed, that is condemned to prohibition, nonexistence and silence, then the mere fact that one is speaking about it has the appearance of a deliberate transgression” (p. 6). Therefore, Akeem Lasisi (2008) cautions writers and their alter ego narrators that if they don’t want to write about sex, they should not follow their characters into their bedrooms. Unfortunately, many a narrator in Ghanaian fiction is reticent on sex matters. That said, I hold that sex, as a subject of literary study, should be mentioned and discussed anyway. In this context, it is interesting that stories by the “courageous” Ghanaian writer Amma Darko expose us to scenes of the [explicitly] sexual in vivid fashion and, sadly, many critics are shocked by it. This article investigates whether Darko’s treatment of sex in *Beyond the horizon* is an instance of transgressive pornography, or simply an act of calling a spade a spade for sex information and education purposes, and concludes decisively in favor of the latter position.

On a subject as riveting as sex, I find it bewildering when I attempt to explain why explicit depictions thereof are often met with vehement scorn, repudiation, censorship and evasion. One simple answer is that sex is a no-go area for puritans. That aside, narration using explicit sexual language is very common in fictional works penned around the globe, and Ghana is no exception. Amma Darko’s *Beyond the horizon*, *The housemaid*, *Not without flowers* and *Faceless* all feature episodic narrations on sex, while work by another female African writer Calyxte Beyala, such as *Femme nue*, *femme noire* [*Naked woman*, *black woman*] (2003) has received massive criticism for

being offensively erotic and pornographic. In this article I assert that the episodic narrations of sex and related issues in Darko's works are not pornographic but instead, in Foucault's words quoted above, an instance of the "mere fact that one is speaking about it" (1978: p. 6) as a way to convey depth of information and understanding, much in the same way as she addresses other issues.

While some narrators find explicit reference to things sexual distasteful and they resort to euphemisms, metaphors, symbols, evasion and silence, more courageous writers use plain, raw and exact language as a choice to represent the world as we experience it. Other Ghanaian texts that feature narrations of explicit sex include Ayi Kwei Armah's *Two thousand seasons*, *Fragments*, *The beautiful ones are not yet born*, *KMT: in the house of life*, and *Osiris rising*; Amma Ata Aidoo's *Changes*; Amu Dzoletso's *Money galore*; Benjamin Kwakye's *The clothes of nakedness*, and *The other cruxifix*; Mawuli Adzei's *Taboo*; Mohammed Naseehu Ali's "The manhood test", and others. Those who see these works as noxious, obscene, and pornographic can be seen as having internalized the patriarchal prohibitions of the colonial enterprise, especially the puritanical variety imposed by the British. In any case, many narrators feel compelled to present the truth of whatever they see in unvarnished language because they want their readers to understand and resonate with the text at the deepest levels possible.

Kofi Agyekum (2010) notes that, in cases of verbal abuse, one of the very few contexts where explicitly sexual references abound in languages such as English, it is a taboo to mention the sex organs in Akan tradition. He refers to Allan and BurrIDGE's (1991) rather strange observation that "the sex organs are unreasonable... stupid and even contemptible [and] in view of the behavior of our sexual organs, to ascribe the characteristics of a sex organ to someone is to dismiss them as not reasonable in their behavior ... and hence as contemptible" (p. 141). This brings to mind Ayi Kwei Armah's name "*Kotse ye Aboa*" ["The penis is a Beast"] for the village from which a ram is brought for the naming ceremony that eventually kills Kwesi's and Afua's baby in *Fragments* (p. 139). Writers who mention the sex organs and related issues are also classified as contemptible by some readers.

In relation to Blanchard (1985) and referring to Foucault (1978), Wexler (2004) states that: "our sexuality is trapped by the language that is meant to free it" (pp. 164-183). Attempting to "free" it takes us again to Wexler (pp.166-167) who says the following "although the aim of his [Foucault's] argument is how the repression of sexual discourse serves as "the regime of power-knowledge-pleasure that sustains the discourse on human sexuality in our part of the world" (p. 166) his "repressive hypothesis" also accounts for the shock value of sexual discourse." To Wexler, Foucault's hypothesis concerning the psychological and social repression of sexual discourse gives it what he calls "transgressive power" which when released "produces the pleasure of transgression." So that the thing that "sustains our eagerness to speak of sex in terms of repression is doubtless this opportunity to speak out against the powers that be, to utter truths and

promise bliss, to link together enlightenment, liberation, and a manifold pleasure, to pronounce a discourse that combines the fervor of knowledge, the determination to change the laws, and the garden of earthly delight” (Foucault, 1978: 7).

Another factor that has motivated the prohibition against sexually explicit fiction is religion, especially that imposed by the colonial hegemon. According to Verene (1972), St Augustine, considered to be the most influential thinker of the early centuries of Christian theology, connects sexuality to the problem of original sin (p. xix). Verene argues that “behind the customs and institutions relating to sex existing in any particular period in any particular society is the fundamental ethical question of how human beings ought to relate to their sexual natures...” (p. x). Reacting against Christian morality, and inspired by the relative lack of restriction that ancient Greek and Roman society had towards discourse on sex, Verene observes that beginning with the Renaissance and works such as Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, the sonnets of Aretino and the oeuvre of Rabelais, there has been increased interest and openness regarding sex in fiction (pp. xix-xx). He adds that from the age of Freud onward, some have claimed the freedom to discuss attitudes and social customs which have sex as a subject, with research into matters concerning human sexual activity increasing dramatically (p. xxiii).

According to Zoe Norridge (2012), in contemporary West African literature there has been an increase in the depiction of explicit sex scenes and “...sex has become a recurring theme of contemporary Nigerian literature [and] over the last decade, descriptions of sex and in particular sexual pleasure, have flourished in the works of African writers across the continent” (p. 19). Norridge makes a connection between explicit sex and the violence that accompanies political turbulence in her comparison of Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie’s *Half of a yellow sun* and Aminata Forna’s *The memory of love*. She observes that Adichie presents sensual and comprehensive narratives of sexual desire and coitus between her main adult characters and a tender but very disturbing account of the houseboy’s (Ugwu) awakening sexuality. (2012: 21). Norridge’s illustrations of how explicit sex and violence connect reminds us of how Darko also uses the language of explicit sex in the context of the atrocities that Mara, the central character in *Beyond the horizon*, braves in her stay abroad with her husband Akobi.

Many African writers [and their narrators] are often loquacious on the microscopic details of everything else apart from sex, an attitude, which I argue, is hypocritical especially because their fictional works are not meant for, and are not about children. So, how would we label a narrator who gives us details of politics, fashion, music, meals, wardrobe, sport and so on? Vociferous? Eloquent? Scholarly? Exact? Precise? Well-informed? If so why can’t narrators of matters related to sex also be described in a similar fashion, rather than marginalizing and castigating them? Norridge notes that sexual episodes in the works that she compares are packed with symbolic meaning and are at the same time interspersed with narrations of other events. She speculates that perhaps sexual intimacy is used as a means to an end so as to highlight the bigger subject

of experience with war. Darko's explicit language, I argue, is not simply or only a means to an end, but instead an expression of a voice, an attitude, a beginning and an end in and of itself. In her case, sex does not function only as an experience that signifies something larger than itself but is itself a major issue that deserves our attention.

Explicit sex in *Beyond the horizon*

The seemingly loose tongued narrators in Darko's stories go right on and tell whatever they see on matters relating to sex, along with discussion of adjunct issues such as gender, femininities, masculinities, violence, and ethics. This is characterized by some as pornography. Pornography usually relates to books, videos pictures and so on giving a description of and showing naked people and sexual acts which cause the viewers and readers to feel sexually excited. This is done in ways that many people find offensive. The term pornography itself comes with gradations, based on very vague criteria of judgement by an equally vague set of judges. Soft porn consists of movies, books, pictures, actions etc. that show and/or describe sexual activity in ways that are sexually exciting but not in what is judged to be a detailed or violent way. Hard porn similarly has to do with movies, pictures, books etc. that show sexual activity in what is judged to be a very detailed and sometimes violent way.

Chantelle Thauvette (2012) discusses pornography based on the definitions of the word found in the third and fourth editions of the Oxford English Dictionary, paying particular attention to how the definitions of the term have changed over time, not only in relation to the sensual and erotic, but also to the moral. She notes that "... to make the term pornography useful, in context... we would need to think of it

as a reading process, not a genre, where pornography refers to an interaction between reader and text, not to text or to authorial intent alone [and that] by shining a light on the relationship between text, reader, and context, such definitions of pornography show that the sexual pleasure this mode provides can be both moral and sensual, both pro-social and anti-social and that to understand the place of sex in a given culture we must understand how morality and sexuality can coincide. (p. 46)

Dako, Denkabe and Yitah (2006) say that in Darko's first two novels *Beyond the horizon* and *The housemaid*, sex is used as a means of control. Specifically, the Ghanaian men in Darko's texts make ends meet by sexually exploiting their women (p. 278). They note that while in *Beyond the horizon* the men use sex as a means to manipulate their women, in *The housemaid* it is the women who have the upper hand, using sex to control their men, adopting "essentially the interwoven survival strategies of fertility, sex, subservience, and exploitation" (p. 276). But they also note that there is a "bitter irony" in that the worth of those who deploy these strategies is "diminished" and devalued by

what they gain as a result. They assert that “the strategies in ... Darko’s novels, therefore, are as stark as the realities that spawned them” (p. 282).

Darko is not averse to having her narrators talk explicitly about sex. Challenging inhibitions, her narrators do not shy away from using “raw” language for that purpose in *Beyond the horizon*. Positioning the narrator Mara herself in the many sexual contexts of the plot, we find that though she is illiterate, she is informed about the scientific aspects of sex and the maze of cultural issues related to it. Mara understands that sex is a very important physiological need and expression of selfhood and for this reason, she rejects any act of sublimation such as masturbation in favor of having real physical contact with her husband in Germany. As narrator, Mara resists the temptation to be vague in her exposition, pointing to exactly what she experiences when she is with her husband in their bedroom.

This explicit representation of the sex ordeals she goes through with Akobi becomes a parallel to the public “open sea” image in Armah’s *The fragments*. Ossey’s wife would have us hear that Akobi: “... is a man ... and when he has a risen penis he will sleep with anything that has a vagina and leave the regret for later But here in the bathroom he didn’t sleep with you to let you bear him a son. Otherwise he wouldn’t have called for a condom. So he slept with you for the same reason that he used to sleep with you at home” (Darko, 1995: 86). In their woman to woman encounter and interaction in the secrecy of the bedroom, Ossey’s wife asks Mara:

“So be honest with me. How did he get his thing hard? Did you do it for him?”

“I was, to say the least, flabbergasted. “Did what?” I exclaimed at the top of my voice.”

“Make his thing hard for him!”

“Did you make his thing hard for him before he did it with you?”

“I never make his thing hard for him!” I retorted. Akobi always makes his thing hard for himself!”

Then in her own flabbergasted state and in curiosity she asks in return:

“Do you make Ossey’s thing hard for him before he sleeps with you,” I asked.

“Always”

“How?”

“... I rub it in my hands or... ah forget it, Mara, you won’t understand!”

“Or what?” I persisted.

“Or put it in my mouth.”

“Your what?” I howled like a crazy dog and the next moment I was out of bed and rushing to the bathroom. I don’t know why. I guess I just thought that I should throw up, but nothing came. I returned to bed” (Darko, 1995: 87-88).

Already married to Gitte, an ugly German woman, Akobi uses Mara as a sex “pawn” and “player” (Dako, Denkabe & Yitah, 2006: 173) to harvest money from her to take

care of Gitte. This story comes to us in as much detail as necessary for the reader to understand the hegemonic, tyrannical sexual experience that Mara experiences. The episode in no uncertain terms spells out the mistreatment women suffer at the hands of men while simultaneously exposing their vulnerability and yearning for a voice to liberate them from the brutalities they suffer. The heavy doses of explicit sex narration are therefore not in any way accidental, nor are they intentional pornography. This is highlighted by the fact that the language is not completely explicit, referring to Akobi's penis as "his thing" [in Akan, *nadeɛ no*], and when we encounter the language "make his thing hard for him", "rub it in my hand" and/or "put it in my mouth" she feels disgust. Instead of pornography, the graphic nature of this scene is unavoidable in the development of the plot as well as in the development of our understanding of Mara and our connection to her as readers. In being explicit, the narrator is able to expose the evil intent behind the act of domestic rape.

Oral sex has become ordinary to the now Ghanaian-German characters but to Mara it is a nauseating thing. Birth control is mentioned in the context of whose duty it is to make provision for it, the female or the male. The narrator implies that it is the duty of the woman, but when Mara does not provide it, Akobi, the man, takes up the "responsibility" to ask for one from his friend Ossey, while Ossey and his wife are themselves having intercourse in the same apartment separated only by a curtain, a curtain which is only a sham of a symbol cosmetically separating something hypocritically made not to be seen. The narrator also addresses differences in cultures with her reference to polygamy, noting that if while such a practice may be allowed in Africa, at least the sexual acts involved would not take place in the presence of the other wives. In Europe however, Mara finds herself in the same apartment where Akobi has sex with Gitte, something that is offensive and disgusting to her. Akobi's inhumane treatment of Mara becomes even more apparent when he contracts a group of at least twenty men to have an orgy with her. If there is any reticence on the part of the narrator in her depiction of sexual activity, we witness it here: "Then they were all around me, many hairy bodies, and they were stripping me, fondling me, playing with my body, pushing my legs apart, wide, wide apart. As for the rest of the story, I hope that the gods of Naka didn't witness it". (Darko, 1995: 111)

Asaah (2006) argues that Europhone African literature to a very large extent portrays some dynamism in the way the writers respond to sex as a taboo subject (p. 496) but he concludes "...that whereas African writers thematize sex, most of them are stylistically and technically reticent about the depiction of erotica and genitalia (p. 511). Nabutanyi (2014) criticizes this reticence because: "...given that child prostitution thrives in contexts of secrecy and fear it is its exposure as depicted in *Faceless* that demystifies it and thus can be read as the first step toward enacting platforms to discuss it" (p. 91). In a similar vein, Green-Simms (2016) celebrates the increasing inclusion of homosexual relations in Nigerian fiction as providing Africans with a platform for countering the

particularly poisonous strains of homophobia with which British colonialism infected the continent and which US fundamentalist Christian churches are currently incubating and developing into ever more virulent mutant forms. If we are to effectively challenge the patriarchal enclosure of our bodies and our loves that have enabled the hegemonic colonization of our minds and relationships, we have to resist the propensity to fall back into the comfort zone Asaah characterizes as a “sense of propriety [that] is a reflection of taboo-adherence and the desire, as it were, not to speak with the whole mouth” (2006: 511). Darko, to a great extent, reclaims her “whole mouth” by breaking out of this concealment and hypocrisy, and in the process she achieves, in my opinion, an admirable and moving degree of artistic naturalism in her work.

REFERENCES

- Agyekum, Kofi (2010). *Akan verbal taboos in the context of the ethnography of communication*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Allan, Keith & Kate Burridge (1991). *Euphemism and dysphemism: language used as shield and weapon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Armah, Ayi Kwei (2006, [1970]). *Fragments*. Popenguine: Per Ankh.
- Asaah, Augustine H. (2006). To speak or not to speak with the whole mouth: textualization of taboo subject in Europhone African literature. *Journal of Black Studies*, 36, 4, 497-514.
- Beyala, Calixthe (2003). *Femme nue, femme noire. [Naked woman black woman]*. Paris: Albin Michel.
- Blanchard, Lydia (1985). Lawrence, Foucault and the language of sexuality. In Michael Squires & Dennis Jackson (Eds.), *D.H. Lawrence's "Lady": a new look at "Lady Chatterley's lover"* (pp. 17-35). Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Dako, Kari, Aloysius Denkabe & Helen Yitah (2006). Pawns and players: the women in Amma Darko's novels. In Christine Oppong, M. Yaa P.A. Oppong & Irene K. Odotei (Eds.), *Sex and gender in the era of AIDS: Ghana at the turn of the millennium* (pp. 273-286). Accra: Sub Saharan Publishers.
- Darko, Amma (1995). *Beyond the horizon*. London: Heinemann.
- Darko, Amma (1998). *The housemaid*. London: Heinemann.
- Darko, Amma (2003). *Faceless*. Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers.
- Darko, Amma (2007). *Not without flowers*. Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers.
- Foucault, Michel (1978, [1976]). *The history of sexuality* (Trans. Robert B. Hurley). (3 Vols.). New York: Pantheon Books.
- Green-Simms, Lindsey (2016). The emergent queer: homosexuality in Nigerian fiction in the 21st Century. *Research in African Literatures*, 47, 2, 139-161.
- Lasisi, Akeem (2008). If you don't want to write about sex, don't follow your character into the bedroom Chimamanda. *Punch*, 27 Aug. Accessed May 2017

- <http://www.punching.com/Articl.aspx?theartic=Art20080827253023>
- Nabutanyi, Edgar (2014). Documenting child prostitution in Amma Darkoh's *Faceless*. *English in Africa*, 41, 2, 79-93.
- Norridge, Zoe (2012). Sex as synecdoche: intimate languages of violence in Chimamanda Ngozie Adichie's *Half of a yellow sun* and Aminata Forna's *The memory of love*. *Research in African Literatures*, 43, 2, 18-39.
- "Pornography" www.oed.com accessed May 2017.
- Thauvette, Chantelle (2012). Defining early modern pornography: the case of "Venus and Adonis". *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 12, 1, 26-48.
- Verene, Donald P. (Ed.) (1972). *Sexual love and western morality*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Wexler, Joyce Piell (2004). Sex isn't everything (but it can be anything): the symbolic function of extremity in modernism. *College Literature*, 31, 2, 164-183.

LENGUAJE Y FIGURA: ESTUDIO DE PERSONAJES INUSUALES EN EL LIBRO *MUNDO CRUEL* DEL ESCRITOR PUERTORRIQUEÑO LUIS NEGRÓN

ANISSA M. ORTEGA DÍAZ

JOMAYRA PIMENTEL RODRÍGUEZ

UNIVERSIDAD DE PUERTO RICO, RÍO PIEDRAS

Luis Negrón nace en Guayama, un municipio al sur de Puerto Rico, en 1970. Estudió periodismo; además, es librero y curador de arte. Escritor de *Tres golpes* un libro de crónicas, y de *Mundo cruel* una antología de cuentos, que describe y da visibilidad a la otredad. Vivir en Puerto Rico, una colonia de Estados Unidos en el Caribe, presenta intrínsecamente un escenario político-social complejo. Puerto Rico es un país conservador en el que las creencias cristianas más radicales han calado hondo en el imaginario moral de la población. Si fusionamos los avatares políticos a las concepciones morales predominantes en la sociedad podemos deducir que la “otredad” no tiene un camino fácil hacia su visibilización. Prueba de esta dificultad es la reducción de la mujer negra, de las figuras dominicanas y de la comunidad LGBTQIA a papeles literarios estereotipados o a la no aparición.

En este contexto social se publica *Mundo cruel* una antología de nueve cuentos en los cuales Negrón les da vida y voz a dos grupos marginados e invisibilizados en la literatura puertorriqueña, los homosexuales y los dominicanos. Siendo el mismo Negrón parte de la comunidad LGBTQIA y vecino de Santurce, una comunidad con una alta población de hombres y mujeres provenientes de la República Dominicana, sus personajes rompen con todas las representaciones anteriores de la literatura puertorriqueña. Este estudio pretende darles una mirada profunda a los personajes inusuales que son presentados en esta obra y al mismo tiempo exponer, desde una perspectiva lingüística y una crítica literaria actual, la invisibilización de los dos grupos antes mencionados. En pos de nuestro fin, estudiaremos las distintas representaciones que aparecen en los cuentos sobre la homosexualidad y analizaremos el personaje de Alma, la única mujer dominicana con voz propia en el libro.

Señala Ignacio Echevarría (2016) en el prólogo de *Mundo cruel*, “loquerío desmeleñado, picaresca sexual, irresistible propensión al melodrama y empleo recurrente de los registros lingüísticos del habla”. *Mundo cruel* no es importante solo porque da voz a comunidades marginadas en la sociedad puertorriqueña, sino porque utiliza la voz de

quien se escribe. Es decir, más Negrón no usa el mismo registro, ni el mismo léxico, más bien se podría interpretar que son los personajes quienes escriben sus propios cuentos o historias.

En los últimos tiempos se ha trabajado arduamente en el Occidente para y por la aceptación, inclusión y el respeto de grupos no tradicionales. Sin embargo, día a día en nuestra sociedad caribeña podemos notar como se “aceptan” ciertos tipos de homosexuales, y se limita hasta dónde debe llegar su comportamiento o conducta. Parece ser que Luis Negrón les dio voz a todos y cada uno de los tipos de homosexuales con sus particularidades, comportamientos y peculiar jerga. Puntualiza Carlos Pardo (2016) que estos relatos: “no son sólo una comunidad gay, sino una picaresca de los excluidos. Esta limitación autoimpuesta, que parecería restarle ambición, por el contrario, le permite una escritura de sobreentendidos, confiada y empática, con una recurrencia a la caricatura como forma de resistencia, de protección”.

Es así y no de otra manera que se cruzan fronteras y se construyen puentes, rompiendo con el estereotipo del homosexual adinerado, culto, sumiso; ese que es “aceptado” socialmente. No obstante, aquellos señalados despectivamente como locas – los homosexuales afeminados – son totalmente excluidos y marginados; afirma Negrón (2017) en una entrevista:

Claro, porque también la pobre es la loca que no le gusta a nadie, la que incomoda, la que es más difícil de controlar. Porque ahí no solo bregas con la homosexualidad, también con la vulgaridad, con la cursilería, con la pobreza. Es que la gente cree que los gays somos ricos, y se lo imaginan a uno con champán, con dinero. Nada que ver. Lo que sí debemos ser las locas es malas. Nadie que ha sobrevivido al maltrato va a ser demasiado pendejo como para dejarse tratar mal otra vez. Mi libro no se trata de los gays, mi libro se trata de las mariconas. Ser gay, al final, es un estatus social. Y el miedo que hay es no ser parte de esa élite.

Más allá de un constructo o un estatus social, podemos encontrar dentro de la homosexualidad distintas formas de manifestación y junto a ellas “la modificación de estructuras jergales como estrategia lingüística que se emplea para establecer nuevas palabras y/o representaciones semánticas; y muchas veces, a través de las mismas, se matizan la identidad y la visión de mundo” (Anthony Díaz, 2016). Como ejemplo de esto hemos hecho una selección de los cuentos de *Mundo cruel* con distintas representaciones gays. En los cuentos “La Edwin” y “Por Guayama”, se destaca el tipo de homosexual que se denomina como “la loca”. Es el homosexual que suele ser satirizado en las comedias; es extremadamente afeminado, entre sus profesiones se encuentran el estilismo, el fashionismo y ser maquillista, roles asignados socialmente para la mujer. La loca tiene una particularidad en el habla que no se encuentra con frecuencia en otros tipos de gays, entre su vocabulario se encuentran palabras como “mala”, “ella” y “perra” para referirse

a cualquier hombre o mujer que se vista bien o que haya logrado algo fenomenal. Además, utilizan los términos patería y pato (a), que suelen ser despectivos para referirse a situaciones o personas cursis, o algún gesto bueno.

En el cuento “El vampiro de Moca” se presenta al homosexual conocido como El Daddy o el Papi; es un homosexual adulto, en su mayoría hombres de dinero, con un buen estatus social y alguna profesión de “prestigio”. Al Papi se le conoce así por la edad y su experiencia de vida, son personas cultas que nunca o casi nunca se le verá actuando o hablando como una loca.

En el cuento titulado “Botella” se presenta al homosexual bujarrón o bugarrón, quien suele tener apariencia muy varonil. En muchos casos, como en este, hombres heterosexuales, casados o en alguna relación con una mujer. El personaje tiene relaciones amorosas y encuentros sexuales con otros hombres homosexuales mayores que él. El nombre Botella lo tiene otro personaje que carga siempre con una botella de cloro para limpiar(se) cualquier enfermedad que pueda haber contraído al tener sexo con otro hombre. Sin embargo, se puede deducir que esto va más allá de acabar con una “enfermedad”, es querer borrar de su cuerpo una conducta socialmente prohibida.

En resumen, Ana Lydia Vega resalta en el prólogo de *Mundo cruel* (2011) “El mundillo gay, microcosmos enclavado en el intramuros capitalino, es el protagonista indiscutible del libro. Ese mundillo interactúa con otros, entre los cuales se destacan el de los frequentadores de barras y licorerías, el de los inmigrantes dominicanos...”. El lenguaje ha sido un método de resistencia entre las comunidades socialmente marginadas, manteniendo así una manera de entenderse y solidarizarse entre ellos.

Las comunidades que convergen en *Mundo cruel* tratan de desarticular los discursos heteronormativos, raciales y discriminantes. Estos cuentos exponen historias de la cotidianidad que todos conocemos, pero ignoramos, porque venimos cargados con discursos de clases dominantes que nos hacen señalar a aquellos socialmente desaventajados. Hoy es más necesario que nos (de)construyamos constantemente, que miremos, que escuchemos, que nos entendamos como personas diferentes; porque al final eso somos, un bonche de distintos en un mismo suelo.

En el cuento “Muchos o de cómo a veces la lengua es bruja” Luis Negrón se narra la conversación entre dos madres identificadas como; madre preocupadísima y madre preocupadísima también. ¿Por qué están tan preocupadas estas madres? Bueno, porque son “muchos” dicen ellas. Muchos homosexuales, más de los que se identifican abiertamente y están en todos sitios. Las madres preocupadísimas tratan el tema cual si fuera una grave epidemia, la epidemia del homosexualismo y, ¿A qué madre no le preocupa que su hijo o algún familiar puede ser afectado por una epidemia?

Entre esos apestados se encuentra el hijo de Alta, una mujer dominicana y profesional que es vecina de las preocupadísimas madres. Según ellas, este niño se pasa viendo novelas y eso “es cosa de nenas”, además, cuenta una de las madres que una vez uno de sus niños se antojó de un peluche rosa (miren que atrevimiento) y ella obviamente lo

reprendió (más vale reprender esas cosas a tiempo). Guiada por la preocupación de esta grave epidemia la madre preocupada aconsejó a Alta y le contó a la madre preocupadísima también lo que Alta le respondió y citamos:

MP: Pero óyete el cuento. Me dice la muy malagradecida (refiriéndose a Alta), que “no se preocupe vecina, que a ese nene se le está criando sin complejos. Moléstele a quien le moleste – hablando duro como para que el marido la escuchara –, que bastante ya tiene con ser hijo de una dominicana y aquí hay mucho prejuicio” y la madre preocupada le dice: “por eso mismo te lo digo, porque después va a ser peor para él”.

Y así, hablando de esos que estaban infectados de la terrible epidemia del homosexualismo, se va alejando la escena de las madres hasta perderse en las calles de Santurce, barrio sanjuanero en donde se desarrolla la conversación entre estas madres tan preocupadas.

En 1999 Marie Ramos Rosado publica el libro *La mujer negra en la literatura puertorriqueña*. En este trabajo Rosado pone de relieve que, hasta ese momento, la mujer negra en la literatura puertorriqueña no había sido un tema de estudio. Esta falta de interés en el estudio de la mujer negra se debe a que hasta antes de la década del 70' la mujer negra en la literatura puertorriqueña aparece poco y generalmente como personaje silueta; es la sirvienta, la amante, la bruja, etc. El personaje silueta no habla, no tiene identidad propia y es igual a todos los de su clase. Y, cuando es representada la mujer puertorriqueña en la literatura dice Monserrate Santana que: “...la mujer de clase media, la burguesa es la que con más frecuencia aparece en la literatura. La jíbara aparece de vez en cuando y es el tipo que mejor encarna la verdadera hija del país. La mestiza y la negra no aparecen con mucha frecuencia, y la mujer libre, de ideas avanzadas empieza a ser considerada por los literatos” (p. 98).

Ramos Rosado señala con acierto que las causas de que a la mujer solo se le haya representado de forma estereotipada son los marcos morales e ideológicos de la sociedad en la que se escribe: “Ya que nuestra cultura no solo es sexista, sino además racista y clasista, necesariamente encontraremos todas estas situaciones reflejadas en nuestra literatura. Y esto es así porque, para hacer literatura, se parte de una realidad social y un momento histórico específico”.

La década del 70' presenta una metamorfosis en la literatura puertorriqueña. Se presenta el proceso colonizador en todo su apogeo y cómo este funde el cerebro de los individuos. Esta década, 20 años después de establecido el Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico, 20 años después de la política pública conocida como “Manos a la Obra” que prometía traer progreso a la isla y que fue impulsada por el gobernador Luis Muñoz Marín, esta fue la década de la desmitificación. En este tiempo la mujer comienza a ocupar papeles protagónicos, pasa de ser personaje silueta a ser personaje principal.

De esa época es importante señalar la obra de Luis Rafael Sánchez. En sus escritos la mujer es protagonista, sin embargo, se representa de forma caricaturesca para usarla

como sátira social y política. Son mujeres, en palabras de la académica Ramos Rosado, fársicas. En esta década no solo comienzan a aparecer protagonistas mujeres en la literatura, también comienzan a aparecer en la vida real. Así es importante destacar el trabajo de la escritora Rosario Ferré. Su obra es innovadora porque toca temas como la homosexualidad, el incesto y la violación doméstica por parte del esposo de la víctima desde el punto de vista femenino. Aunque estos temas habían sido tratados con anterioridad en nuestra literatura nunca se habían presentado desde los ojos de una mujer. Su obra también abre un camino hacia la desmitificación de la mujer.

Sin embargo, quien más éxito tiene en la desmitificación y la presentación cruda de la mujer puertorriqueña es la escritora Ana Lydia Vega. En sus cuentos la mujer es un personaje complejo, lleno de matices y es un personaje en lucha. Se subvierte el papel de mujer dócil, doméstica y sumisa y es el hombre que comienza a tener personajes siluetas. Vega reivindica el papel de la cultura popular, cultura que ha sido desplazada y despreciada estética e ideológicamente en favor de la cultura dominante, que en el mayor de los casos no es la verdadera cultura del pueblo pobre. A ella también se le atribuye comenzar a hablar del valor lingüístico y social del spanglish en Puerto Rico. En los 70', nace una literatura de ruptura, alzan su voz los proletarios, los negros y las mujeres, en resumen, los marginados.

En la década del 30' hubo un gran exilio de dominicanos y dominicanas a Puerto Rico debido a la dictadura de Rafael Leonidas Trujillo. Con el tiempo, estos grupos de exiliados se asentaron en varias regiones de la capital. Sin embargo, y a pesar de que han tomado parte activa en la economía de varias zonas sanjuaneras, el dominicano carga con el estigma de extranjero, de negro, de peligroso y con todos los demás estigmas que una sociedad racista y clasista, como la que es impulsada desde las esferas del poder, atribuye a los extranjeros (Martínez, 1998).

Cuando se representa una figura dominicana en la literatura puertorriqueña, se suele presentar, por lo general, un hombre con todos los estereotipos que le atribuye la sociedad puertorriqueña. Para los puertorriqueños el dominicano es el "otro". A pesar de que han proliferado en la literatura los estudios sobre la mujer, hay una falta de interés por el papel de la mujer dominicana en la sociedad y en la literatura. En *Mundo cruel*, Alta es un personaje inusual porque rompe con todos los estereotipos sociales que se le atribuyen no solo a la población dominicana sino a la mujer misma. Por primera vez se reconoce la existencia de la dominicana en convivencia con la sociedad puertorriqueña. Alta cruza las fronteras del racismo, del sexismo y de la xenofobia. Alta no es la concubina o la esposa sometida tampoco es la sirvienta o el personaje silueta, por el contrario, es una mujer educada, es la esposa legítima y alza la voz sin miedo cuando difiere. El marido de Alta es un personaje silueta aquí, se invierten los papeles y tenemos a una mujer oprimida en plano protagónico. Alta, también es consciente de su opresión por ser mujer y dominicana y contrario a las madres preocupadísimas, no presenta una actitud de desprecio hacia la posibilidad de que su hijo sea homosexual. Por otra parte,

aunque las figuras de las “madres preocupadísimas” se utilicen para realizar una crítica social muy pertinente a nuestros tiempos, la representación de dos mujeres “chismeando” hace que el cuento recree otro estereotipo adjudicado a la mujer: el chisme. La razón por la que se destaca la figura de Alta, a pesar de que el cuento recrea un estereotipo negativo de la mujer, es porque “las madres preocupadísimas” con sus comentarios homofóbicos y xenofóbicos se hacen quedar mal a ellas mismas mientras realizan, sin querer, la conciencia social de un personaje del cual no se espera tal comportamiento. Alta, en este sentido, es la reivindicación de la mujer en el cuento. La redención de la figura femenina en el relato llega desde una de las personas más oprimidas en nuestra sociedad: una mujer dominicana. No tan solo es novedosa la forma en que Negrón trata el tema de la homosexualidad, también es innovadora la manera en que construye personajes y crítica social. En el contexto de “Muchos” la mujer puertorriqueña está en ventaja social porque está en su país y, por tanto, no carga con los prejuicios y estereotipos que se le adjudican a la mujer dominicana. Sin embargo, la mujer dominicana es la que muestra una actitud de avanzada, quedando las “madres preocupadísimas” como personajes retrógrados, homofóbicos y sin ninguna conciencia social, contrario a lo que el jactancioso imaginario popular puertorriqueño pueda pensar. Desde la literatura podemos crear mundos nuevos, mundos que nos ayuden a cruzar las fronteras de la otredad y a construir puentes que nos acerquen y nos permitan mirarnos como iguales.

REFERENCIAS

- Alzate, Sergio (2017). ‘Yo no soy gay, soy loca’: Luis Negrón. *El Tiempo*. <http://www.eltiempo.com/lecturas-dominicales/entrevista-a-luis-negron-autor-de-mundo-cruel-98192>
- Bal, Mieke. (2006, [1990]). *Teoría de la narrativa*. (Trans. Javier Franco). Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra.
- Díaz Vázquez, Anthony (2016). La jerga de la comunidad homosexual de Puerto Rico. In Nicholas Faraclas et al. (Eds.), *Celebrating multiple identities* (pp. 179-190). Curaçao/Puerto Rico: UoC/UPR.
- Herrera Mora, Myrna (2008). El exilio dominicano en Puerto Rico y las mujeres. In *Mujeres Dominicanas 1930 – 1961: antitrujillistas y exiliadas en Puerto Rico* (pp. 95-124). San Juan: Isla Negra.
- Martínez-San Miguel, Yolanda (1998). De ilegales e indocumentados: representaciones culturales de la migración dominicana en Puerto Rico. *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, 4, 147-173.
- Negrón, Luis (2011). *Mundo cruel*. San Juan: Libros AC.
- Pardo, Carlos (2016). Gueto, humor y resistencia. https://elpais.com/cultura/2016/07/11/babelia/1468246640_205613.html

- Ramos Rosado, María E. (1999). *La mujer negra en la literatura puertorriqueña: cuentística del 70*. San Juan: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.
- Vega, Ana Lydia (2011). Ana Lydia Vega presenta “Mundo cruel”. *80grados Prensa sin prisa*, 6 de mayo de 2011, <http://www.80grados.net/ana-lydia-vega-presenta-mundo-cruel/>

CANEFIELDS, GOLDEN MONGOOSES, AND FACELESS MEN: TRAUMA THEORY AND *THE BRIEF WONDROUS LIFE OF OSCAR WAO*

KLAAS BANT, RIJKSUNIVERSITEIT GRONINGEN

Introduction, theoretical framework and historical context

Trauma is a salient feature of human life, and is, as such, often represented in literature. Historical fiction often uses a backdrop of trauma and the traumatic experience in the form of violence inflicted on whole groups of people through events such as the Holocaust, colonialism, and numerous other incidents of mass subordination and attack. And, many of these literary works focus on a more personal type of trauma such as Junot Díaz' novel *The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao* (henceforth *OW*) which deals with both historical and literary trauma. The novel is set in the present day United States but focuses on the lives of people in the Dominican Republic and its diaspora dating from the 1940s. The De Leon family is burdened by the experiences of an extraordinarily cruel dictatorship under Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina as well as a curse (*fukú*) put on the family by Rafael Trujillo himself. The narrator and the characters in the novel are inherently self-aware of both the national trauma of Trujillo's dictatorship and the more personal *fukú*, which plagues three generations of the De Leon family. Considering this self-awareness, *OW* presents an interesting perspective on traumatic experiences and how trauma is addressed with varying degrees of effectiveness. Analysis of the literary trauma in *OW* provides insight into the effects of trauma with respect to the fictional De Leon family and may provide insight into the real Trujillo legacy on the Dominican people as a whole. Analysis begins by uncovering a number of recurring themes in the novel and discussing these through trauma theory and symbolic imagery. Since the themes and images occur throughout three generations of the De Leon family, each generation will be discussed in different sections to provide a clear view of the consequences of the traumatic images for family members in their specific contexts. Although trauma theory has been much debated since its conception, it is one of the most effective literary theories for the analysis of historical fiction. However, many scholars criticize traditional approaches in trauma theory for a number of reasons that are well summarized by Visser in terms of: "trauma theory's Eurocentric, event-based conception of trauma; its too-narrow focus on Freudian psychoanalysis; and its deconstructionist approach that closes off other approaches to literary trauma" (2015: 252).

In response to these points of criticism, a new model of trauma theory has been offered that accounts for “the prolonged, cumulative hurt of long years of repression that constitutes the trauma of colonialism, with its repeated and cumulative stressor events” (p. 252) and “the trauma of concrete historical factuality: of dispossession, of land loss, and of instances of racial discrimination” (p. 254). This new theory includes “rethink[ing] trauma as ‘collective, spatial, and material (instead of individual, temporal, and linguistic)’” (p. 253) and has been particularly useful as a tool for analyzing historical fiction that makes use of a colonial context. Considering the fact that the Dominican Republic has been a Spanish and French colony, and that the colonial experience can be comparable to life in a dictatorship, Visser’s version of a decolonized trauma theory will be used to discuss the depiction of trauma in *OW*.

Further theoretical background is provided by Michelle Balaev, who states, “Trauma causes a disruption and reorientation of consciousness, but the values attached to this experience are influenced by a variety of individual and cultural factors that change over time” (2014: 4). In other words, trauma can cause changes in people, but these changes differ per individual and per culture. The changes and disruptions brought about by trauma and the different forms which they can take can be seen very clearly in *OW*’s national and personal traumas over three generations. Balaev also notes that analysis using trauma theory “may function to acknowledge the impact of suffering on individuals and communities” (p. 4). A similar claim is made by Buelens, Durrant, and Eaglestone, who claim that “Trauma theory is ... an attempt to trace the inexhaustible shapes ... of human suffering and of our responses to that suffering” (2014: 7). Individual responses to suffering as a result of trauma are an integral part of *OW*. Similar traumas affect family members in different manners, and the way trauma is handled by each character influences their eventual fate. As such, decolonial trauma theory with recognition of variation in individual responses to trauma is well suited to the analysis of *OW*. Political history and its enduring impact are vital themes of the novel. The importance of the historical context is clear from the opening pages of *OW*, which include ironic footnotes “For those of you who have missed your mandatory two seconds of Dominican history” (Díaz, 2007: 2)¹. The footnotes detail how the U.S.-backed dictator Trujillo reigned over the Dominican Republic for thirty-one years through methods which included coercion, intimidation and violence, including various cases of murder. The footnotes explain how Trujillo was more powerful and terrible than other Latin American dictators and that people believed he commanded superhuman powers, which is best illustrated in the country’s national slogan, “Dios y Trujillo [God and Trujillo]” (p. 3), and in the description of “his almost *supernatural* abilities” (p. 3, emphasis in original). Díaz outlines a number of Trujillo’s acts of terror, including the 1937 Haitian genocide, as tools that his corrupted leaders used to exploit both people and natural resources to extend their own wealth and political power. Due to the perpetual threat of such acts,

¹ All page references henceforth refer to *OW* (Díaz, 2007) unless indicated otherwise.

Dominicans lived in constant fear of physical and mental torment brought on by Trujillo's government. Such a state of perpetual fear was also partly due to the supposed ability of Trujillo to place a curse or *fukú* on people. Originating in Africa, the Dominican *fukú* was said to be a curse which caused transgenerational and transnational trauma (Gantz, 2015: 127) and such a *fukú* plays an integral part in the narrative of OW.

OW is the story of the title character Oscar de Leon and members of his extended Dominican family, including his mother Beli, his maternal grandfather Abelard, and La Inca, Beli's de-facto mother. The narrator of the story, Yuniór, is not a family member but has close connections to the family as Oscar's college roommate and his sister's ex-boyfriend. His narrative follows a non-linear timeline, with the focus of each part shifting between different members of Oscar's family. However, each part focuses heavily on the *fukú* and trauma in the life of each character.

Abelard's trauma

Abelard Luis Cabral, Beli's father and Oscar's grandfather, was a respected surgeon and wealthy man in the mid-1940s Dominican Republic. Faced with the prospect of having his daughters raped by Trujillo, he attempted to protect them as much as possible by hiding them and restricting their exposure to the corrupt leader. Four weeks after Abelard forbade his wife and eldest daughter to attend one of Trujillo's parties and a short time before he was arrested by Trujillo's secret police and put in prison, Socorro, Abelard's wife, dreamt that a "faceless man was standing over her husband's bed ... and then the next night she dreamed that he was standing over her children too" (p. 237). After being apprehended for a lie, Abelard is slandered, forced to undergo a mock trial, and sentenced to eighteen years in prison. Soon after the trial, Beli was "born black" (p. 248), which the family considers a bad omen. In the following years, Socorro commits suicide, Beli is sold as an infant slave, Abelard's eldest daughter Jackie is found drowned in a near-empty pool, her sister Astrid is hit with a stray bullet, and Abelard is tortured to such a degree that he lives the rest of his life in an "imbecilic stupor" (p. 251).

Abelard's actions can be considered to have triggered the familial trauma. Although Abelard was imprisoned due to his insubordination towards Trujillo, both indirectly for failure to offer his daughters to the dictator and directly for lying, Yuniór asserts that an additional reason for his incarceration could have been a book Abelard was supposedly writing about Trujillo's supernatural abilities, including the *fukú*. Yuniór explains:

[Abelard's] shit, if we are to believe the whispers, was an exposé of the supernatural roots of the Trujillo regime! A book about the Dark Powers of the President, a book in which Abelard argued that the tales the common people told about the president – that he was supernatural, that he was not human – may in some ways have been true (p. 245).

Considering this claim's unrealistic premise and the novel's many supernatural and comic-book influences, it is easy to dismiss this statement as part of Yuniór's imagination. However, the appearance of the Faceless Man in Socorro's dreams lends credibility to the connection between Trujillo and the *fukú*. The Faceless Man is an indicator of doom; Abelard is tortured and imprisoned and many of his family members die soon after the appearance of this unidentified man. The Faceless Man can be seen as a personification of a *fukú*, an interpretation which is also argued by Anne Garland Mahler, who states that the "curse of the *fukú* is physically embodied in the novel by a Faceless Man who haunts the members of Oscar's family" (2010: 122).

In the novel, Trujillo, the person responsible for Abelard's imprisonment, is said to have a special relation to the curse, as it is mentioned that he was *fukú*'s "hypeman of sorts, [its] high priest" (p. 2). In fact, it is even suggested that Trujillo and the *fukú* were interchangeable, since:

No one knows whether Trujillo was the Curse's servant or its master, its agent or its principal, but it was clear he and it had an understanding, that them two was *tight*. It was believed, even in educated circles, that anyone who plotted against Trujillo would incur a *fukú* most powerful, down to the seventh generation and beyond. (pp. 2-3, emphasis in original).

It thus seems likely that Abelard's attitude towards Trujillo, specifically his lack of deference and fear, seems to have brought a *fukú* on his family. This is confirmed by Yuniór, who states:

Losing your house and all your properties, that was par for the course with the Trujillato – but the arrest (or if you're more into the fantastic: that book) precipitated an unprecedented downturn in the family fortune. Tripped, at some cosmic level, a lever against the family. Call it a whole lot of bad luck, outstanding karmic debt, or something else. (*Fukú?*) (pp 247-248, emphasis mine).

Thus, Abelard indirectly caused the family's financial and worldly downfall as a result of the *fukú* which he incurred due to his defiance of Trujillo's wishes, or potentially, his authorship of the supposed book about Trujillo's supernatural abilities. When given the opportunity of fleeing in order to escape Trujillo, Abelard chose to stay in the Dominican Republic. His passivity with regard to the *fukú* subsequently lead to his own imprisonment, torture and death in addition to the deaths of his family members. In the case of Abelard, the trauma of the *fukú* and its dictatorial roots are thus not dealt with, and this perpetuated the misfortune, death and the demise on future generations.

Beli's trauma

Beli, the third daughter of Abelard and Socorro, experienced extensive physical and mental trauma throughout her life. First of all, she was sold as a child slave by her father's cousins after her mother committed suicide and during her childhood years as a slave, she lived in one of the poorest areas of the Dominican Republic. After she

attempted to attend school, her foster father poured hot oil over her back and locked her in a chicken coop. However, she is rescued and raised by Abelard's cousin, La Inca. As a young adult, Beli goes dancing with a coworker and draws attention due to her stunning beauty and curvaceous figure, described by Yuniór as a "cuerpazo [great body] so berserk that only a pornographer or a comic-book artist could have designed it with a clear conscience" (pp. 91-92). Beli attracts the attention of the Gangster, with whom she eventually starts a relationship, not knowing he is married to Trujillo's sister, La Fea (the ugly one). After La Fea discovers that Beli is pregnant, she sends her two henchmen to viciously beat Beli which causes a violent abortion. Although La Fea's henchmen leave Beli for dead, she survives the ordeal. After continued threats, Beli is forced to flee to the United States, where she eventually gives birth to Lola and Oscar. After some years, she develops terminal breast cancer, thus finalizing her personal trauma.

A noteworthy aspect of Beli's trauma is the reappearance of the Faceless Man. His first appearance in Beli's life is when she recalls "how her [foster] 'father's' face had turned blank at the moment he picked up the skillet [with hot oil]" (p. 261). The Faceless Man first appears in Bela's life during this physical trauma and reappears during an attempted kidnapping. After being confronted by La Fea, whose two henchmen try to force Beli into a car, she initially resists, but then, "she saw that there was one more cop sitting in the car, and when he turned toward her she saw that he *didn't have a face*. All the strength fell right out of her" (p. 141, emphasis in original). In this instance, the connection between the Faceless Man and the Trujillo family is strengthened, as the Faceless Man appears to be one of La Fea's henchmen. It can be said that the Faceless Man in this instance is the same as the one in Abelard's narrative, as both stories share themes of defiance against Trujillo. Considering this, the Faceless Man present in Beli's trauma can be interpreted as part of the *fukú* placed on the family by Rafael Trujillo. The claim that Beli's trauma and her beating are due to a Trujillo-related *fukú* is at least partially supported by the narrator. Yuniór recognizes:

There are still many, on and off the Island, who offer Beli's near-fatal beating as irrefutable proof that the House Cabral [Abelard's family name] was indeed victim of a high-level *fukú* ... Two Truji-líos in one lifetime – what in carajo else could it be? (p. 152)

Although the attempted kidnapping is the last appearance of the Faceless Man in Beli's narrative, it is not the end of her *fukú* or her trauma. In order to avoid further beatings and possibly death, she flees to the United States, a country which she had dreamt about previously, claiming that she and the Gangster "would be living in Miami soon" (p. 128). However, in the U.S. she is forced to live in a "contemporary U.S. ghetto" (p. 22) in New Jersey. She also develops breast cancer, which necessitates the removal of one the breasts she was so proud of and admired for (p. 53). When, during her "Last Days"

(p. 113), Beli reflects on her life in the Dominican Republic, and specifically her decision to go to the nightclub where she met the Gangster, she states that “All I wanted was to dance. What I got instead was *esto*, she said, opening her arms to encompass the hospital, her children, her cancer, America” (p. 113). By placing America on the same level as the hospital, her children (with whom she had difficult relationships), and her cancer, she lays bare her true feelings about the country she dreamt of in her youth. Beli’s statement also signals that her escape from the Dominican Republic and from the *fukú* were not successful as her trauma continued in the U.S.

Beli’s narrative also introduces a new symbol of the traumatic experience, namely the canefields she was beaten in. This location is significant as this is the place “where slaves were raped and beaten during the colonial era” (Takolander, 2017: 108). Garland Mahler explains further that that “the canefields represent the legacy of colonial oppression under slavery” (2010: 128). Yuniór’s narration serves to reinforce this historical reading as he states, “you’d find yourself plunged 180 years [into the past] into rolling fields of cane” when leaving the urban areas of the Dominican Republic and Gantz’s analysis of the novel supports the notion that historical trauma can affect individuals despite it being chronologically distant (2015: 147). The canefields and their symbolic meaning of abuse and tyranny thus serve to reinforce the historical context of Beli’s beating and reference the transgenerational *fukú* related to abuses of power. In this historical context, Trujillo becomes merely one figure of power and abuse in a long line of tyrants.

Beli’s narrative introduces a figure to balance the negative symbolism of the *fukú*, namely a mystical Golden Mongoose. The creature was described as having “golden lion eyes” (p. 149), an “absolute black ... pelt” (p. 149), and “a woman’s lilt” (p. 150). Yuniór expands on the supposedly mystical origins of the Mongoose and adds a suggestion that this figure stands for the defiance of empire and its exploitation by stating that the Mongoose is:

one of the great unstable particles of the Universe and also one of its greatest travelers. Accompanied humanity out of Africa and after a long furlough in India jumped ship to the other India, a.k.a. the Caribbean... has proven itself to be an enemy of kingly chariots, chains, and hierarchies. Believed to be an ally of Man (p. 151).

This interpretation is reiterated by Garland Mahler, who states that “the Mongoose, in fighting ‘chains’, is a symbol of resistance to [colonial] oppression” (2010: 128). This mystical symbol of resistance appears before Beli as she gets up after her beating and tries to escape. The Mongoose leads her out of the dangerous canefields, continually motivating her and by singing and talking to her, and eventually stops a passing truck, which brings Beli to La Inca.

The Mongoose thus acts as a counterfigure to the Faceless Man; it is a symbol of salvation while the Faceless Man is a symbol of doom. As such, while it does not undo the

trauma which has already been inflicted, it prevents further trauma and defies death. The Mongoose also serves to counteract the dangers of the canefields, which, apart from being a location of historical trauma, were also dangerous due to their vast size. Yuniór emphasizes their hazard, noting that “canefields are no fucking joke, and even the cleverest of adults can get mazed in their endlessness, only to reappear months later as a cameo of bones” (p. 149). Beli, injured and alone, was not likely to escape from the canefields and so the Mongoose saves her from the environment and potential death. The Mongoose as a symbol of defiance and post-traumatic survival is thus a counterfigure to earlier imagery associated with the *fukú* and plays a positive role in the traumatic narrative of *OW*.

In Beli’s narrative we can see the return of both the historical and personal trauma introduced in Abelard’s narrative, yet we are also introduced to new images of survival. Additionally, the way Beli’s trauma is handled is much different from the way her father’s trauma was addressed. Whereas Abelard chose passivity, not fleeing to Mexico or Cuba with his family when the opportunity arose, Beli fled the place of her trauma, thereby hoping to escape the reaches of the *fukú*. However, despite her action, Beli herself realizes that escape is not the solution as the realities of life in the U.S. differ vastly from her expectations and the *fukú* still appears to haunt her in the forms of her breast cancer and her general dejection with life in the U.S. It appears that escaping the Dominican Republic does not result in escaping the *fukú* or its traumas and that, much like her father, Beli’s inability to resolve the *fukú* results in the continuation of the transgenerational trauma.

Oscar’s trauma

The final instance of the *fukú* occurs in the narrative of Beli’s son Oscar. The majority of *OW* takes place during Oscar’s adolescent life and centers around him being a social outcast. Oscar’s obesity, love of comics and sci-fi novels, and lack of social skills are not considered masculine, attractive or desirable by his peers or his family, leading him to be shunned. The resulting social isolation lead Oscar to depression and an eventual failed suicide attempt. After completing college, Oscar eventually returns to the Dominican Republic for a vacation, where he falls in love with Ybón, a prostitute. Following this, Oscar is beaten to near-death by two henchmen of Ybón’s violent boyfriend, the Capitan, who is supported by Trujillo’s successor. Continuing his pursuit of Ybón culminates in Oscar’s death, thereby finalizing his trauma.

A number of traumatic events occur in Oscar’s narrative, but only some of these involve the trauma-related symbols which were discussed above. One of these symbols is the canefields, which feature prominently in Oscar’s two beatings at the hands of the Capitan. When Oscar is lead into the canefields before his first assault, “he had the overwhelming feeling that he’d been in this very place, a long time ago. It was worse than *déjà vu*” (p. 298). This feeling corresponds with the notion that the canefields are not

only a site of historical trauma but are also an integral part of the transgenerational *fukú* placed on Oscar's family. It is possible that Beli's traumatic feelings with regard to the place where she was beaten cause Oscar to feel like he had been in the fields before. The events in Oscar's narrative also correspond closely with Beli's experience; Oscar nearly gets killed by two henchmen of a powerful person who is supported by a dictator. The canefields thus symbolize the continuation of the personal *fukú* through generations of the De Leon family.

A different noteworthy reappearance of *fukú* imagery is during Oscar's suicide attempt. Standing on a bridge "seventy-seven feet in the air" (p. 190), Oscar was contemplating an end to his life. However, before he jumps, he sees "something straight out of [fantasy and sci-fi author] Ursula le Guin standing by his side. Later, when he would describe it, he would call it the Golden Mongoose" (p. 190). After this vision, Oscar jumps off the bridge but "in his drunken confusion he must have miscalculated, or maybe, as his mother claims, he was *being watched from up on high*, because the dude missed [the highway] and landed on the divider!" (p. 191, emphasis mine). In this instance, the Golden Mongoose is again involved in saving a life in the De Leon family. Similar to Beli's experience of the Mongoose, the experience has a mystical feeling, and Oscar's survival is attributed to him "being watched from up on high" (p. 191).

The next appearance of the Mongoose corresponds closely to Beli's vision and reinforces the connection between the mystical figure and the canefields that symbolize a violent colonial history. After Oscar has been beaten to near-death by the Capitan's henchmen, he is left for dead in the canefields. Clives, a family-friend and cabdriver, attempts to find Oscar but after deciding to abandon the search, "he heard someone *singing*" (p. 300, emphasis in original). This voice guides him to Oscar, similar to the manner in which Beli was lead out of the canefields by singing. In a deviation from Beli's experience, however, the Mongoose initiates a mental conversation with Oscar, asking him whether he wants to live or die, prompting Oscar to choose life.

However, the Mongoose is not the only reoccurring symbol that connects closely with colonial imagery in Oscar's narrative. Oscar also has a number of visions which feature the Faceless Man in association with the canefields. Two of these instances occur before and during his first attack in the canefields. When the Capitan's henchmen have to stop to refuel, Oscar sees "a lone man sitting in his rocking chair out in front of his ruined house and for a moment Oscar could have sworn the dude had no face" (p. 298). The vision of the Faceless Man thus signals a beating, which is similar to the occurrences of the Faceless Man in both Abelard and Beli's narratives. Oscar also sees the Faceless Man during the beating; Yunion relates that "there were moments Oscar was sure that he was being beaten by three men, not two, that the faceless man from in front of the colmado [grocery store] was joining them" (p. 299). Furthermore, moments before Oscar faints, he "could have sworn that there was a third man with them and he was standing back behind some of the cane" (p. 299). The positioning of the Faceless Man behind

the cane alludes to his distance from the immediate violence yet his oversight of it like the dictator he represents. His position also reinforces a connection between the Faceless Man and the canefields, both of which are traumatic images in the narrative related not only to the *fukú* but also to historical trauma.

The most noteworthy *fukú*-related imagery in Oscar's narrative is the last appearance of the Mongoose which occurs concurrently with the last appearance of the Faceless Man and solidifies both images in connection to the family curse. Several weeks after his beating, Oscar returns to the Dominican Republic in order to continue his pursuit of Ybón. Unsurprisingly, he is kidnapped by the Capitan's henchmen again. Yúnior relates how Oscar and the henchmen:

... drove past a bus stop and for a second Oscar imagined he saw his whole family getting on a guagua [bus], even his poor dead abuelo [Abelard] and his poor dead abuela [Socorro], and who is driving the bus but the Mongoose, and who is the cobrador [conductor or ticket vendor] but the Man Without a Face, but it was nothing but a final fantasy... (p. 321).

This vision not only stresses the Mongoose's close relationship with the family's *fukú*, but also emphasizes the importance of the creature in the *fukú* hierarchy. The Mongoose's status as the driver of the bus implies that the Mongoose, a symbol against oppression, has control over life and the direction of the *fukú*. However, the vision also suggests that passengers have to pay their dues to the Faceless Man, signifying that the members of the De Leon family have to confront the dictatorial trauma of the *fukú* in order to move forward with the symbol for survival, i.e. the Mongoose. The presence of Abelard and other members of Oscar's family means that they have paid the Faceless Man and are now safely in the care of the Mongoose.

Oscar's final vision of the Mongoose and the Faceless Man appears to be hopeful as opposed to the more negative endings to the trauma narratives of Abelard and Beli. This positive end can be attributed to the different approach Oscar takes to the *fukú* although his initial actions are comparable with those of his mother and grandfather. Abelard stayed passive and Beli attempted to escape, which corresponds with Oscar's initial response, as he returned to the U.S. and was resigned to inaction while healing. Yet, during this time of inertia, he had frequent dreams where he would see:

the cane, the terrible cane, except now it wasn't him at the receiving end of the beating, but his sister, his mother, heard them shrieking, begging for them to stop, please God *stop*, but instead of racing toward the voices, he *ran away*! Woke up *screaming. Not me. Not me.* (p. 306, emphasis in original).

Aside from further emphasizing the familial scope of the *fukú*, the nightmares seem to be partially due to Oscar's inactivity regarding the help he might offer his family members. In the dream, his cowardice in running away from the screams of his mother and sister causes him to wake up screaming, suggesting a link between the subconscious

trauma and the passivity and migration that his family members used to attempt to escape the *fukú*.

However, there is a turning point in Oscar's dreams, which subsequently affects his handling of the *fukú* in real life. Yuniór notes:

Six weeks after the Colossal Beatdown [Oscar] dreamed about the cane again. But instead of bolting when the cries began, when the bones started breaking, he summoned all the courage he even had, would ever have, and forced himself to do the one thing he did not want to do, the he could not bear to do. He listened (p. 307).

This act of courage in Oscar's dreams also serves to incite him to take action in his life. Some time after the dream, Oscar borrows money from Yuniór in order to travel back to the Dominican Republic where he continues his pursuit of Ybón. However, he is caught and taken to the canefields again, where he has his final vision of the Mongoose on the bus. In contrast with the previous time, this beating by the two henchmen is fatal. While this might seem to be another failure of handling the *fukú* and a victory for the curse, it should be noted that by returning, Oscar accomplishes his life's goal to lose his virginity prior to being killed. Throughout the novel, Oscar complains numerous times about his lack of success with women. His ultimate fear is dying as a virgin, something his sister Lola mentioned when Oscar was in high school and she warned him, "you're going to die a virgin unless you start *changing*" (p. 25, emphasis in original). Oscar responds sarcastically, "Don't you think I know that? Another five years of this and I'll bet you somebody tries to name a church after me" (p. 25). Oscar's anxiety to lose his virginity is a recurrent theme in his conversations with Yuniór. On one occasion, Oscar asks, "I have heard from a reliable source that no Dominican male has ever died a virgin. ... do you think this is true?" (p. 174). Yuniór responds, "O, it's against the laws of nature for a dominicano to die without fucking at least one" (p. 174), and Oscar confirms, "That ... is what worries me" (p. 174). However, when Oscar returns to the Dominican Republic, he loses his virginity and finally experiences the "little intimacies that he'd never in his whole life anticipated" (p. 334). This prompts him to exclaim "If only I'd known. The beauty! The beauty!" (p. 335), words which conclude the novel. Oscar's defiance of the *fukú* in his decision to return to the Dominican Republic thus result in the fulfillment of his life-long dream, supporting the claim that the novel "advocates agency rather than passivity in the face of ... evil" (Takolander, 2017: 110).

Conclusion

When faced with the question how transgenerational, dictatorial trauma should best be handled, Díaz' novel suggests different approaches but ultimately advocates for action. The novel suggests that Oscar's confrontation, and not Abelard's passivity or Beli's escape, is the most effective resolution to the family's *fukú*, which corresponds with Visser's statement that postcolonial theory should encompass "not only melancholia,

weakness, and stasis but also the completely opposite dynamics of life-affirming ... processes” (2015: 254). Thus, in terms of literary trauma theory that advocates for action in the face of apparently insurmountable odds, the three narratives of OW offer realistic representations of one family’s exposure to personal and historical trauma and leaves readers with a message of agency and hope.

REFERENCES

- Balaev, Michelle (Ed.) (2014). *Contemporary approaches in literary trauma theory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Buelens, Gert, Sam Durrant & Robert Eaglestone (2014). *The future of trauma theory: contemporary literary and cultural criticism*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- Díaz, Junot (2007). *The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao*. New York: Riverhead Books.
- Gantz, Lauren Jean (2015). ‘Nothing ever ends’: archives of written and graphic testimony in *The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao*. *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, 46, 4, 123-153.
- Garland Mahler, Anne (2010). The writer as superhero: fighting the colonial curse in Junot Díaz’s *The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao*. *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*, 19, 2, 119-140.
- Takolander, Maria Kaaren (2017). Theorizing irony and trauma in magical realism: Junot Díaz’s *The brief wondrous life of Oscar Wao* and Alexis Wright’s *The swan book*. *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, 47, 3, 95-122.
- Visser, Irene (2015). Decolonizing trauma theory: retrospect and prospects. *Humanities*, 4, 2, 250-265.

ABOUT THE EDITORS



Prof. Dr. Nicholas Faraclas (Puerto Rico) is a Professor in Linguistics at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras. Having received his PhD from the University of California at Berkeley, he has taught courses and published several books and articles in the areas of theoretical, descriptive, socio-, and applied linguistics. Over the past three decades, he has been conducting research on Creole languages as well as promoting community based literacy activities in Africa, the South Pacific, and the Caribbean. nickfaraclas@yahoo.com



Prof. Dr. Ronald Severing (Curaçao) is a Professor of Language Education in the General Faculty at the University of Curaçao and the former managing director of the national institute for language planning (FPI) of Curaçao. He obtained Master's degrees in Dutch Language and Literature at Nijmegen and Socio- and Applied Linguistics at Tilburg, and his PhD at the University of Nijmegen. Together with local authors he has published textbooks and manuals for all educational levels in Papiamentu and Dutch. r.severing@uoc.cw

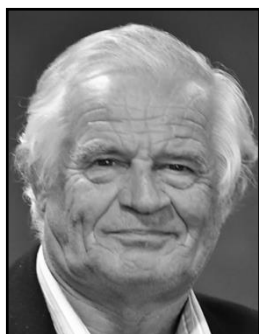


Drs. Christa Weijer (Curaçao) received a Bachelor's degree in French and Dutch, and a Master's degree in Romance Languages (main subject French) from the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. She taught French and Dutch language and literature for more than twenty years at the Peter Stuyvesant College in Curaçao, and worked for fourteen years at the national institute for language planning, Fundashon pa Planifikashon di Idioma (FPI). christa53@gmail.com



Dr. Elisabeth Echteld (Curaçao) is the Dean of the General Faculty at the University of Curaçao (2006-2012; 2014), where she is now Associate Professor in charge of research. She received her PhD from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. Her dissertation focuses on literature written in Spanish in Curaçao during the second half of the 19th century. She has taught courses and published a number of articles on literature. She is co-author of *Kadans*, a literature textbook series used in schools and colleges in the Dutch Caribbean. e.echteld@uoc.cw; www.uoc.cw

ABOUT THE EDITORS (continuation)



Prof. Dr. Wim Rutgers (Aruba) is a Professor in Literary History and Literary Science with a focus on Papiamentu at the University of Curaçao. He received a Master's degree in General Literary Science in Utrecht and his PhD from the University of Utrecht. He has taught courses and published in the areas of Caribbean, Antillean and Aruban literature. He has long been a literary reviewer in the local press. He has written and published textbooks and manuals on literature for different educational levels. wim_rutgers@hotmail.com



Dr. Sally J. Delgado (Puerto Rico) has a PhD in the literature and languages of the English-speaking Caribbean from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras with a specialization in linguistics and is currently an assistant professor in the English Department at the University of Puerto Rico in Cayey. Her interests in historical dialectology and theories of creole genesis are explored in her research on Ship English of the early colonial Caribbean. She teaches linguistics and English as a Second Language and has published several articles on maritime culture and history, education, and sociolinguistics. sallyj.delgado@upr.edu

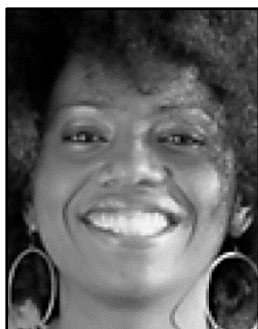
ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Charity Aboagye MA (Ghana) is a graduate of English language from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana. Her research interests include Ecocritical studies, Postcolonial Studies, African Literature and Gender. charityaboagye@gmail.com



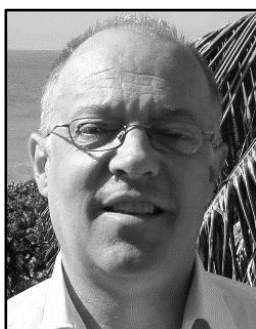
Prof. Dr. Ann Albuyeh (Puerto Rico) is professor of English Linguistics at the Universidad de Puerto Rico. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research focuses on language and culture in the Caribbean and Africa. ann.albuyeh1@upr.edu



Dr. Roseline Armange (France) is a clinical psychologist in France who recently earned her PhD from École Pratique des Hautes Études (Institute of Advanced Studies, Sorbonne). Her research concerns Health Psychology and problems of ethics in the field of Psychology. Her recent research focuses on reparations for slavery in former French colonies and the Caribbean. roseline.armange@gmail.com



Klaas Bant MA (Aruba) graduated from the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. He has a Bachelor's in English Language and Culture and a Master's in Writing, Editing, and Mediating. He is currently working on a teaching degree in Groningen. klaasbant94@gmail.com



Dr. Bernhard Michael Bierlich (US Virgin Islands) has taught as an Assistant and Associate Professor in departments of Sociology and Anthropology and Education at Israeli universities, and has also held various temporary and part-time positions at the universities of Hull, Cambridge and Copenhagen. He holds a PhD in Global Health and Anthropology from the University of Cambridge. He has been involved in several consultancies and research projects in the US Virgin Islands and Ghana, including studies on breast cancer and African health care. bbierlich@gmail.com



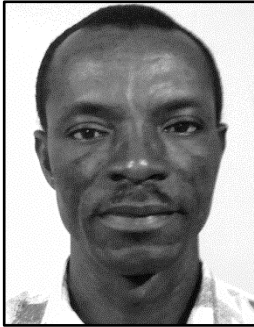
Dr. Aart G. Broek (Netherlands), who worked in Curaçao from 1981 through 2001, received his PhD from the Free University in Amsterdam, and is a consultant and independent scholar. He has published extensively on Dutch Caribbean social, political and cultural matters, generally in a wider Caribbean context and/or in relation to (post)colonial developments in the Netherlands. agbroek@planet.nl or info@klasse-oplossingen.nl



Maritza V. Cardona Ortiz MA (Puerto Rico) is a doctoral student in Literature and Languages of the English Speaking Caribbean at the University of Puerto Rico. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Secondary Education (ESL) and a Master's Degree in Literature. She is a professor at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus, and has had works published in several academic journals and magazines. cardona.mari-tza42@gmail.com



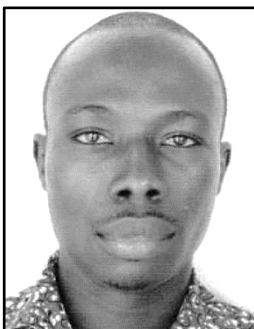
Dr. Janice Cools (St. Lucia) is an Assistant Professor at Missouri Western State University. She has a PhD in Literatures in English from the University of the West Indies-Mona. Cools earned an MA in Rhetoric and Professional Communication from New Mexico State University. Her work in Men's Studies has been published in the *Journal of Men's Studies*, as well as in *Culture, Society and Masculinity*. Other interests include Writing Studies, with a focus on Academic Literacies, ethnography in the writing classroom, and teaching transferable skills.
janice.cools@gmail.com



Kofi Darkoh-Ankrah MPhil (Ghana) teaches Literature in English at the University of Ghana, Legon. He holds a Bachelor of Arts (English) degree and an MPhil (English) degree, both from the University of Ghana. His research interests range across a wide variety of critical issues in African Literatures. He does research on philosophical nuances, religion, sex, and more in Post Colonial Literature, with a concentration on West African fiction. kodarkankrah@yahoo.co.uk



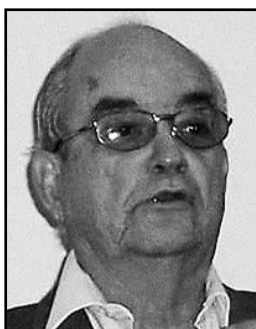
Nicole Diaz Morell MA (Puerto Rico) is an adjunct Professor at Sage College in Albany N.Y. She is currently in the dissertation process for her PhD in Caribbean Literature from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. ncdiaz@gmail.com



Charles Djorbua MA (Ghana) is a teacher by profession at the Presbyterian College of Education, Akropong-Akuapem, Ghana. He is currently pursuing an MPhil in the English Programme at the Department of English, University of Ghana. He received his Bachelor of Arts and his Master of Arts degrees from the University of Ghana. He speaks Dangme, Akan, English and French. cdjorbua@yahoo.com



Prof. Dr. Brenda L. Domínguez-Rosado has a B.A. in Secondary Education (TESS), an M.A. in American and British Literature, and a Ph.D. in the Literature and Language of the Anglophone Caribbean, all from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras campus. She has been an educator for thirty-two years and is currently a professor of English at the UPR, Bayamón campus. Her interests include sociolinguistics, bilingualism, and higher education. One of her most recent publications is *The Unlinking of Language and Puerto Rican Identity: New Trends in Sight*.
brenda.dominguez1@upr.edu



Dr. Wilfredo Geigel (Puerto Rico) was a trial lawyer by profession, an independent scholar, member and president of the Society of Virgin Islands Historians and an Adjunct Professor of History at the University of the Virgin Islands, St. Croix Campus. He was the author of three books on legal and historical topics. This well-known lawyer and Caribbean historian unfortunately passed away in 2017 and was commemorated in the 2017 versions of these volumes. wageigel@gmail.com



Dr. Iris Hewitt-Bradshaw (Trinidad and Tobago) has been an educator for 35 years and has taught at the secondary school level and at Teachers College. She is currently an Assistant Professor in Language and Linguistics at the University of Trinidad and Tobago where she also mentors pre-service and in-service teachers on practicum field teaching, and supervises undergraduate and post-graduate research. She possesses a Ph.D. and a Master of Philosophy in Language Education and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Language and Linguistics. ihewbrad@gmail.com



Alim Hosein (Guyana) is a lecturer in Linguistics in the Department of Language and Cultural Studies, University of Guyana. His particular area of interest is Creole linguistics. Interested in all forms of culture, he is a member of the Guyana Prize for Literature Committee and Coordinator of the Guyana Visual Arts Competition and Exhibition. alazho@yahoo.co.uk or alim.hosein@uog.edu.gy

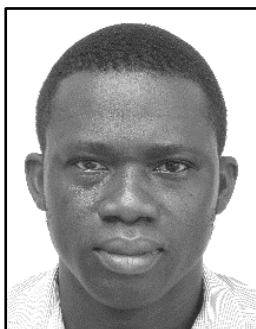
389



Dr. Marguerite-Joan Joseph (Grenada) obtained a Doctorate in Obstetrics & Gynaecology from UWI in 1991. As the Senior Gynaecologist at General Hospital, St. George's from 1992-2012, her service helped Grenada to achieve the global WHO rating for the lowest country Maternal Mortality Ratio. As President of The Grenada Creole Society, she has lead efforts to research and revitalize Grenadian Creole French, coordinating community based activities with children, teachers and the public to preserve and promote the language, from 2009 to the present. mj.otmc@spiceisle.com



Dr. Janice E. Jules (Barbados) is a lecturer and the Coordinator in Linguistics in the Department of Language, Linguistics and Literature of the Faculty of Humanities and Education at The UWI, Cave Hill Campus. Her research interests include innovations in language teaching, strategies and methods in Teaching English as a Second and Foreign Language and teaching Standard English to non-standard speakers of the language. jules.janice@gmail.com



Gervase Kuuwaabong MSc (Ghana) is a lecturer with the Department of Environment and Resource Studies of the University for Development Studies, Ghana. He is currently pursuing his PhD studies in Geography and Resource Development and Food and Natural Resource Economics at University of Ghana and the University of Copenhagen. He is interested in urban and rural planning, green growth, and climate smart agriculture. gkuuwaabong@yahoo.co.uk



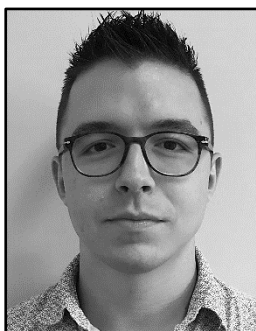
Dr. Ilsa López-Vallés (Puerto Rico) holds a Ph.D. in Caribbean Literature from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras. She teaches English at the Inter American University of Fajardo and heads the Humanities Department in the same institution. Dr. López-Vallés has published articles and poetry in scholarly journals and two books of short stories entitled *Stories from Here and There* (2006) and *Seasoned Stories with Sabor* (2008) for advanced learners of ESL. Ilsa_lopez2000@yahoo.com



Alexandra N. Mihailovic Court BA (Puerto Rico) graduated with a Bachelor's degree in History from Lehman College, City University of New York (CUNY), and is currently a student in the M.A. program in English Linguistics in the College of Humanities at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras campus. She is also a History and English teacher, an intersectional feminist, and a grassroots organizer. anmc311@gmail.com



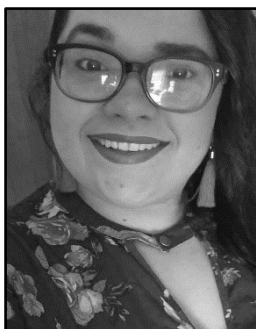
Penelope Montfort MA (Guyana) is a lecturer in the Faculty of Education and Humanities at the University of Guyana. She taught for nineteen years at the elementary and secondary levels, and has approximately thirty-two years of experience in the field of education. She holds a BA in English from the University of Guyana; an MA in Educational Psychology from Andrews University, Michigan, USA; and an MS in Education from Walden University, USA. Her scholarly interests are language acquisition, and reading and learning disabilities. penelope.montfort@uog.edu.gy



Jeffrey O'Field BA (Puerto Rico) is completing his MA in TESL at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, San Germán campus, where he also works as a graduate research assistant at the Centro Graduado de Investigación y Éxito Estudiantil. His research interests include second language acquisition for adults, learner motivation, and pronunciation teaching methodologies related to accent and identity. jeffery.ofield@gmail.com



Patrick Oneill López Negrón BA (Puerto Rico) holds a BA degree in Psychology and is completing his MA in TESL at the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, where he also works as a graduate research assistant at the Centro Graduado de Investigación y Éxito Estudiantil. Patrick is a published writer and is directly involved with the creative writing community as a playwright and editor. His research interests include second language acquisition, linguistic relativism, Gestalt, and heuristic methods. patrickoneillwriter@gmail.com



Anissa M. Ortega Díaz BA (Puerto Rico) es estudiante del Programa Graduado de Lingüística de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras. Realizó un bachillerato en la misma universidad en el Programa de Estudios Interdisciplinarios en el área de Pre-traducción dirigida al portugués. Además, fungió como presidenta del Consejo de Estudiantes de la Facultad de Humanidades. Sus trabajos se concentran en la Sociolingüística y el Análisis del Discurso; en temas relacionados a la comunidad LGBTQ, género, y comunidades marginadas. anissa.ortega@upr.edu



Dr. Anna Kasafi Perkins (Jamaica) is the Senior Programme Officer, Quality Assurance, at the University of the West Indies in Mona, and adjunct faculty at St Michael's Theological College. Her interests include sex, sexuality and gender minority identities; faith and popular culture; quality assurance; business and professional ethics. She is the author of *Justice as Equality: Michael Manley's Caribbean Vision of Justice* (2010), and contributor/co-editor of *Justice and Peace in a Renewed Caribbean* (2012), and *Quality in Higher Education in the Caribbean* (2015). anna.perkins@uwimona.edu.jm



Jomayra Pimentel Rodríguez BA (Puerto Rico) es estudiante del Programa Graduado de Lingüística de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras. En esta universidad también realizó su bachillerato en Estudios Hispánicos. Durante su bachillerato fue cellista de la Orquesta de Cámara de la UPR-RP y publicó el cuento "En memoria de Jacqueline du Prè" en el semanario *Claridad*. Actualmente es tutora en el Programa de Innovaciones Educativas y concentra sus trabajos en el área de Análisis del Discurso. jomayra.pimentel@upr.edu



Dr. Cynthia Pittmann (Puerto Rico) is an Assistant Professor at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras, teaching English and literature (autobiography and the journey) in the English Department, College of General Studies. Her prose and creative writing are published in *Sargasso*, *La Torre*, *Festschrift*, *In a Sea of Heteroglossia*, *In Mis Words Spanglish*, *The Indelible Heart*, *Oasis Writing Link™*, etc. Currently, she is writing a memoir about her mothers who were murdered in a hate crime in 1992. cynthia.pittmann@upr.edu



Dr. Lydia Platón Lázaro (Puerto Rico) es profesora del Departamento de Inglés de la UPR Cayey. Ha publicado dos libros, uno de corte académico: *Defiant Itineraries: Caribbean Paradigms in American Dance and Film* (2015) y uno de corte artístico junto a la artista visual Paloma Todd: *El cuarto acto* (2005). Sirvió como Decana de Asuntos Académicos de la Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño del Viejo San Juan y es productora, actriz y co-creadora. Ha ofrecido cursos en la Universidad del Sagrado Corazón, la UPR, Río Piedras y la UPR Bayamón. puchiplatón@gmail.com



Dr. Elizabeth Rezende (St. Croix) has worked for over twenty years piecing together the social history of the Danish West Indies using Danish colonial administration records. She teaches Anthropology and Caribbean History courses at the University of the US Virgin Islands, St. Croix Campus, and is a consultant for the National Park Service, Christiansted National Historic Site, where she has supervised groups of university students in internship programs, guiding them in creating tours of the historic neighborhoods of the town. erezende576@gmail.com



Frances S. Rivera Cornier MA (Puerto Rico) is a visual artist and a lover of languages. She received her BA Fine Arts in painting, and her MA in Linguistics from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras. Presently, she is an Adjunct Professor of English at the University of Puerto Rico, Bayamón, La Escuela de Artes Plásticas y Diseño, San Juan, and the Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Metropolitan Campus. frances.s.rivera@gmail.com



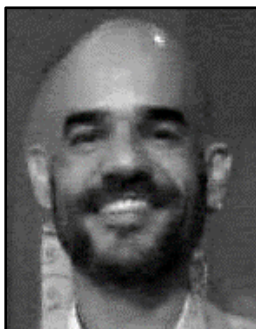
Luis A Sanchez Galan MA (Puerto Rico) recently received an M.A. in English Literature from the Graduate Program in English of the College of Humanities at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus. In addition to this, he is an English teacher and a PhD candidate at the University of California Riverside's English and Philosophy graduate program. ls.g2009@hotmail.com



Prof. Dr. Michael Sharp (Puerto Rico) is Professor of English at the UPR, where he teaches in the Caribbean Studies doctoral program. Having received his PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he has been a Faculty Associate at the University of Santiago de Compostela in Spain, and has taught at Harvard, as well as in Binghamton, Wisconsin, Scotland, Greece, Portugal, and Nigeria. His research focuses on poetry written in English in Africa and the Caribbean, and his poetry has been published on both sides of the Atlantic. michael.sharp1@upr.edu



Prof. Dr. Alma Simounet (Puerto Rico) is Professor of English and Linguistics at the Río Piedras Campus of the University of Puerto Rico. She works in the areas of ethnolinguistics, bilingualism, language and identity, and discourse analysis. She was until recently the Chair of the Department of English. almasimounet@gmail.com



Gabriel E. Suárez MA (Puerto Rico) es de Guaynabo, donde recibió educación primaria y secundaria. Es egresado de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, de la facultad de Ciencias Naturales. Además, posee una maestría en Educación Temprana, de la Universidad del Sagrado Corazón. Actualmente, pertenece al Programa Graduado de Estudios Hispánicos, en la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Su interés principal es la lingüística hispánica, específicamente el análisis del discurso en billboards. gsuarez937@gmail.com



Dr. Meagan Sylvester (Trinidad and Tobago) completed her Ph.D. in the Sociology of Music at The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago, and holds memberships in professional organizations including the Society for Ethnomusicology, the International Association of the Study for Popular Music, the Caribbean Studies Association and the Association of Black Sociologists. She is a well-known public academic in her native Trinidad and Tobago where she participates in both television and radio discussions on the Calypso and Soca musical artforms. drmasylvester@hotmail.com



Alfred Kwami Teni BA is a final year MPhil student in the Department of English, University of Ghana. He was earlier awarded a BA degree in Linguistics from the University of Ghana in 2013. He is also a professional teacher with twelve years' experience in and out of the classroom in Ghana. As a young dynamic and determined scholar, his interests include socio-linguistic and applied linguistic research. akteni@st.ug.edu.gh



Raúl J. Vázquez Vélez MA is a PhD student at the English Department of the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras campus. He has published poetry and short prose fiction as well as essays dealing with literature from the English-speaking Caribbean and related topics. He is currently writing his doctoral dissertation. inti_x@yahoo.com



Dr. Hélène Zamor (Martinique) is currently teaching French at The University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, where she earned a PhD in Linguistics 2008. Her thesis focused on French Caribbean music and dance during the colonial era. As an active member of the Caribbean Studies Association, Miss Zamor has been producing monthly newsletters focusing on various aspects of Caribbean culture. More recently, her research interests have focused on the Martinican banana, sugar cane and rum industries. helene.zamor@gmail.com

ABOUT THE COVER ARTIST



Wilson Garcia (Netherlands) was born in Curaçao and worked at the Fine Arts Academy and the Akademia Pedagógiko Kòrsou teaching art. He still exhibits in Curaçao. On his website, he writes: “To me, art is very personal. It invites people-to-people contact. I portray human contact figuratively in striking colors. I blend figures and environment into a visionary whole, an invitation to feel part of the portrayal. I mix my oils directly on the canvas, which creates numerous transitions and nuances. The portrayal speaks for itself, supported by the title and the viewer designs his or her own story.” <http://www.wilsongarcia.nl/>