

# Panama Silver, Asian Gold: Collaborative Pedagogy for the Digital Age

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English*

**Missy Roser** *Head of Research & Instruction, Frost Library*

# An experiment in decentralized, collaborative, blended learning using technology and open-access resources

*MOOC*: Pedagogically centralized, branded by a single institution

*instead*: “Expertise is distributed throughout a network, among participants situated in diverse institutional contexts, within diverse material, geographic, and national settings, and who embody and perform diverse identities (as teachers, as students, as media-makers, as activists, as trainers, as members of various publics, for example).” [excerpted from [FemTechNet](#)]

# “Panama Silver, Asian Gold: Migration and the Birth of Modern Caribbean Literature”

## Amherst College

Seminar meets Tuesdays 1-4 in Cooper House 101



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## University of Florida

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**Beatrice Skokan**  
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- pilot for intercollegiate digital humanities courses
- supported by libraries of all three institutions
- taught in fall 2013 as a hybrid course with collaboration among campuses

# Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC)

*literature, newspapers, journals, photographs relevant to the development of literature, nationalism, and Independence in the West Indies*

J.J. Thomas *Froudacity*

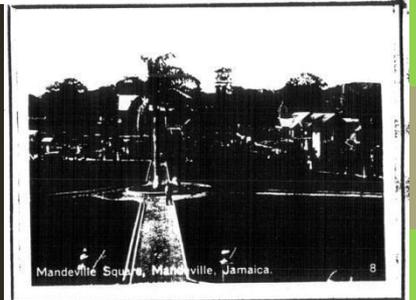
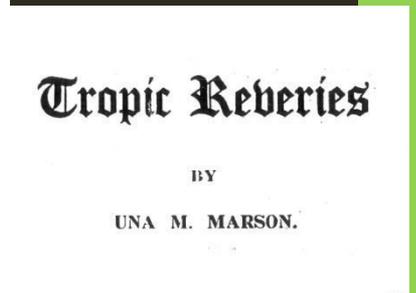
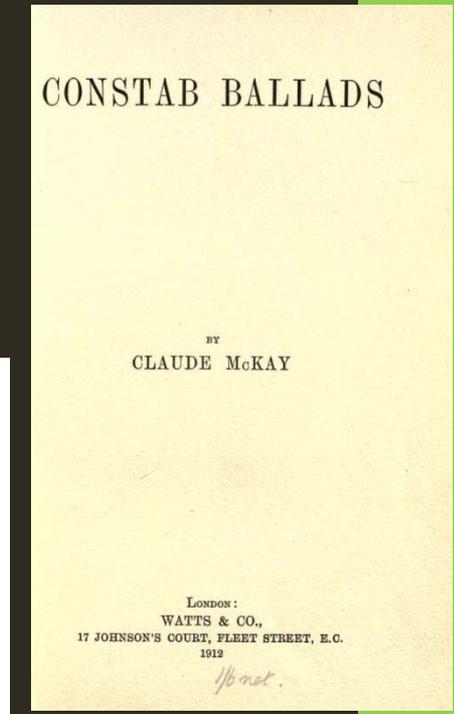
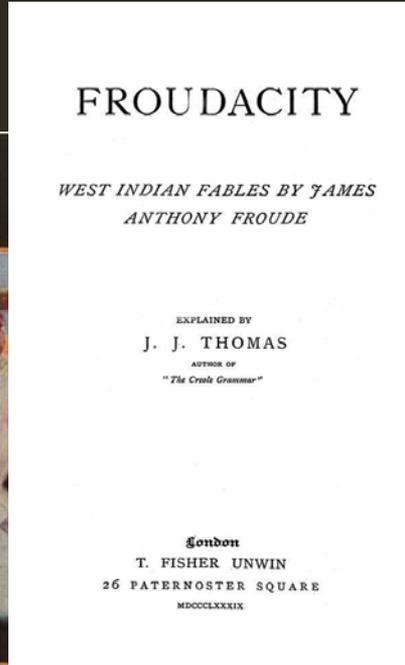
Claude McKay *Songs of Jamaica and Constab Ballads*

The Poetry of Una Marson

The All Jamaica Library

The Independence anthology of Jan

and nearly all books written by Herbert de Lisser



# Course Description



Concurrent migrations of Chinese and Indian indentured laborers to the Caribbean and Afro-Caribbean workers to and from the Panama Canal, at the turn of the twentieth century, profoundly influenced the style and scope of modern Caribbean literature. Both migrant groups worked under difficult conditions for exploitative wages, yet members of each managed to save enough to enter the educated middle class. Their cultural forms and political aspirations shaped Caribbean literary production as well as anti-colonial political movements. In this course, students will **learn how to use digital, print, and audiovisual archival material** related to these migrations to enrich their reading of Caribbean literature. Librarians at Frost as well as **scholars, librarians, and students at two other universities** will join us. We will hold some class discussions online and students at all three campuses will learn how to create finding aids for the archives we use. We will read works by Claude McKay, H.G. de Lisser, Marcus Garvey, George Lamming, V.S. Naipaul, Ismith Khan, Ramabai Espinet, Meiling Jin, and Patricia Powell.



# Vision

“We hope that the course will become part of a broader initiative to make visible to other teachers and scholars new ways of incorporating archival material into research on Caribbean literature and culture.

Since the Panama and Asian migrations are rarely privileged in stories Caribbean nationalists tell about the region, we want to use the project to intervene more broadly in the way Caribbean literary scholarship imagines the Caribbean cultural diaspora and interrogates the ways in which both traditional and colonial archival sources shape the stories we can tell about the Caribbean region.

We hope our experiment will sow the seed for future collaborative courses involving students at institutions in the Caribbean, Panama, China, and/or India, capable of working with relevant documents from these regions in languages other than English.”

# Course Objectives: Literary and Historical

- Gain knowledge of **key concepts, themes, tropes, styles, and aesthetic concerns** of Caribbean literary discourse by examining literature about these two migrations—written during the migrations and contemporary literature that examines them.
- Integrate this **historical research** into **literary analysis**, using contemporary historical studies, and primary historical sources such as government reports, oral histories, historical photographs, newspapers, and memoirs.
- **Enhance dLOC's collection** in two key areas: West Indians in Panama and Asians in the Caribbean
- Illuminate some of the **limitations of the colonial archive** records of subaltern and disenfranchised people and techniques used by Caribbean scholars, writers, and ordinary people to **challenge and/or employ these colonial historical sources** to illuminate the experience of indentured Asian immigrants and West Indians working in Panama



# Faculty & Librarian collaboration

- Collaborative design of syllabus including assignments, incorporating archival-research techniques and introducing digital humanities aims and tools
- Pooling resources for guest lectures & for digitizing materials (5 guest speakers online, streamed to three campuses, supported by Academic Technology at Amherst)
- Working with librarians from each campus to choose appropriate technology and design technology-based assignments—and then to teach these to students



# Collaborative experiment with online pedagogies



**Home: Panama Silver, Asian Gold**

last edited by [rosenber@...](#) 9 months ago

**Welcome to the Wiki for the Panama Silver, Asian Gold Course**  
This is the wiki for the Panama Silver, Asian Gold Course being taught at Amherst College, the University of Florida

- Syllabi for [Amherst College](#) (meets Tues. 1-4pm), [University of Florida](#) (meets Tues. 12:50-3:50pm), &
- **Introductions**
  - [Meet your faculty & librarians](#)
  - [Student Profiles](#)
  - [Guest Lecturers](#) (Meet our guests, see the dates for their presentations, and find links to recording)
- **Getting Started**
  - [Getting Started: guides and resources for PBworks Wiki, dLOC, library reserves, tools, & more](#)
  - [Discussions Index](#)
- **Schedule and Assignments**
  - [All Assignments](#)
  - [Schedule and how this course proceeds with an explanation of assignments](#)
  - Student space for the assignments (where all students post)

Title	Creator	Info
A pocket guide to Panama	United States. Army Serv...	
Alternative Texts: Indo-Caribbean Women's Jewelry	Mahabir	
An eye for the tropics: tourism, photography, and framing the Carib...	Thompson	
Anthropology and photography, 1860-1920	Royal	
Black Labor on a White Canal: Panama, 1904-1981	Conniff	
Callaloo nation: metaphors of race and religious identity among Sou...	Khan	
Cereus blooms at night	Mootoo	
"Colón man a come": mythographies of Panamá Canal migration	Frederick	
Colonial photography and exhibitions: representations of the 'native...	Maxwell	
Colonialist photography: imag(in)ing race and place	Hight and Sampson	
Complete poems	McKay	
Coolie woman: the odyssey of indenture	Bahadur	
Corentyne thunder	Mittelhölzer	
Diggers	Foster et al.	
Discerner of hearts	Senior	
Experiences of a Demerara magistrate, 1863-1869.	Des Voeux	
Freedom Denied: Indian Women and Indentureship in Trinidad and ...	Reddock	
Gendered Testimonies: Autobiographies, Diaries and Letters by Wo...	Brereton	
Haunted by empire: geographies of intimacy in North American hist...	Stoler	
Hosay Trinidad: Muharram performances in an Indo-Caribbean dias...	Korom	
In Jamaica and Cuba,	De Lisser	

**Info** Notes Tags Related

Item Type: Journal Article

Title: Gendered Testimonies: Autobiographies, Diaries and Letters by Women as Sources for Caribbean History

Author: Brereton, Bridget

Abstract: Although history has been one of the m...

Publication: Feminist Review

Volume: 59

Issue: 59

Pages: 143-163

Date: July 1, 1998

Series: m d y

Series Title:

Series Text:

Journal Abbr: Feminist Review

Language:

DOI: 10.2307/1395728

ISSN: 0141-7789

Short Title: Gendered Testimonies

URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1395728>

Accessed: 6/13/2013 2:45:18 PM



# Research methods and digital humanities

## To use hands-on assignments to teach research methods for newspapers, photographs, memoirs, historical accounts, government records, oral histories.

**THE DAILY BEAR AND HERALD, MAY 5, 1911.**

**KEEP OUT PLAGUE CARRIERS.**  
The warning sent out by Foreign Minister Federico Boyd to the port authorities throughout the republic to exercise special vigilance and take extraordinary precautions against the admission of Chinese from foreign ports is timely and appropriate. The action was taken in response to the publication of news reports that batches of Chinese coming from the plague-stricken region in the East were being sent from Halifax to West Indian and Central American ports. The immigration laws of this Republic prohibit the entry of Orientals in the country, but, as is well known, Chinese are often smuggled in on both coasts and while the authorities are usually on the lookout for such infractions of the immigration laws the wily Oriental and his backers or importers often get the better of the officials. Now that the plague menace in the East still threatens the Western world it behooves all countries on this continent to enforce their exclusion laws and measures of precaution against plague invasion more stringently than ever.

The report that over a hundred Chinese were being shipped from Halifax to tropical ports caused a flutter in the West Indies as soon as the happy tidings reached the islands. The newspapers at once took up the matter and called upon the governments in no uncertain language to enforce the exclusion laws. We have received enough information

from one same revolver. Tropical plants massed in the window concealed the assailant. As soon as they recovered their self-possession the diners gave the alarm, but the would-be assassin had escaped and a careful search of the town failed to bring out any evidence.

We learn that the report has been denied by Foreign Minister Boyd by cable. The story is a ridiculous exaggeration of a trivial incident at David during the President's visit when some merry-andrew started the diners by throwing some harmless object on the table.

**MEXICO**  
**IS DIAZ TO RESIGN?**  
Question Agitating the Capital  
Mexico City, May 3.—In the ranks of the revolutionary element in this city there is an ancient contest of opinion between a majority, favoring pressing the demand for the resignation of Diaz, and a conservative minority urging to let that pass alone. Tentative plans are being made for a meeting demonstration of students and the wage earning and salaried classes at a propitious time in the next few days asking for his resignation.

An unofficial junta is considering the question to-night of a propaganda on a radical basis, the chief claim for further demonstrations being the fact that Diaz refused to receive a petition of students some days ago on the ground that they did not represent the masses. One radical afternoon paper, whose editor was released from jail yesterday and the paper permitted to resume after a brief suppression, came out with a call on the masses to address letters to Diaz urging his resignation. To show the popular trend at Vera Cruz, however, the reception

of independent utterances, prints a special despatch from El Paso that Madero has received many despatches from revolutionary justas asking that he eliminate the resignation of Diaz as a condition of peace. "The impartial," a government organ, carries in display a series of stories showing the vandalism of the rebels in the smaller towns and cities captured and begins an agitation with the question: "Can political parties succumb to free elections be organized in Mexico?"

For the first time in many weeks passengers arrived in the City of Mexico this morning on delayed trains from Monterrey on the way to Eagle Pass, the line on which the rebels during the armistice have permitted repairs. Other roads, however, about Mexico are out of commission to-day.

**CHANGE OF SENTIMENT IN CITY**  
Less Insistence on Resignation.  
Mexico City, May 3.—A distinct recession in the wave of excitement and suspense which reached its crest yesterday is noticeable in official and public circles generally to-day, influenced chiefly by optimistic news from the border and the departure of General Huerta's column for Chihuahua, whence comes information that all foreigners are safe and the feared attack by the rebels has not materialized.

Trains to Laredo and to Vera Cruz to-day, however, are crowded with foreigners leaving the country and the registration at the consulates continues in unusual numbers. Railroad officials declare that the wrecks and accidents interrupting traffic on the roads to Puebla and to Mazatlan will soon be repaired. The Central northward to Chihuahua, however, remains completely out of commission.

It may be stated definitely on almost the highest authority that President Diaz will make no promise of resignation to any faction or element and that the rebels of whatever action must be content to make peace if at all with that element eliminated.

It is a striking phase of the situation that while among the lower classes in the capital of Mexico the demand for the President's resignation is growing louder daily, being voiced in calls and on the streets, in club meetings and scattered pamphlets, there is a distinct growth of conservatism among the educated radicals and liberals and expression of a realization that in Diaz is to be found the best refuge from possible, if not probable, collapse of order. Despatches to Ambassador Wilson came through to-day from several points reflecting a similar trend of opinion elsewhere. This has been produced by revision from the wide spread disorder of the past week,

occurring close to the city, accompanied by vandalism and brigandage in the guise of revolution. As a result, the unofficial ultimatum of the rebels of this section that Diaz must resign while not withdrawn is being discontinued by many usually accredited to the ranks of reformers.

An authoritative statement came from the Department of Foreign Relations yesterday that the government would not treat with Madero further unless he would give guarantees of ability to bring peace. This is interpreted to-day as leading to a proposition that Madero's forces in the north be taken into the government service, temporarily at least, in case peace is signed at Juarez, to be used with the federal troops against all who refuse to abide by the terms agreed on.

In government circles elation is expressed over the success of the effort to establish counterparts with Figueroa, chieftain of the Guerrero and Morelos insurgents, who to-day came to the capital under a flag of truce accompanied by Lieut. Col. Beltran. He stopped openly at a hotel and called on Minister of Finance, Immigration and Minister of War Cosío. He refused to say a word for publication. Meantime his forces in scattered bands are within from 20 to 50 miles of the capital. He denies responsibility for massacres of soldiers or the shooting of Dr. Soffer.

**Peace Commissioner at El Paso.**  
El Paso, May 3.—The Commission, the peace commissioner of the Mexican Government, has arrived. He brings with him ample powers. The conference will take place in a tent pitched equidistant from Juarez and Madero's camp.

**AN OLD NURSE FOR CHILDREN.**  
Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup has been used for over fifty years by millions of mothers for their children while teething, with perfect success. It soothes the child, softens the gums, allays all pain, cures wind colic and is the best remedy for diarrhoea. Sold by all druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup and take no other kind. The best remedy of all.

**BANK INSURANCE**  
Don't brood over a load of responsibilities. Let us relieve you of one at least, the most important one, which is your clothes washing. Security stands in case of an accident. Why hand your clothes to the irresponsible stone blanchers? Hygienic and sanitation electricity done at the  
Despatch LAUNDRY Co.

**Warner's**



# Research methods and digital humanities

To introduce students to the technology used in digital archiving (producing metadata, exhibit labels, finding aids) and digital humanities (timelines, data visualizations like mapping programs, Zotero, WordPress)

**Permanent Link:** <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00013942/00001>

## Material Information

**Title:** The coolie, his rights and wrongs. Notes of Guiana, with a review of the system and of of inquiry.

**Physical Description:** xii, 446 p. illus. (incl. map) 20 cm.

**Language:** English

**Creator:** Jenkins, John Edward

**Publisher:** George Routledge and Sons

**Place of Publication:** New York

**Publication Date:** 1871

## Subjects

**Subjects / Keywords:** Chinese -- Guyana.  
Labor and laboring classes -- Guyana.  
Working class--Guyana.  
Labor movement--Guyana.  
Labor--Guyana.

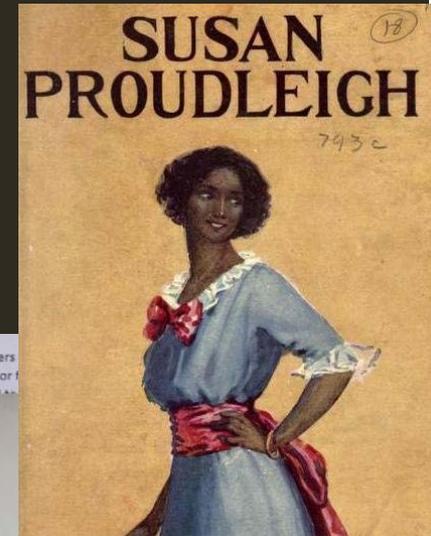
## Notes

**General Note:** By the author of "Ginx's baby." ( i.e. John E

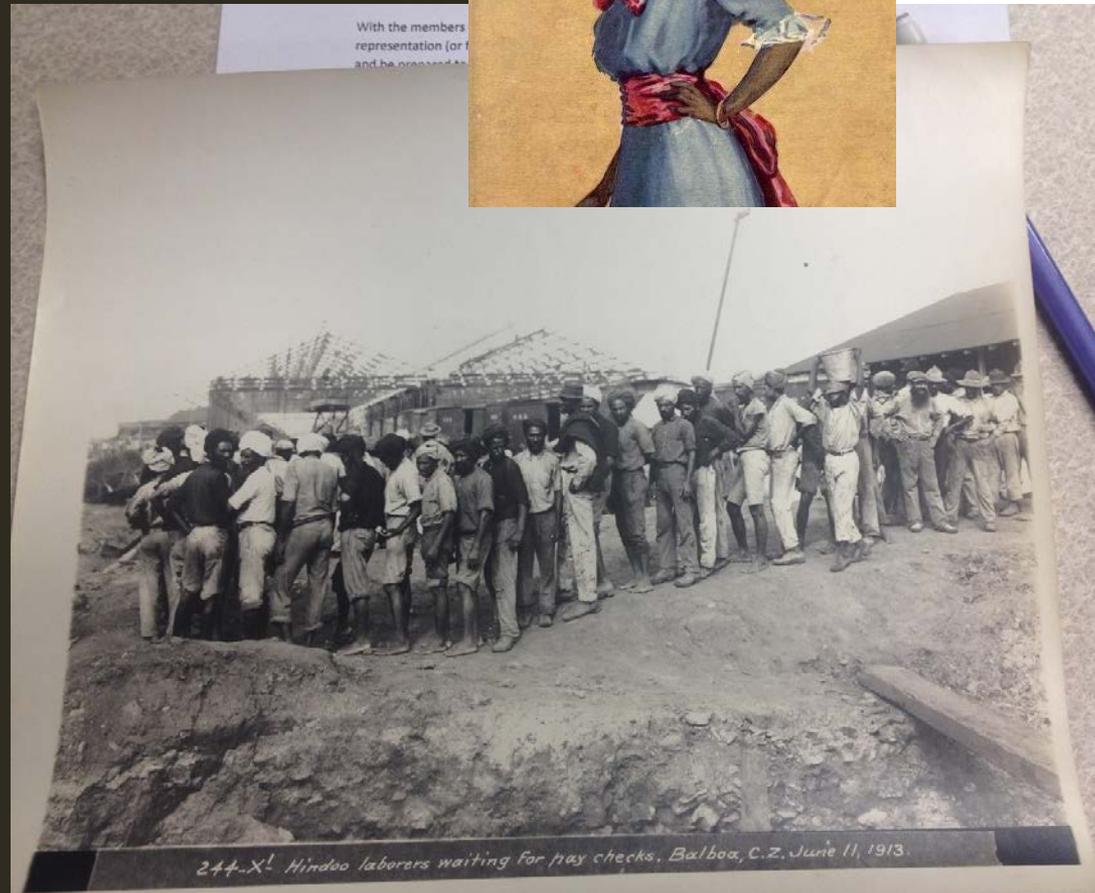
# Respect for diversity, specificity, and the local + critical engagement with technology

- Challenges posed by digital archiving; how can we avoid reproducing the colonial structure of existing historical archival materials?
- Students note absence of online presence for the Caribbean authors they study and see their work as potentially intervening in the US-European orientation of Wikipedia and other digital sources on literature
- Students' digital research projects (finding aids, curated exhibits, timelines) that annotate and explicate literary and primary historical sources can address bias and lacunae in existing archives. Successfully completed projects will be added to the Digital Library of the Caribbean ([www.dloc.com](http://www.dloc.com)) to enrich information available about these sources and help future scholars and students make use of them.

# Collaborative creation of the historical archives

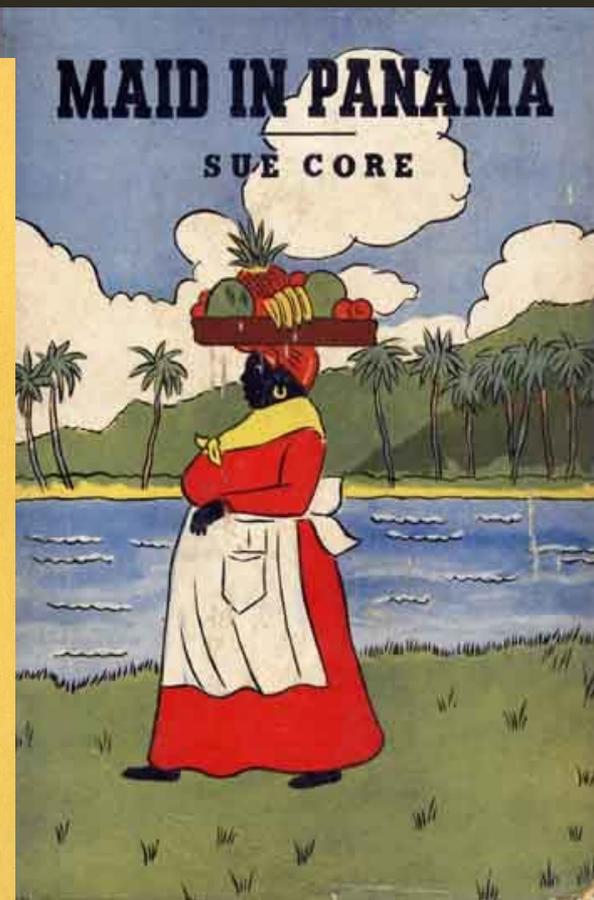
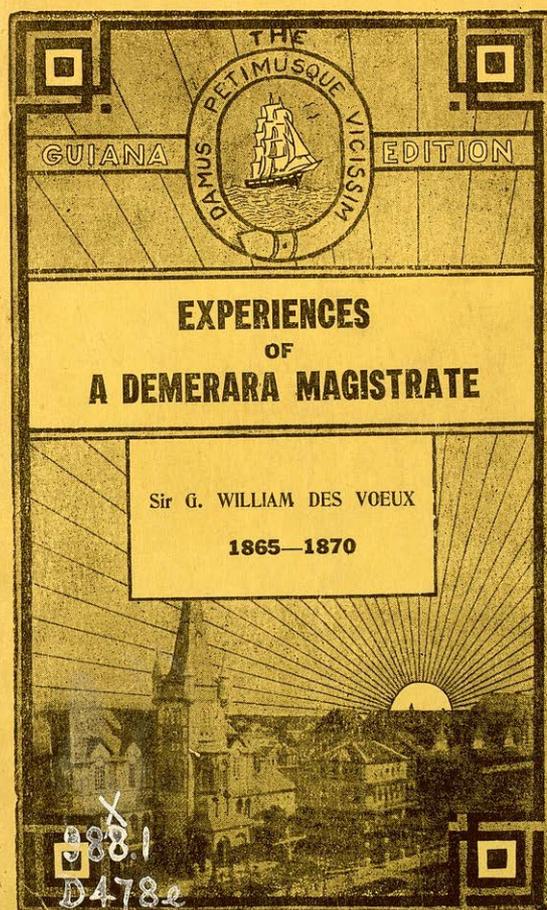


**BLACK  
LABOR  
ON A  
WHITE  
CANAL**  
PANAMA, 1904-1981  
Michael L. Conniff  
University of Pittsburgh Press



**VOICES FROM OUR AMERICA**

# Enhancing dLOC's holdings and information about Asians in the Caribbean and West Indians, particularly women, active in Panama



## Resources in dLOC added for/from the class

Villalobos, Joan Victoria Flores. "West Indian Women in the Panama Canal Zone, 1904-1914." Thesis. Amherst College, 2010.

*Isthmian Historical Society competition for the best true stories of life and work on the Isthmus of Panama during the construction of the Panama Canal*

Mahase Snr., Anna. *My Mother's Daughter*. Trinidad: Royard Pub. Co, 1992.

Syllabi, assignments, and powerpoint presentations

Being added to dLOC: videos of guest lectures and a finding aid for all the course materials; plans in the future for more developed lecture notes and commentary for teaching the course.

# Final projects as exploration of DH + interests

ghostsinthewater.wordpress.com/history/

## Ghosts in the Water: Chinese Women in Trinidad

Home Navigation **History** Women in the Narrative The Journey Across Black Waters Connections Beyond the Grave

Maps and Statistics Media Bibliography

### History



Records show that as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese artisans, religious figures, and professionals were migrating to Southeast Asia[1]. With the Empire at its height, Chinese skilled labor was in high demand in foreign markets. However, these early migrations had nothing on the sheer numbers that migrated during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some scholars refer to this period as the “classical migration period”. It was only during this period that migration patterns shifted, particularly in terms of push/pull factors of the time period, what *types* of migrants were making the journey, and *where* migrants were traveling.



## Canal Zone Classrooms

*A look into student lives in the segregated school system of the Panama Canal Zone*

### A Segregated History: Part I

*This is a general introduction to segregation in the Canal Zone, which contextualizes the segregated school system. Click [here](#) to skip ahead to part II specifically about education.*

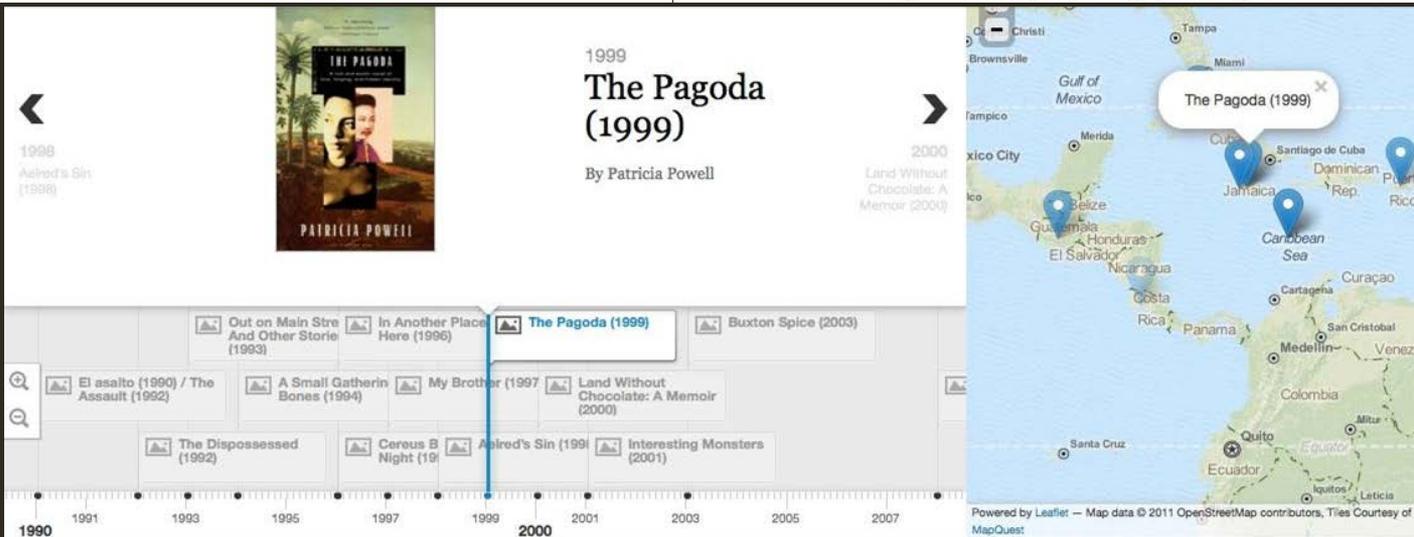
For most of the 20th century, the public school system in the Panama Canal Zone was segregated. As the *Silver People Chronicle* explains, this segregation was part of a

- MAPPING THE ZONE
- A SEGREGATED HISTORY
- ARCHIVED YEARBOOKS
- THE FLAG RIOTS OF '64
- ABOUT THE PROJECT
- RESOURCES

Search ...

RELATED PAGES

- A Segregated History: Part I
- A Segregated History: Part II
- A Segregated History: Part III



1999

## The Pagoda (1999)

By Patricia Powell

1998 *Alfred's Sin* (1998)

2000 *Land Without Chocolate: A Memoir* (2001)

Timeline items:

- 1990: *El asalto* (1990) / *The Assault* (1992)
- 1991: *The Dispossessed* (1992)
- 1993: *Out on Main Street And Other Stories* (1993)
- 1994: *A Small Gathering of Bones* (1994)
- 1995: *In Another Place Here* (1996)
- 1997: *My Brother* (1997)
- 1998: *Cereus B Night* (1998)
- 1999: **The Pagoda (1999)**
- 2000: *Land Without Chocolate: A Memoir* (2000)
- 2001: *Alfred's Sin* (1999)
- 2003: *Interesting Monsters* (2001)
- 2005: *Buxton Spice* (2003)

Map showing locations: Tampa, Miami, Jacksonville, San Francisco, Mexico City, Merida, Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Curacao, San Cristobal, Medellin, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Quito, Santa Cruz, Iquitos, Leticia.

Powered by Leaflet — Map data © 2011 OpenStreetMap contributors, Tiles Courtesy of MapQuest

# Final projects as a way to enhance the archive

Yasmina Martin, Amherst College, “[Encountering cultures: the role of the Chinese shop in Jamaica, 1890-1940](#)” provides historical background and context for a specific novel, Patricia Powell’s *Pagoda*, but also a general overview of scholarship and key concepts about Chinese immigration to Jamaica, including historical photos and newspaper articles about anti-Chinese riots, and anti-Chinese racism (Yellow Peril).

Abigail Nichols, University of Miami, “[Women of the Panama Canal](#)” brings together information from two previously hard-to-access texts with images from primary sources to illuminate the different roles West Indian women played in the Panama Canal projects and to dismantle the general assumption that they were few in number and all employed in domestic work.

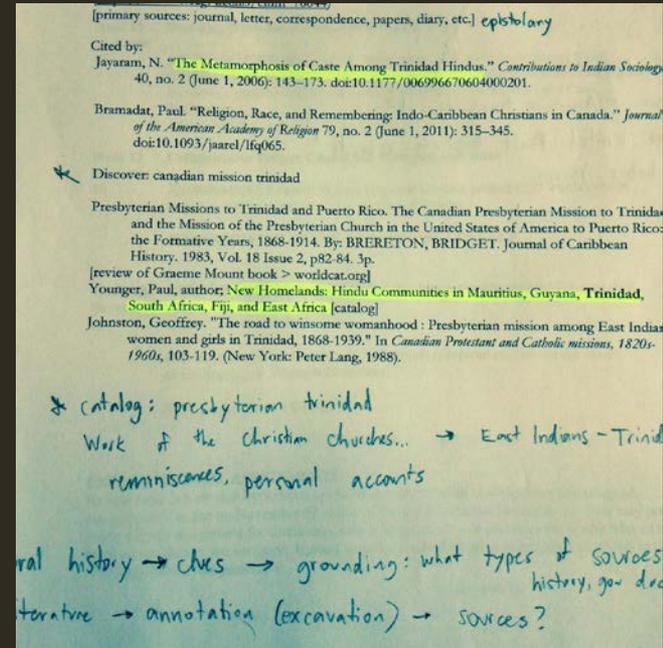
Dhanashree Thorat, University of Florida, “[Indian Indenture](#)” places the memoir of one Indo-Trinidadian woman, who narrates the story of her parents who migrated from Trinidad as indentured workers, in the context of the large-scale migration through mapping and a timeline.

## Further Collaboration



- Conference Panel on the course at the International Conference on Caribbean Literature, to introduce the project and invite other faculty to join
- Plan to teach the course collaboratively in Fall 2015
- Plans underway to produce a DH project based on the course

# Some lessons learned



- Technological learning curve
- Cross-cultural communication
- Pedagogical feedback and improvements

TRINIDAD.

410. 17

INMIGRACION.

Yo, que inscribimos declaramos por el presente documento que, de acuerdo con la Ordenanza de 8 de Mayo de 1875; á la cual nos sometemos, hez mos celebrado el siguiente contrato.

Yo, Doctor JUAN SECCHI, por mí ó por medio de mis Agentes, me comprometo á llevar de esta isla de Trinidad á la de Cuba al Coolie Vangaramy abajo firmado, y á pagarle un ebelin por cada día de trabajo; pago que debere hacer quincenalmente. Me comprometo ademas á darle cada año dos mudas de ropa, cada una de las cuales ha de consistir de un Sombrero, una Camisa, un Calzon, un par de Zapatos, y en Enero una Chaqueta y una Friezada.

Al partir de Trinidad el Indio (Coolie) Vangaramy

recibirá una muda de ropa hecha á la usanza de su país, y ademas, al llegar á Cuba, la suma de £ 2. 1. 8 como enganche.

Yo, Doctor JUAN SECCHI me obligo tambien á proporcionale asistencia médica en caso de enfermedad y a darle las medicinas y demas auxilios propios de los hospitales.

La racion consistirá de dos libras arroz, un cuarto de libra pescado salado, una onza aceite de coco, dos onzas frijoles, y café y azucar, todo lo cual será preparado por un cocinero (Coolie) que residirá en la hacienda.

Yo Vangaramy

acepto el contrato anterior propuesto por el Doctor JUAN SECCHI, y me comprometo á trabajar en su servicio, segun sus órdenes, ó las de sus mayordomos ó la persona que lo remplace en este contrato, en los dias de trabajo; de la misma manera que lo hacen los peones libres del país, y sométien dome á la Ordenanza arriba mencionada.

Este contrato durará cinco años, terminados los cuales, el Doctor Secchi, ó su representante en Cuba, pagará el pasaje del citado á Trinidad, si así lo exigiere el último.

Y para que así conste firmamos el presente contrato en

isla de Trinidad á los

dias del mes de agosto de ochocientos

veinte y ocho. Antepuesto latito above Vangaramy hi  
n named Coolie by mark

Alba P. J. Secchi

El Consul de España en la Isla de Trinidad certifico que el indio Coolie Vangaramy natural de Madras si he presentado en iste Consulado acompañado del Intérprete de Gobierno de esta isla i ha

# Questions?

Request from Isthmus for Employment of Nurses - Reg. 3/25 to 5/2/07

Form 110

ISTHMIAN CANAL COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON OFFICE

RECEIVED CANAL ZONE GOVERNMENT  
JUL 13 1907  
SANITARY UNIT

June 21, 1907.

Madam:-

You are hereby provisionally employed as Nurse, -----

under the Isthmian Canal Commission for duty on the Isthmus of Panama, your compensation to be at the rate of Sixty dollars (\$60) a month -----, United States currency value, for the performance of such duties as may be determined by the head of the Department to which you are assigned upon arrival on the Isthmus, to serve at the pleasure of that official, subject only to the allowances and conditions shown on the reverse of this sheet.

This paper should be presented by you upon arrival in the harbor at Colon to the authorized representative of the Isthmian Canal Commission, who will come aboard ship at that port and advise you as to your assignment to duty.

Sanitary 42370