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FACT AND FETISH IN CREOLIZATION STUDIES:  
HERSKOVITS AND THE PROBLEM OF INDUCTION, OR,  
GUINEA COAST, 1593

Two things strike me in reading some of the work cited by Richard Price (2001) in his retrospective on creolization in the African diaspora in the Americas.<sup>1</sup> First, although Melville Herskovits's research on New World Africanity figures prominently either as source of inspiration, object of criticism, or merely useful signpost, his equally influential writings on economic anthropology and their possible relation to his work on African survivals in the New World are largely absent from the discussion.<sup>2</sup> Second, in a debate oriented largely around differing interpretations of "much the same data" (R. Price 2001:52), and in which attention to "what went on in specific places and times" (Trouillot 1998:20) is paramount, there is little reflection on the status of the facts *as facts* and the modality of inductive reasoning in which historical particularism makes sense. In the case of African survivals, the problem of induction is particularly acute since the data that might be admitted as evidence are rarely straightforwardly evident to the senses.<sup>3</sup>

1. I would like to thank Jennifer Heung, Rosemarijn Hoefte, Tom Boellstorff, Kevin Yelvington, and the reviewers for the *NWIG* for their comments, criticisms, suggestions (and photocopies!) of some sources, as well as their general collegial assistance. Writing has been supported by the Centre for Women's Studies in the Faculty of the Arts, and the Department of Anthropology in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, both at the Australian National University. Research on Frank Knight and economic theory was supported by the National Science Foundation, Law and Social Sciences Program, SES-9818258. I alone am responsible for all errors and inconsistencies here.

2. See e.g., Jackson 1986 and Fernandez 1990, who make a brief mention of this body of work; Apter 1991; Scott 1991; Trouillot 1998; R. Price 2001; see also Khan 2001; Yelvington 2001.

3. I would like to thank Kevin Yelvington for suggesting this phrasing.

This essay represents a series of speculations on some possible connections between the absence of Herskovits's economic anthropology in discussions of African survivals, and the relative lack of reflection on the mode of reasoning of historical particularism. It is meant in a spirit of critical reflection on the categories of analysis we use when approaching cultural formations in the African diaspora. David Scott (1999:108) has recently maintained that "a critical anthropology of the African diaspora has to be constituted through a close attention to the history of its own categories and to the extent to which it assumes their transparency." Kevin Yelvington (2001:250) has written eloquently about the "paradigm paralysis" in the field of Caribbean studies even as its models become the stock in trade of the new anthropologies of globalization, transnationalism, and hybridity. Aisha Khan (2001:278) critically reviews the "discourses of celebration and lament" that have characterized the search for African "retentions" and the solace some scholars find in creolization models of culture change, a solace only possible if the models remain relatively untheorized.

My provocation here has two components. The first is theoretical and methodological and has to do with the status of facts and facticity in Herskovits's economic anthropology, which became the centerpiece of his debate with the economist Frank Knight in the *Journal of Political Economy* (Herskovits 1941a; Knight 1941). At issue was the relation between deduction and induction, the positing of principles and the discovery of facts. The second is historical and cultural and has to do with the emergence of the idea of the fact as a stand-alone datum independent of any theory for its existence. By linking recent work on fetishism with new scholarship on the scientific revolution, I tentatively suggest that this emergence coincided with that of the idea of the fetish as an object possessed of a power all its own.

As for the debate over African diasporic cultures and their continuities or divergences from African and/or slave pasts, I take a page from the Mintz and Price (1992) score, but put it to a new tune. What strikes me in the debates over creolization is less the contending political and epistemological positions different scholars have taken in relation to certain foundational texts, and more the "unconscious 'grammatical' principles, which may underlie" (Mintz & Price 1992:9-10) not only the influence of African cultures on New World cultures (which was Mintz and Price's original concern), but the very debate itself. There is a meta-grammar here, and it structures the debate's conflicting positions (and possibly its acrimoniousness [R. Price 2001:36] as well). Creolization is so intractable a problem because it re-stages the founding problematic of scientific induction: how do we draw conclusions from facts? Like other complex social phenomena, and the theories built up in tandem with them, it is by no means unique in doing so. Induction, in the specific form in which we have inherited it, I suggest, was not only the product of the scientific revolution in Europe but was also brought into being on the slave-trading West African coast, in colonial ventures that provided raw material for the new sciences and that were key to the

emergence of the distinction between fact and fiction. That distinction, in turn, was triangulated by the figure of the (commodity) fetish.

A word about my own stakes in the creolization debate: having worked primarily in the British Virgin Islands, a place that scored pretty low on Herskovits's (1930, 1966) "scale of intensities of New World Africanisms" (about which I have more to say below), and having worked primarily on law and economics, I originally found the creolization problematic in Caribbean studies to be largely irrelevant to my concerns – or those of British Virgin Islanders. It is important to make the analytical distinction between creolization as a process and creolization as a strategic discourse of elites or others. The BVI is, after all, a place that has placed its bets on a self-conscious strategy of "creolization redux," that is, promoting itself as a de-creolized piece of England in the Caribbean for the purpose of attracting and maintaining its offshore financial services industry (see Maurer 1997a and 1997b). Beyond the dominant discourse, however, offshore financial services in financial practice and legal form are difficult to see as in any way "creolized."<sup>4</sup> However, the manner in which offshore finance encourages both professionals involved in the business and everyday BVI Islanders to pay reflexive attention to culture, status, and monetary and legal forms points up the analytical need for questioning the origins of those forms and their contemporary transformations. Finance capital, as a specific modality of legal, bureaucratic, and economic power, after all, has some of its origins in the shipping requirements of Caribbean slavery (Stinchcombe 1995:57-58). Today, creative reworkings of the formal qualities of economic and legal facts occupy those I study as well as myself, just at a historical moment when, in what are coming to be called creoles and hybrids, they take center stage in new capitalisms around the world (see, e.g., Pieterse 1994; Ong 1999; Yang 2000).

#### CREOLIZATION DEBATES

In their reassessments of the Herskovitsian paradigm, both Andrew Apter (1991) and David Scott (1991) revisit the "scale of intensity of Africanisms" Herskovits put forward (Herskovits 1930, 1966). To both Scott and Apter, the scale of intensities recalls nothing so much as the nineteenth-century scientific racism that Herskovits and his teacher, Franz Boas, were at pains to argue against. For Scott (1991:277), the scale represents "the inaugural moment of a lasting anthropological problematic" according to which the "New World Negro" would be configured as an anthropological object defined by distance from an authentic past and divergence from a distinctive culture. For Apter (1991:237), the scale is

4. For instances of creolized economic forms in Herskovits's work, see Herskovits (1941b:161, 165) and Herskovits & Herskovits (1947:290-92), on labor sharing and rotating credit associations.

almost a "parody [of] the epistemology of liberal social science." As a "form of knowledge" and a "specific discursive modality" for constructing Africanity, it cries out for deconstruction (p. 244).

Apter (1991:236) attempts just this, by "extract[ing] the interpretive kernel from its scientific shell" in order to achieve "greater clarity about just what it is we are comparing, contextualizing, and historicizing on both sides of the Atlantic." What Apter reveals is a form of interpretive practice (especially bodily practice, p. 242) from West Africa that itself challenges the trope of fragmentation on which the creolization paradigm is predicated with a Yoruba-derived one of indeterminacy, empowerment, and appropriation. Thus, for example, "slaves took possession of Catholicism and thereby repossessed themselves as active spiritual subjects" (p. 245). His conclusion is that "the revisionary power of syncretic religions derives from West African hermeneutical traditions which disseminated through the slave trade and took shape in black communities to remake the New World in the idioms of the old" (p. 255-56). Apter (1991:243) is not as concerned as Scott with the factual status of the "data" on which his own or Herskovits's conclusions are based. The assumptions behind the "scale of intensity" may have *distorted* the facts. But recovering a theory of creolization from them does not require "the lofty heights of postmodern criticism" so much as "internal evidence supplemented by empirical data" (p. 244). In taking this position, Apter is perhaps closer to Herskovits (and Mintz and Price) than not.

For Scott, however, it is just such evidence and data that themselves come under scrutiny. Flagging the problems of Boasian empiricism and holism, Scott (1991:274-75) calls for a move away from the "preoccupation with the corroboration or verification of authentic pasts" and toward the discursive formations that figure realities and relationships (p. 278). Scott's shift leads him to the place of Africa and slavery as discursive constructs in the rhetorical and political struggles of people of the New World African diaspora. The focus becomes an appreciation of the place of the past in memory and the emplotment of positions and persons in cultural and political fields (p. 279). Scott does *not* suggest that his proposed shift in focus lead us to consider the discursive formations conjuring the "facts" of the past, in their status as facts of an actual history, but rather the spaces of memory and traditions of representational and ideological work.

Had he done so, Richard Price's response to Scott in his recent critical retrospective might have been a little different. Price (2001:53) reads Scott's "radical critique" as denying "the primary object of historical study – pasts that exist independent of a cultural imagining of them." Price is correct to argue that Scott's critique moves from histories that exist independent of imaginations and toward memories and discursive traditions of imagining histories. Price's own work, of course, is exemplary of such a move (e.g., R. Price 1983, 1990, 1998). But because Scott does not turn his critical apparatus toward the process of fact-making itself, Price is not, strictly speaking, correct to link Scott's shift to memory and discursive tradition to an outright "discard[ing] ... the facts of eight-

eenth-century demography or colonial statutes or accounts of tortures meted out to recaptured Maroons" (p. 53). What matters to Scott, it seems to me, is the place of memories of the past in the present. The same could be said for Price, given his continued attention to the imagining and resituating of pasts in the present, and one wonders whether the two authors' positions are as divergent as their responses to each other might suggest.

What matters to me, however, is the place of the facts of the past (or the present, for that matter) as products of a specific discursive political economy. Other interventions in the creolization debates recently have made the models an object of scrutiny but have left the "data" on which they depend relatively unscathed, and, indeed, have left in place the presumed directionality between data and models: data come first, and models are built up "after" them, as it were. Yelvington (2001:250) notes that some recent work attempts "to steer paths through materialistic determinism and cultural production through ethnography and revisionist historiography." Khan (2001:294) argues that the models have served academic gatekeeping functions that "overdetermine Caribbean realities, overshadowing the contingencies of local contexts and daily life." Her essay brilliantly demonstrates how creolization is "a fiction that invents the Caribbean" (p. 295). But I am less convinced by the grounding function given to "ethnography and revisionist history," the supposition that "the gritty realities of people's lives complicate theorizing experience" (Khan 2001:293) or the call for greater attention to "the ethnographic, the material, the concrete" (p. 293). I find such invocations of gritty reality unconvincing not because I deny the "reality" of the material or the concrete, but because I do not believe the distinction and the presumed directionality between "real" experience and theorizing experience is a tenable one. The notion of experience giving access to some truths – whether lived or theoretical – comes from a specific historical and philosophical tradition, about which I have more to say in the final section of this essay. I am interested in the gritty realities, and the facts like those Price mentions – colonial demography, legal statutes and the like – because of their effects in the present (R. Price 2001:53; Khan 2001:292; Yelvington 2001:250-51), and because of their efficaciousness *as facts* for political and academic agendas. That efficacy tells us something important about the sorts of facts analysts presume, look for, and find in their divergent approaches toward creolization. And that efficacy leads me to want to look more closely at that discarded "scientific shell" of Herskovits's scale of intensity.

#### HERSKOVITS AND THE PROBLEM OF INDUCTION

"It is quite possible on the basis of our present knowledge to make a kind of chart indicating the extent to which the descendants of Africans brought to the New World have retained Africanisms in their cultural behavior:" thus

Herskovits (1930:149) in the 1930 essay in which he originally proposed a chart for what would become, in a 1945 article, the "scale of intensity of Africanisms" (Herskovits 1966).<sup>5</sup> The shift from descriptive prose to a tabular matrix is significant, for, as Jack Goody (1977:81) has argued, the table imposes a kind of form on otherwise discontinuous items, bringing "greater visibility to categories, at the same time as making them more abstract" (see also Riles 2001:155-56). In the 1945 chart, the column headings refer to different cultural elements: technology, economy, social organization, kinship, religion, magic, art, folklore, music, and language. The row headings refer to places or regions, such as Guiana (bush), Guiana (Paramaribo), Brazil (Porto Allegre), Jamaica (Morant Bay), Jamaica (general), U.S. (rural South), U.S. (Gullah Islands), and so forth. Each cell of the table is occupied by a letter, from *a* to *e*, indicating "intensity" of African influence, or a question mark indicating that no data are available.

The 1930 article in which the scale was first proposed was firmly within the Boasian problematic, framed by "Man's physical form, and ... his languages and cultures" (Herskovits 1930:145). The 1945 essay, more confident in tone, turns directly to problems of "clarity of purpose in research," "methodological concepts and techniques," and "hypotheses which have guided investigation and developed out of experience in the field" (Herskovits 1966:43).<sup>6</sup> According to Herskovits (1966:50), the scale of intensity is a "logically conceived continuum which ranges from retentions that are completely African, or almost so, to those least African and most European." Furthermore, it is

but a means to an end rather than an end in itself. In this case, the end that is envisaged is that comprehension of process which alone can lead to valid prediction. To be revealing in terms of this end the classification must be derived through induction, and flow from the data, rather than be imposed upon it after the fashion of *a priori* categories that tend to force materials into groupings that do violence to the scientific reality. (Herskovits 1966:51)

In the 1945 article, Herskovits (1966:45) repeatedly stressed the inductive and empiricist orientation of his endeavor. For example, he lauded research in which, despite any current academic fashion, "the data have been followed where they led," and emphatically asserted that "the most fruitful results can be had only when the facts are studied as they lie, without those preconceptions which ... lead to distortion" (p. 46).<sup>7</sup>

5. Originally published in *Afroamerica*, vol. 1, pp. 5-24, the article was reprinted in *The New World Negro* (1966).

6. Page numbers refer to the 1966 reprint.

7. Herskovits's wariness of preconceptions and biases of all kinds helps account for his conflicted relationship with certain partisan causes. Yelvington (2000) has documented this in relation to Herskovits's Jewishness. See also Herskovits's response to Leslie White's quoting him out of context regarding evolutionary theory. Herskovits (1960:1050) main-

The 1945 essay is characterized by an almost defensive reaction against sloppy or careless anthropologists, and critics who would challenge either the “scientific” status of the study of culture or the justification for a field devoted to the “New World Negro.” If there is any defensive rhetorical posturing in the 1930 essay, it is toward the scientific racists with which the Boasian school took issue. Nevertheless, the approach remained strictly Boasian: build a rich “body of factual materials” (p. 44) for comparative research that will permit the formation of hypotheses. By 1945, it seems Herskovits felt there had been enough data collection across geographical and disciplinary areas to warrant theory-building. He thus departed from Boas’s equivocation on the proper moment for beginning the comparative project and jumped right into it.<sup>8</sup> Like Richard Price’s (2001) recent essay, the article was a retrospective, and a prolegomenon for new research, a “logical moment for stock-taking, for the explicit statement of theoretical assumptions, and for a refinement of techniques” (Herskovits 1966:44). The chief hypothesis that results from the scale was that “in situations involving change, cultural imponderables are more resistant than are those elements of which persons are more conscious” (p. 60).

Despite the imperative to stick to “just the facts,” Herskovits demonstrated some discomfort with the facts as arranged on his logical continuum. In addition, despite the strong emphasis on historical particularism and induction from the data that “only await gathering to be utilized” (Herskovits 1930:145), Herskovits also equivocated on the role of classificatory schemes. Although he stated that, “Scientific analysis is impossible without classification of data, and herein lies the importance of this series of categories; but it cannot be too strongly emphasized that classification, of itself, can tell us nothing about causes, or relationships, or the processes of change” (Herskovits 1966:51), a closer look at the explanatory notes to his scale of intensities suggests there is more going on than simple fact-collection and classification. This conclusion is warranted by some of his other writings, as well.

There are three dimensions to the scale. First, there is the classification of relative degree of “intensity” (represented by the letters *a* through *e* on the

tained that White’s quotation misrepresented his “approach to scientific controversy and ... sense of the dignity of scholarship” by juxtaposing it to a rather “intemperate” sentence by another author who claimed the theory of cultural evolution to be “inane, sterile and pernicious.” Herskovits was arguing here over the importance of language and, in effect, discursive community in scholarship, a point relevant for my larger argument that Herskovits’s encounter with Knight underscored the role of argument in science and unsettled somewhat Herskovits’s inductive method. I would like to thank Kevin Yelvington for bringing these debates to my attention.

8. Kevin Yelvington (personal communication) suggests that by 1945 Herskovits was extremely confident in the abilities of himself and his students to make such comparisons, and thereby to surpass the Boasian paradigm of deferring comparison until that impossible moment when “all” the facts are in.

table). Herskovits (1966:54) relied for these classifications on his own field research and that of "trained and competent observers." The classifications here are abstractions from the facts derived from field research, and are designed, not to approximate truth, but to minimize argument. As he puts it, the "weightings ... are broadly conceived" to reduce "disagreement" among scientists that would be "to no purpose, since all classifications of such data must be subjective" (p. 54).

Second, there is the classification of group, region, or locality. But even something so apparently straightforward as locality cannot so easily be captured in the classification scheme.<sup>9</sup> In an earlier formulation of the scale, Herskovits noted, he had lumped together some of these groups and areas. Here, however, he achieved a "further refinement" in cases where "districts can be distinguished wherein the pattern and degree of African retentions differ." This further refinement was still not sufficient to capture the complexity of his cases, however, for "in every part of the New World where Negroes live, excepting only the Guiana Bush, class differences operate so as to make for variation" within each group. Hence, in coming to an assessment of each group or area's level of intensity, he relied on "that degree of retention for each group which is closest to African custom." Although people in Bahia generally speak Portuguese with few elements of African grammar or vocabulary, nevertheless Bahia was rated as having a high intensity of Africanisms in its language because "only there have certain African tongues been retained" as opposed to simply a few words or phrases or grammatical structures (all quotations in this paragraph are from Herskovits 1966:52).

Third, there is classification of "cultural elements" into technology, economy, social organization, religion, and so on. Herskovits wrote that while "greater refinement" here might be "more revealing," "the technique of trait-analysis seems to be too mechanical, and to work too great violence to the unity of the cultural elements involved." Furthermore, his designations were "for convenience only, and to consider them as anything more than useful symbols would be to introduce a note of spurious accuracy against which too great warning cannot be given" (p. 54). As with the classification of levels of intensity, the classification of cultural elements was designed with the goal of minimizing argument. It was also designed to avoid "violence" to cultural "unities." And it was designed to prevent the student from ascribing to any of these cultural elements or the ratings they are given on the scale of intensities a "spurious accuracy."

Herskovits's classificatory scheme was heuristic; as such, it sat awkwardly within the inductive method he espoused. While warning against a logical positivism that would insist on the primacy of classificatory schemes or the

9. On the problematic of locality in anthropology, see Boellstorff 2002 and Gupta & Ferguson 1992.

postulation of culture “traits” whose frequencies could then be measured across the societies of the world, (in the fashion Murdock popularized; see Simpson 1973:7), Herskovits’s equivocation about his own axes of classification belied any simple relationship to the “facts” alone. At the same time, following Goody (1977; see also Riles 2001), the tabular form imposed a degree of abstraction and visibility on the categories, and made it seem necessary to find the data needed to replace question marks with letters from *a* to *e*. In other words, despite Herskovits’s protestations to the contrary, once the scale of intensity became a table, the classificatory scheme seemed to precede the data, and not the other way around.

Herskovits’s apparent inconsistency on the question of whether data or theories are primary has strong resonances with his debate with the economist Frank Knight, published in the *Journal of Political Economy* in 1941 and reprinted in Herskovits’s 1952 volume, *Economic Anthropology*. Framed by Herskovits (1952:507) as a study in the contrast between the inductive and deductive approach in the social sciences, the debate represents to me a softening of the strict empiricism that was Boas’s legacy to Herskovits, and a glimpse into the discursive fabrication of the facts of African retention that are at the heart of the creolization debates.

Knight’s criticisms of economic anthropology rested squarely on his vision of economics as a science of principles and laws, not empirical realities. For Knight, Herskovits’s derision of economics for neglecting the vast majority of the peoples of the world was simply beside the point. Moreover, “facts” for Knight paled in importance to logical relationships and the weight of argument. Knight’s own work in economics was very much against the emerging tradition of stochastic modeling (see Mirowski 1989). Like John Maynard Keynes and Joan Robinson, Knight argued that econometricians’ adoption of statistical procedures mistook economics as a science of the epistemologically or logically probable for a science of the empirically observable. Best known for his book, *Risk, Uncertainty and Profit* (1921) which clearly laid out the distinction between quantifiable and epistemological probability, Knight also authored a lesser-known work, “Liberalism and Christianity” (in Knight & Merriam 1945). The latter, published together with an essay by Thornton Merriam, was a defense of liberalism. It was also a defense of the epistemological conception of probability. “Recognizing that truth is a value means recognizing that it is a social category,” he wrote. “Truth is known, tested, and practically speaking defined, by agreement in some community of discourse,” and “real problems of fact are problems of the *worth* of evidence” (Knight 1945:49, emphasis added). Knight considered the use of “utilitarian application of positive science” to be “the worst form of original sin, rationally defined” (Knight 1945:49). As noted in his obituary, Knight believed that “a multiplicity of principles and conceptual frameworks are necessary if we are to know much about human society and hence of ourselves as the ‘social animal’” (Wick 1973:514). As Knight himself put it,

“The position we have to combat seems to rest on the inference, characteristically drawn by the ‘best minds’ of our race, that since natural objects are not like men, men must be like natural objects” (quoted in Wick 1973:514).

Knight’s position against Herskovits thus challenged the latter’s historical particularism, and, indeed, the very need for “facts:”

any intelligent or useful exposition of facts imperatively requires an understanding of principles, while the need for facts in connection with the exposition of principles is far more tenuous, and the “facts” which are really in question need not be facts at all in the sense of actuality for any particular point in time or space, provided they are realistically illustrated. (Knight 1941:516)<sup>10</sup>

Since economics, for Knight, ought to be interested in logical suppositions and conclusions derived from them, “real” facts are not even necessary: “‘authentic’ facts are not necessarily more useful than travelers’ tales based on superficial and largely false impressions – the bane of modern anthropological science – or even outright fiction or poetry” (Knight 1941:517).

While Herskovits’s response did poke fun at Knight’s persistence, as he called it, “in living in a world of [economists’] logical unreality” (Herskovits 1941a:524), he actually conceded a great deal in the debate. Thus:

Only for training purposes do we impress upon the graduate student the principle that the answer to a problem may not be assumed before the data are in. As a scholar grows in experience he comes to understand that the most fruitful attack on a problem is an approach motivated by a flash of insight telling him that a certain body of data should throw needed light on a given problem of his concern in terms of certain derived results. It is the way such interpretive flashes are used, rather than the fact that they are used, that differentiates the scientist from the nonscientist. (Herskovits 1941a:524)

And also:

It is difficult to envisage a human being, no matter how scholarly or how committed to scientific method, who does not exhibit some kind of bias most of the time. In the exact sciences, where data are measurable, we recognize this fact and allow for it, and we call it by the statistical term “error.” In the social sciences, particularly in social theory, we cannot achieve this, and too often merely call names. (Herskovits 1941a:530)

The arguments Herskovits put forward in his debate with Knight recognized the importance of a community of scholars in determining the relative *argumentative* weight of discrete bits of data. “Bias” is integral to the social scientific endeavor. Answers can be assumed before the data is in. And yet, in spite of his construction of the scale of intensity of Africanisms as essentially an argumentative device for creating “facts” for a particular community of schol-

10. Page numbers for Knight 1941 and Herskovits 1941 refer to the 1952 reprint.

ars, Herskovits continued to claim that the real problem was one of collecting good data without forcing them into preconceived logical schemes (or empty spaces on the intensity chart). Such schemes not only threatened to build insupportable flights of fancy but also to do what he called "violence" to cultural unity and scientific reality.

What is interesting to me in this regard is that by 1950 Herskovits was advocating a method based on the collection, indeed, the creation of fictional facts. In "The Hypothetical Situation" (1950), he described an ethnographic technique he had used in West Africa, the Caribbean, and South America. The technique involved posing hypothetical situations to people and asking them to talk about these. In this manner, information on sensitive topics could be obtained in a way that did not jeopardize reputations or relations with other persons or supernatural forces.<sup>11</sup> Herskovits concluded that the technique was "novelistic" in nature, a kind of "projective device" akin to what one finds in literature. "It has long been recognized by students of literature," he wrote, "that the creative process feeds on experience. Even the most fantastic tale bases its fantasy on reality" (Herskovits 1950:69).<sup>12</sup> As for the possible concern that what the ethnographer will end up with will be pure fiction, Herskovits writes, "No one can make up a social system, a grammar, a theology; at most, he but registers the flow of his imagination over his enculturative experience," and moreover, after all, "the hypothetical person turns out to be the informant himself, who is freed by the fictional quality of the approach to reveal facets of his personality he would take all pains to conceal were he speaking about himself" (p. 70). Herskovits's novelistic device recalls Knight's statement that the facts of poetry are as useful as the facts of particular points in space and time.<sup>13</sup>

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Herskovits's changing theoretical stance reveals a shift from a strict empiricism to an awareness of the place of argument in the making of the facts

11. Since the Herskovitses used interpreters in all their field sites except Trinidad, the method may have been born of necessity and only later theorized. This projective device may have been the only way to collect data on sensitive topics, since informants might have been unwilling to reveal much in the presence of a local interpreter. I thank Kevin Yelvington for this insight.

12. Page numbers refer to the 1966 reprint.

13. Space does not permit discussion of Herskovits's 1956 essay on the comparative method, which contains strikingly reflexive statements about the nature of anthropological inquiry (e.g., "Do we realize, perhaps, that we ourselves provide materials for the study of the very phenomena which it is our task to investigate?" [Herskovits 1956, p. 72 in the 1966 reprint]).

themselves. Yet the scale of intensity continued to make a fetish of the facts of New World Africanity, informing debates to this day. By way of a speculative linking of arguments going on in other fields, this section, in lieu of a conclusion, proposes that the fact and the fetish, as cultural and analytical objects, belong in the same argumentative space as our discussions over creolization. Irresolutely material, both fact and fetish came into being in the contact zone of the West African coast at the beginnings of the transatlantic slave trade and the blurring of the distinction between persons and things that that trade entailed. Both shared in an emerging logic of commodification and the money-form as infinitely encompassing. And both, I suggest, inaugurate the problem of creolization as a social fact and an analytical enterprise.<sup>14</sup>

As Peter Pels points out, the seventeenth century was book-ended by two travelers' accounts of the West African fetish, the first by Pieter de Marees written in 1602 and the second by Willem Bosman, written in 1702 and much more widely read (Pels 1998:102; see also Pietz 1987:39 and Pietz 1988). It was also, as Pels remarks, the "heyday of the curiosity cabinet and the object displayed in it, the so-called 'curiosity' or 'rarity,'" an object of singular importance in the history of Western conventions of objectivity, empiricism and induction (Pels 1998:102-3; see also Daston 1988, 1994; Raffles 2001).

Indeed, a growing body of literature in the philosophy and history of science demonstrates how Western scientific reason derived from its encounter with the rarity. Not only did rarities raise "classification quandaries" that later resulted in taxonomic systems (Pels 1988:108). They also were central to the epistemological separation of the weight of argument from the supposedly natural facticity of things (Daston 1994). The new sciences of Enlightenment reason depended on the givenness of things-in-themselves that existed prior to any human interpretation or theorization of them (Daston 1988, 1994). "Conclusions that may be based on" such things-in-themselves – evidentiary claims – were effectively separated from the "[data] of experience" – facts, in the modern sense (Daston 1994:262; see also Poovey 1998). The shock of wonder that rarities invoked helped decompose the presumptions of a scholasticism for which every datum was always-already evidentiary for something else, generally, God's design.<sup>15</sup>

14. Herskovits (1941b:69-77) wrote of the fetish that it permeated West African daily life and served to relativize moral assessments of good and bad. It "was for Herskovits a multipurpose fact that was further evidence for Africanisms" (Yelvington, personal communication) in the New World.

15. I am indebted to an unpublished paper by George Collier (n.d.) on the role of curiosities from the New World in transforming European understandings of various "natures," human nature prime among them. See also Greenblatt 1991.

Facticity in this sense owed much to new techniques and understandings of description and recording, as well as a new kind of community of discourse. This community would consist of reasoned men who could verify the facticity of any item of sensory experience by the fact of their agreement about it. Originally framed, the problem of induction began from the problem of determining, through shared experience and consensus about that experience, what exactly was a fact and what was not. It was also, of course, a political problem, as science, thus conceived, posed challenges to established theological and political orders. The textbook example is Hobbes's debate with Boyle over the possibility of a vacuum, a debate coded in terms of, and with profound implications for, the status of royal authority (see Dear 1995; Shapin & Schaffer 1985).

William Pietz's reflections on the etymology of the term "fetish," while perhaps linguistically thin, are revealing because they permit speculation about the relationship between the emergence of the kind of facticity discussed by the historians of science and the kind of fetishism discussed by historians of West Africa. The historians of science cited here all agree that it is during the seventeenth century that the word "fact" took on the particular meaning of stand-alone datum. Prior to this, it referred to something made or achieved, derived from the adjectival past participle of the Latin *facere*, to make or do (*facticus*) (OED). The term "fetish," also derived from *facere*, first appears in Portuguese (*fetiço*) (Pietz 1987:24). As used by fifteenth-century Portuguese traders on the West African coast, it originally meant an object of witchcraft, something made for un-Christian ends. During the seventeenth century the word "fetish" entered other Europeans' vocabularies in the sense of an object possessed of a spirit of its own (Pietz 1987:24), just as "fact" took on the sense of an object possessed of an ontology of its own. The fetish's materiality was invested with a spiritual agency. European travelers, traders, and theologians made distinctions between the idol, which was worshiped as a representation of a deity, and the fetish, which possessed a power in itself (Pietz 1987:36-37). The fact, too, was invested with a spirit: it spoke to competent observers about the order of nature and demanded cataloguing, categorization, and analysis.

The emergence of the fact and the emergence of the fetish, together characterize a Christian European modality of primitivizing Africa and Africans; an epistemology that is predicated on things standing on their own without human mediation; a system of representation that is based on reference to a material reality and produces what we might call reality-effects, tangible consequences for social practice of the presumed referentiality of representations (Pels 1998; Mitchell 2000); and, importantly, a mercantile system both enraptured and confounded by the equivalencies between objects – including persons – that it encountered and enforced on the Guinea Coast. Rarities, of course, were themselves important items of trade, commodities in their own right. "The rarity," writes Pels (1998:103), "is the twin of the fetish: It was not

just born at about the same time, but also duplicated its mercantile features." Indeed, fact and fetish cohered in an emerging financial system based on the fictions of paper credit (Ingrassia 1998) that were so important to the slaving enterprise. They also cohered in an emerging scientific order based on "promissory naturalism," the belief that curiosities like African "fetishes" – and Africans themselves – could eventually be subsumed into a classificatory order of natural kinds even if the effort at first seemed impossible (Daston 1994:251).<sup>16</sup>

Part of the European disgust at the African fetish was that it blurred the boundaries between persons and things. As Michael Jackson (1998:77) remarks, however:

They protested too much. Those who were most repelled and outraged by the African's apparent indifference to the ontological divide between persons and things were, as often as not, engaged in the kind of colonial ventures – such as slave trading – that conspicuously reduced Africans to the status of beasts, chattels, and mere things.

And here's the rub. If, as Pietz (1985:16) has argued, "the problem-idea of the fetish arose within and remains specific to a particular type of cross-cultural experience first engaging European consciousness in ongoing situations on the West African coast after the fifteenth century," then the problem of the fetish – and the problem of the fact – belong properly to the field of studies of African slavery, creolization, and the African diaspora.

Moreover, they constitute the field's founding problematic. Creolization is so intractable a problem because it demands that we come to grips with the question of how we can abstract from a totality certain identifiable bits that we can agree we all "see" doing things like recombining, mixing, moving, and so on. Other social and cultural phenomena present similar problems. Yet what makes creolization so unique is that the phenomenon and the debate depend on the mixing of (cultural, lived) ideas and the very (analytical, theoretical) idea of mixing (cf. Khan 2001). The key term is "agreement," indexing a community of shared discourse and debate. Consider the meta-grammar of this com-

16. "Fiction" derives from the Latin *ingere*, to fashion or form. In that sense, its early occurrences in natural history books suggested something closer to the modern notion of fact, when the fact in question was a "natural" product. The *Oxford English Dictionary* thus lists a 1607 occurrence of the term that states that the shrew "is called ... Zissmuss, from the fiction of his voice." At the same time, Francis Bacon was at great pains to differentiate "fictions" from "facts" – his protestations themselves indicative of the fine shades of meaning separating the two for most of his readers. In his "Advancement of Learning" of 1605, for instance, he admonished those who put stock in belief rather than truth by stressing the modern sense of fiction as falsity, "He that will easily believe rumors ... will as easily augment rumors ... so great an affinity hath fiction and belief" (Bacon 1974:30; *Adv. Learn.* I, iv, section 8).

munity of discourse. That the languages available for describing creolization share the biogenetic metaphor of Western kinship and the recombinant and equivalence-making properties of the capitalist money-form should give us pause (see, e.g., Maurer 1997b; Strathern 1999). The objects most amenable to study for scholars of creolization have been items of material, non-verbal or linguistic *exchange*; dance or music and principles of movement or rhythm; words and grammatical structures; art and material objects.<sup>17</sup> Perhaps this is because creolization itself emerged in the border-zone of new forms of mercantile and slave exchange and violent cultural mediation. And perhaps this is because the regime of facticity and fetishism that emerged with it concocted certain sorts of things as abstractable and fungible within systems of representation and systems of exchange and circulation.

This leads me back to Herskovits's encounter with Knight's version of the probable. My point is certainly not that Herskovits deconstructed the concept of the fact underlying induction and empiricism. Rather, it is that Herskovits's confrontation with Knight's version of economics – an economics of epistemological, not descriptive, probability – introduced a productive instability into his understanding of just what a fact might be. Namely, it introduced the possibility that a fact might be a fetish, and that an empirical order might be a social convention for a community of scholars seeking to build consensus through the forging of new knowledge practices that just might help them to understand others' and the roots of their own. And it suggested that these two sets of knowledge practices may never have been as separate as they have seemed.

17. Sally Price's (2001) "arthings" and "artworlds," by setting the material in motion in social, ideational, and political systems and networks of critics, dealers, artists, and so forth, thus represents an important supplement to earlier work on art that simply looked for material or aesthetic indicators of presumed African retention. I would like to thank the anonymous reviews for stressing this point.

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## Book Reviews

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic.* PETER LINEBAUGH & MARCUS REDIKER. Boston: Beacon Press, 2000. 433 pp. (Cloth US\$ 30.00)

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Several years ago a colleague noted that postmodernism had turned the verb “to complicate” into the greatest compliment one can give when describing scholarship. He suggested that “complicating” a story might not always be an accomplishment, and that rendering a simple and unambiguous interpretation of the past can be a scholarly virtue. In *The Many-Headed Hydra*, Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker reject the multiple subjectivities, ethnographic complexities, and supposedly-unavoidable ambiguities that mark studies of the “subaltern.” Theirs is a straightforward story – a now old-fashioned Marxist morality tale – tracing an Atlantic revolutionary proletarian tradition across the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Their canvas is as geographically broad as it is temporally expansive: the book focuses primarily on England and secondarily on North America, but ranges from seventeenth-century Naples to the British Caribbean and Haiti to West Africa. On that canvas they paint an allegory of the rise of global capitalism and the heroic emergence of a transnational, transracial, and gender-inclusive counter movement that sought to protect the egalitarian world of the commons against the grasping and exploitative Atlantic bourgeoisie.

Linebaugh and Rediker build their analysis around the recurrent image of Hercules and the Hydra, a myth used by the ruling class in the age of imperial expansion “to describe the difficulty of imposing order on increasingly

global systems of labor" (p. 3). They use this image to explore "multiplicity, movement, and connection" among members of "the multiethnic class that was essential to the rise of capitalism" (p. 6). They begin with the famous Bermuda shipwreck that informed Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, uncovering there a struggle between the well-to-do castaways who sought to resume their voyage to Jamestown, and the common seamen, religious radicals, and other hands who much preferred the idyllic and easy lives that they had stumbled upon in Bermuda to the lives of endless unrequited toil that awaited them if they returned to a life at sea or became servants in Virginia. Through the wreck of the *Sea-Venture* they introduce a story about "the origins of capitalism and colonization," a story that is also "about alternative ways of living, and about the official use of violence and terror to deter or destroy them, to overcome popular attachments to 'liberty and the fullness of sensuality'" (p. 14).

The book traces this story through different incidents, some famous and others obscure. First, the main characters are introduced. Francis Bacon represents the expropriators – expropriators "of the commons by enclosure and conquest, of time by the puritanical abolition of holidays, of the body by child stealing and the burning of women, and of knowledge by the destruction of guilds and assaults on paganism" (p. 40). Linebaugh and Rediker see Bacon advocating "several types of genocide, which found ... sanction in biblical and classical antiquity" (p. 40). The targets of Bacon's terror were the "hewers of wood and drawers of water" who responded by developing "new forms of self-organization" that were "alarming to the ruling class of the day" (p. 40). Linebaugh and Rediker assert that these working people and their struggles have been rendered "invisible, anonymous, and forgotten" by historians, and this book seeks to place them back at the center of the history of the Atlantic world.

Both "improving" capitalists and radical proletarians were attracted to dissenting religion and the Parliamentary side during the English Civil War. Linebaugh and Rediker see the New Model Army as a haven for those who rejected established forms of economic exploitation and expropriation as well as the home of the rising bourgeoisie. When, at the famous Putney Debates, Cromwellian defenders of property rights faced off against Gerrard Winstanley's Levellers who insisted that enclosure had to be stopped and that all English people had to be granted true freedom, the river of religious radicalism split into two streams that flowed away from each other for the next two hundred years. One, the Revolutionary stream of the Levellers, flowed, the book argues, into the slave quarters of America, the regiments of oppressed Irish soldiers in the English Army, and the underground world of English urban workers. The "counterrevolutionary opposite" (p. 140) of that vision inspired those who organized the Atlantic slave trade and the growth of the American plantation complex while intensifying the legal and economic hold

of the ruling class over the lives of laborers in England. As the grip of capital tightened, the revolutionary spirit that flowed out of Putney came to rest in the itinerant holds of British ships. Sailors were most subject to the discipline of capital and the state that represented it and became the multiracial and ever-moving repositories of resistance to that discipline. The egalitarian ethos of sailors, pirates, and dockworkers is portrayed as the key to a remarkable period of upheaval in Britain's American colonies during the 1730s and 1740s. That period witnessed a number of slave conspiracies and rebellions – some of them limited to slaves, but others like the New York Conspiracy of 1741 including free people of European descent.

The very groups that sought to overthrow the merchants' control of New York are then placed at the center of the struggle for American independence, only to be displaced by the Thermidorian reaction of the Constitution. The struggle for antinomian democracy did not, however, disappear with the triumph of Madison and Hamilton. Its partisans continued to struggle through slave rebellions in the British Caribbean and the Haitian Revolution, through the efforts of British radicals to overthrow the repressive government of the lords and gentry, and in the guise of Robert Wedderburn's adaptation of radical religion to working-class protest. Following the American Revolution, however, this persistent and heroically antiracist and antisexist tradition succumbed to the racial segregation imposed by capital, and split into a movement for (white) working-class liberation and a separate pan-African movement.

It is customary at this point to say that space does not permit an adequate rendering of the subtlety of the book's argument or the richness of its evidence. In this case, only the latter is true. Linebaugh and Rediker have called on impressive reserves of erudition and research, and *The Many-Headed Hydra* is full of little-known stories and interesting juxtapositions of the previously-obscure and the famous. It is elegantly written and sometimes inspiring. It is also unconcerned about many historiographical issues that have occupied scholars during the last several decades. The sometimes dizzying complexity with which the enclosure of commons in England has been treated by the last generation of historians is reduced to a simple story of landlords expropriating the land of their tenants. The book does make a nod toward the ethnic diversity of West Africa, but there can be little substantive respect for ethnic difference between slaves from the Kingdom of Kongo and Igbo villages in an argument that sees the disinherited throughout the Atlantic region sharing a single proletarian culture. The American Revolution takes place in the absence of the elite republicanism that has shaped much recent scholarship. And many will be perplexed to read about a proletariat in seventeenth-century England or the eighteenth-century American colonies. One might have hoped that a book intended to elicit scholarly controversy would have made a greater effort, in

the notes if not the text, to address these questions and explain why the authors think so much of this work can be ignored.

That, however, would have meant writing a different book. Linebaugh and Rediker have produced a sweeping interpretation of the emergence of the Atlantic world that should win a wide readership and stimulate the intense responses that they surely seek.

*The Atlantic Slave Trade*. HERBERT S. KLEIN. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1999. xxi + 234 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

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The “trafficking in slaves” across the Atlantic has taken on a certain mystique, particularly in the nation-states of the historical Atlantic world. Over the past few decades it has inspired a veritable torrent of writings, academic and non-academic alike. The trade has been referred to and represented in television documentary series and in film. And museum exhibitions have been staged to highlight what James Baldwin called that “bitter hour in the world’s history.” Moreover, there is a vocal, activist side that insists on being heard; representing certain political interests and points of view in the African and black American sectors of the Atlantic world, it demands that reparations be paid to the descendants of those who suffered from the ravages of slavery in the Americas and from the effects of the slave trade in Africa. *The Atlantic Slave Trade* offers academic and interested lay readers another retelling of Baldwin’s “bitter hour.” Intended for scholars and an interested lay readership, it attempts to provide a synthesis of the economic, social, cultural, and political history of Atlantic slaving from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. The book is published in the “New Approaches to the Americas” series.

Herbert Klein, a Latin Americanist by profession, is no novice in the field of slave trade studies. He has chronicled slavery in the African diaspora and investigated the mechanisms of Atlantic slaving. Specifically, he has written on the Middle Passage and produced a comparative study of African slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean. He is also one of the editors of the W.E.B. DuBois slave trade database, a source he liberally utilizes in his synthesis.

The book is organized in eight chapters and an introduction. There are four maps, eight figures, and five tables, two of which are in the appendix. Although the figures and tables provide valuable information on slave exports, slave mortality rates, age structures, and slave distribution aboard a slave ship, the maps (one showing the "major-slave trading zones of western Africa" and three depicting "major slaving ports" of different parts of the continent) contain so many inaccuracies and so little cartographical information that they are, for all intents and purposes, not useable. The fact that all of the maps represent the interior of the continent as a blank space, devoid of any signs of a historical geography (let alone a political, economic, or settlement geography), reveals the place of Africa in the author's scheme of things.

Chapter 1, "Slavery in Western Development," attempts to place Atlantic slaving in a historical context that begins with the ancient Greek city-states. In the mode of a "Western civ" syllabus, it carries readers to the Renaissance and the "Age of Discovery," with a passing nod in the direction of the "Islamic World" and some unspecified African "nations." Chapter 2, "American Labor Demand," looks at the European colonization of the Americas and the rise of plantation slavery and the plantation system in order to account for the demand for African slave labor as well as other forms of social labor. It covers the period from the sixteenth century to the mid-nineteenth. Chapter 3, "Africa at the time of the Atlantic Slave Trade," is a disappointment. Klein's knowledge of African history is severely limited, leading him to make meaningless statements, such as "Sub-Saharan society and economy developed later than North Africa" (p. 47), which typify his treatment of the histories of African societies. His mode of representing Africa depends heavily on what V.Y. Mudimbe terms the "colonial library." Thus, Chapter 5 "The African Organization of the Slave Trade," draws only modestly on recent scholarship concerning the African past. Like Chapter 3, it pulls its banal generalities, formulaic clichés, and stereotypes from the "colonial library." There are no hard empirical data about the practical organization of any activities pertaining to the slave trade. In short, Klein is unable to provide an analytical synthesis at the point of the slave "production" process.

Chapter 4, "The European Organization of the Slave Trade," and (especially) Chapter 6, "The Middle Passage," are the best sections in the book. Klein successfully combines detailed information with a comprehensive overview without drifting into stereotyped generalities and banalities. Chapter 7, "Social and Cultural Impact of the Slave Trade on America," which begins by asking, "Who were the Africans who were forced to migrate to America and what was their impact on the formation of American society?" is quite uneven. The information about sex ratios and age structures is most useful for certain kinds of analyses, but what else does the chapter offer? A serious drawback is that Klein was only able to "identify" Africans in Africa by means of the stereotypes that define the "colonial library." His dependence on

this "library" compromises what he has to say about the roles and activities of Africans and their descendants in the Americas. The final chapter, "The End of the Slave Trade," is a concise summary of abolition and emancipation movements in the midst of the dramatic economic and other changes in the nineteenth century.

In conclusion, I would recommend that readers avoid the chapters and sections of chapters that refer to Africa and Africans and focus on the rest of the book.

*De Nederlandse slavenhandel 1500-1850*. P.C. EMMER. Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 2000. 259 pp. (Cloth NLG 45.00)

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With all the new information about Dutch participation in the Atlantic slave trade that has come to light during the past three decades, it was high time an updated summary on that subject should be published in the Dutch language. That task has been accomplished by Pieter Emmer, a long-time scholar of the slave trade. Intended for the general public and presented in a question-and-answer style, Emmer's book gives a general survey of the Dutch slave trade and also examines its corollaries, slavery in Dutch Caribbean colonies, and the use of contract labor after the abolition of slavery in 1863. Carrying less than 5 percent of the combined Atlantic slave trade, the Dutch were only minor participants in the traffic compared with Portugal, England, and France, yet their involvement was significant.

In the first two chapters Emmer discusses the relatively hesitant entry of the Dutch into the slave trade. Only after they acquired a plantation colony (northern Brazil) and when financial rewards seemed promising did the Dutch West India Company commit itself to trade in human beings. With the loss of Brazil in 1654, the Dutch found markets for slaves in other foreign settlements, especially in the Spanish colonies. But during the eighteenth century, the Dutch increasingly shipped enslaved Africans to their own colonies, principally Suriname and the Dutch settlements in Guyana.

The next two chapters examine the outfitting of slave ships and their voyages from Holland to Africa, the acquisition of enslaved Africans, the Atlantic

Middle Passage, and the arrival and sale of slaves in the Americas. Slave resistance and mortality aboard slave ships during the Middle Passage are given considerable attention. The fifth chapter is devoted to plantation life in Suriname, with emphasis on slave resistance and the high mortality and low birth rates among the slave population, which stimulated the ever pressing demand for more slaves.

Chapter 6 is devoted primarily to the financial returns of the slave trade and the plantation system that stimulated the traffic. Emmer stresses that Dutch profits in the slave trade were modest at best, and that the Dutch economy benefitted relatively little from the slave trade and the Atlantic colonies. He also rejects the widely held notion that the Suriname plantations were excessively brutal, maintaining that they were much like other plantations in the Caribbean region.

In a chapter on the consequences of the slave trade, Emmer discusses the circumstances surrounding the abolition of the Dutch slave trade and the belated abolition of slavery in the Dutch colonies, and speculates on how Africa and Suriname might have fared without the slave trade. The final chapter is devoted to the moral questions surrounding slavery, the slave trade, and whether or not the Dutch owe a "debt of honor" as a result of their participation in the slave trade and use of slave labor in their Caribbean colonies.

Emmer draws extensively on eyewitness accounts, which allows him an effective way of telling his story. His abundant use of new research and comparison of Dutch activities with other European slave vendors provides a meaningful perspective. But by relying too much on publications about the Atlantic slave trade in general, he occasionally overlooks vital information about the Dutch slave trade. Regarding mortality on the Middle Passage, for example, he focuses on the Atlantic slave trade in general and ignores conflicting data about the Dutch traffic. In the latter, female slaves experienced lower mortality rates than men, and Dutch shipments from West-Central Africa (Loango) registered lower death rates than from West Africa (see Postma 1990). Emmer also dwells extensively on the final decades of the eighteenth century, when the Dutch slave trade was in precipitous decline, which creates an inaccurate impression of the eighteenth century as a whole.

While the book does well in dispensing new information, the tone is potentially disturbing. Emmer seems to delight in denouncing views that reveal the worst aspects of the slave trade, sometimes bordering on ridicule. His extensive use of catch phrases seems to magnify this effect. He often cites popularly held notions and interpretations propagated by abolitionists, which he then refutes with contemporary research. Despite periodic assertions that the traffic was inhumane, he creates the impression that the slave trade wasn't so bad after all. He also paints the abolitionists as biased propagandists, instead of crediting them for their vital contribution toward ending that despicable practice.

Fortunately, the tone of the book shifts significantly in the final chapter, which deals with the moral question of slavery. If this same tone had been used throughout, the book would have been more appropriate for a general audience and might be received more sympathetically by descendants of slaves who still carry the memory and scars of that exploitative system.

Emmer's book will undoubtedly stimulate a great deal of discussion in the Netherlands, where the legacy of the slave trade is finally receiving noticeable attention. Almost certainly it will not be the last book on this subject.

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POSTMA JOHANNES, 1990. *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Democracy after Slavery: Black Publics and Peasant Radicalism in Haiti and Jamaica*. MIMI SELLER. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001. xv + 224 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

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Mimi Sheller is part of the new generation of Caribbeanist scholars who seek to place events in that region in a shared context by pointing out connections between islands of different language or cultural heritage, and also by placing them in an Atlantic framework dominated by the more powerful nations of Europe and North America. Her book offers new studies of two peasant-led revolts: Haiti's 1844 Piquet Rebellion and Jamaica's 1865 Morant Bay Rebellion. Her declared intent is to compare the processes of popular mobilization on behalf of democracy in each case. Sheller seeks alternate voices and sources to locate an authentic popular articulation of democratic ideals in both Haiti and Jamaica, something that was often expressed as a critique of the prevailing elite-led notions of material progress. This in itself is an important undertaking and raises broader questions about the notion of the peasant as an intellectual, about the nineteenth-century usage of words like democracy, free-

dom, and liberty in their local Caribbean context, and about the integration of island cultures into a larger world system. In fact, contrary to the usual assumptions that rural folk were disorganized, ill-informed, and apathetic, Sheller finds that peasants were quite proficient at public claim-making, political protest, and active rebellion in the mid-nineteenth century as elites slowly concentrated more power in their own privileged hands.

One of the strengths of Sheller's work is the revelation of the interconnectedness of persons and events throughout the Atlantic world in the nineteenth century. She finds that there were Jamaicans involved in Haiti's Liberal Revolution of 1843 and Haitians who were closely linked to Jamaica's Morant Bay Rebellion. Furthermore, citizens of both islands had connections to anti-slavery movements and intellectuals in Europe, Latin America, and the United States (p. 72). Her discussion of the "Haytian fear" that gripped the Caribbean's civic and political leaders in the nineteenth century is one of the most interesting parts of the book. Haiti's mere existence and its early national experience became vital reference points for both camps, those who feared the abolition of slavery and those who welcomed it. Similarly, in her discussion of events in Jamaica, Sheller uses "public texts" to trace the creation of a national discourse that drew as much from the masses as from the learned elites. In both cases, she makes it clear that these long-ago events and organizational strategies continue to resound through to the present in both Haitian and Jamaican political memory.

Sheller is quite right to question the nineteenth-century notions of material and moral progress, and she exhibits an awareness of the ongoing research being carried out in several languages toward that end. In fact, as she and others have pointed out, abolition of slavery often meant a reduction in the meaningful practice of democracy not just in the Caribbean but throughout Spanish America as well. In both Haiti and Jamaica, coercion remained a central feature of labor relations and the state's machinery was often mobilized against its political (and personal) opponents. While this was the case, she found ample evidence that rural folk organized themselves secretly and in a sophisticated manner in order to advance their interests. Charles Hérard's activities in Aux Cayes represented one such example; the meetings of the apprentice population at Montego Bay's Baptist Chapel in 1838 were another. With this project, Sheller confirms the image of peasants as self-conscious actors in their own right which has become the academic norm over the past twenty years.

Sheller has amassed an impressive bibliography and makes extensive use of both primary and secondary sources in her text. She self-consciously identifies herself as a person "in a position of unequal power" in relation both to her subject and to working scholars based in the Caribbean (p. ix) which then somehow leads to "an ethical obligation to critique the North Atlantic hegemony." She and her privileged readers are asked rethink notions of freedom, democracy, and equality from the point of view of those who were enslaved.

For this reason, her book contains an explicit criticism of white racial domination and unbridled capitalism (p. 5). Although the sentiments behind such assertions may be noble and even admirable, their implications are troubling if they carry hints of postcolonial guilt that may not be at all helpful when attempting to explain Caribbean events objectively.

*Islanders in the Stream: A History of the Bahamian People. Volume Two: From the Ending of Slavery to the Twenty-First Century.* MICHAEL CRATON & GAIL SAUNDERS. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998. xv + 562 pp. (Cloth US\$ 75.00, Paper US\$ 24.95)

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This book is the second of a two-volume history authored by historians Michael Craton and Gail Saunders. Divided into three parts, it covers the period from the end of slavery to the last years of the twentieth century.

The period from 1834 to 1900 – the initial postemancipation era – is examined in the first section under the title “From Slavery to Unfreedom.” It discusses the expected conflict: between a former slaveholding interest trying to construct *status quo ante*, and freedmen desiring (to borrow a phrase from Michael Craton) “to make a world of their own.” All of this occurs, the authors note, as the British metropolitan government deprioritized the Bahamas, as Africans rescued from slave ships were relocated to the archipelago, as the colony struggled to obtain financial liquidity, and as the Out Islands became further marginalized. Black, white and “nonwhite” take on certain aspects of the “anti-hero.” The authors note the relative agency and political savvy of Bahamian whites, underscoring the point by showing the ability of exclusively white Out Islands to prevail while predominantly black ones at times slipped into poverty. Some readers, however, might find unsatisfying the explanation given for this specific situation.

Nonetheless, the authors detail white “anti-heroism” as the sacrifice, by elite whites, of broader Bahamian economic interests in favor of personal ones, and the need by Bahamian whites of all classes to maintain the social

pre-eminence of their caste at all costs. Pictorial images of segregated Out Islands provide a visualization of this second point.

As an example of black "anti-heroism" (for this era), the authors may have conceived the lack of a sustainable collective politics. With few exceptions, the fruits of this politics – whether in New Providence (skillfully related by using a contemporary description of the clients of a Bahamian black storeowner named Mr. Morely) or in the Out Islands – are a black condition overwhelmed by the Bahamian political and socioeconomic situation. For example, no successful strategy is undertaken against the truck system – the economically subordinating successor to pre-slavery arrangements. But it is in the overturning of black and white political fortunes (a drama that stretches from the first to last sections of the book) that an important overarching theme of *Islanders* emerges. It is worth recalling, as the authors note, that the original title-idea for their work was *Time Longer Dan Rope*.

The second part follows changes from 1900 to independence – a period that includes the World Wars, Prohibition, and the Great Depression. The best application of using an individual history to lend clarity to a collective mentality occurs in this section, in the authors' analysis of Etienne Dupuch. Other developments detailed are the increased foreign land purchases and evolution of a successful offshore-tax-haven economy in the Bahamas. Implications of these developments are well related in the discussion of the Port Authority operations on Freeport-Lucaya. For the masses of blacks, the authors examine how work details in the United States, which the wartime Windsor government claimed credit in arranging, further expanded the Bahamian economy. But the inability of black Bahamians to find common cause with African Americans in Florida was often half celebrated, and in a fashion that had the effect of oversimplifying Afro-American experiences.

Nonetheless, the strength of analysis and extensive use of clear charts and graphs give detailed and clear explanations for the movement of the Bahamian socioeconomy from postemancipation conditions to the conditions of the late 1960s. Specifically, the authors provide a clear discussion of how the United Bahamian Party (UBP) could be defeated at the polls in the midst of great economic prosperity. They propose corruption, racism, an awareness by black Bahamians of the limited and racially-tinctured benefits offered by late-century economic expansion, and the political skill of the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) as some significant causes behind the end of UBP and Bay Street predominance.

The last section of the book deals with the challenges and opportunities of a postindependence Bahamian society and presents a detailed discussion of Haitian immigration and its related conflicts as well as the issues regarding Bahamian identity. Yet questions about the "African element" arise in this section. Was African cultural identity (mentioned in the discussion of Haitian-Bahamian culture) as unhelpful in the Bahamian experience as the book at

times implies? And is it possible that the feared avaricious individualism of modern Bahamian society had its roots in part in the decline of the African cooperative economy? One might contend that these were ideas worth exploring – but freed from any reductive tendency to view African culture as a non-dynamic monolith.

*Islanders in the Stream* is a detailed examination of the Bahamian situation postemancipation, postmodernization, and postindependence. Refreshingly not dispassionate, it is, without question, a powerful historical document. To read it is to acquire a deep understanding of many of the factors shaping the history of the Bahamas.

*Buena Vista: Life and Work on a Puerto Rican Hacienda, 1833-1904.*  
GUILLERMO A. BARALT. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999. xix + 183 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95, Paper US\$ 21.95)

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Hacienda Buena Vista, located in the highlands of the *municipio* of Ponce, was not a typical Puerto Rican plantation by any standard. When Ponce was the center of slave-based sugar production for export, Buena Vista produced plantains and corn. It eventually became an important corn-mill center with sophisticated machinery powered by a water wheel, producing corn flour sold to the plantations of Ponce at a time when imported wheat flour was expensive due to transport costs and Spanish tariffs. Thus, Buena Vista was an ancillary plantation, producing food for the export economy of the sugar plantations. Even though it was not itself a sugar producer, its origins and initial prosperity are linked to the sugar boom of the first half of the nineteenth century in Puerto Rico. Its labor force was made up principally of slaves.

Guillermo Baralt's study is based on the family archives of the Vives family, owners of Buena Vista from its foundation in 1833 until its demise in 1958, and covers the period from 1833 to 1904. This English-language edition by the University of North Carolina Press contains many maps, diagrams, and photographs which visually enhance the narrative. Andrew Hurley did a fantastic job translating the Spanish-language original, which had been published in 1988 by the Fideicomiso de Conservación de Puerto Rico in San Juan.

Baralt documents the transformation of Buena Vista from a plantain and corn farm to an important corn mill, and then to a coffee-producing hacienda after the abolition of slavery in 1873. In the three decades from 1870 to 1900, Buena Vista progressively specialized in the production of coffee for export, as did the island of Puerto Rico as a whole. In the early years of the twentieth century, Buena Vista made a transition from coffee production to the growing of oranges for the U.S. market. This was a result of the catastrophic impact of changes in tariffs after the United States invaded Puerto Rico, replacing Spanish colonial rule by U.S. colonial rule. The loss of the protected Spanish and Cuban markets forced Puerto Rican coffee producers to compete in the U.S. market with Brazilian coffee, without tariff protection. Sugar and tobacco production, by contrast, benefited from U.S. tariff protection, creating a boom in those two products in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Faced with the change of tariffs and colonial masters, the owners of Buena Vista shifted to the production of oranges packed in paper and crates, which sold well in the New York market.

Baralt carefully organizes his narrative in order to dismantle half-truths and outright myths about Puerto Rico in the nineteenth century. Slavery was important in food production (plantains and corn), not just in sugar, as has often been assumed. The history of Buena Vista shows that slave labor was crucial to the industrial operations of the hacienda's sophisticated corn mill. Contesting the image of a technological backwater, Baralt shows skill and ingenuity on the part of local skilled labor and engineers in adapting the mill equipment to local conditions. And in contrast to the image of isolation in the highlands, the records of the Vives family show direct linkages to important circuits of capital, credit, and outlets for investment in the world market. Buena Vista did business in London, Paris, and New York, and invested in railroads in the Argentinian province of Entre Ríos. Against the image of slaves who lived in *bohíos* because the plantations were too small, Buena Vista housed and managed its captive labor force in barracks. All of these are remarkable and unexpected developments, considering that the plantation did not produce sugar and did not have the initial capitalization of the larger plantations of the Ponce valley. The nuances provided by this rich study of the family archives of a single plantation will provide specialists in Puerto Rican history with important material for revising our image of the nineteenth century.

In his attempt to explain why Buena Vista was different from other haciendas, Baralt has produced an excellent account of trends that were much more widespread, and ultimately tells the history of the whole Puerto Rican nineteenth century. The hacienda produced plantains and corn, but the relevant chapters explain in detail the sugar boom as the backdrop to Buena Vista's prosperity and as the main thrust of the island's economy in 1800-50. Understanding the impact of abolition on Buena Vista helps us to understand

abolition in the island as a whole – and the smooth and conservative aspects of a transition to free labor without even the promise of forty acres and a mule. In the transition to coffee production, Buena Vista flowed with the trend of the island as a whole. And finally, the last chapters exemplify the impact of the U.S. invasion on the island's coffee producers, who were the center of economic activity in 1897 but were practically ruined in 1900. Because the anomalous aspects of Buena Vista require an explanation of the main trends of Puerto Rican economic history, the history of this hacienda has been written in the context of the economic history of the island as a whole, which is summarized in exemplary fashion in this book with a wealth of documentation in the footnotes that is current and complete. I cannot think of a better book to teach college students the history of the Puerto Rican nineteenth century.

*Caribbeana: An Anthology of English Literature of the West Indies 1657-1777.* THOMAS W. KRISE (ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999. xii + 358 pp. (Paper US\$ 19.00)

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The beautifully packaged *Caribbeana* is a collection of thirteen (primarily Scottish and English) travel accounts, epistles, dialogues, and verse inscriptions of the region's natural, social, and political relations that span the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Krise's collection, which supports the view that the West Indies "is an amalgam of confused and conflicted knowledge and desire" (p. 1), represents English inscriptions of the West Indies published between the "age of exploration and the age of abolitionism" (p. 3), but since these eras are hardly set in stone the timeline for the anthology remains inexplicable. This is somewhat exacerbated by the fact that the pieces are presented in chronological order yet are almost bereft of any detailed historical background in which to place any of them in context. The works in *Caribbeana* address such themes as "slavery and freedom, African culture, obeah, sugar cultivation, piracy, absentee landlordism, [and] military conquest" (p. 4). Yet in gearing this anthology toward English literary scholars and attempting to challenge the notion that English literary production was

contained by discrete national boundaries, Krise's anthology seems less concerned with Caribbean literary historiography; as such, its contribution to Caribbeanists is questionable.

*Caribbeana* begins with an excerpt from Richard Ligon's well-known work, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (1657), including the most likely source for the Inkle and Yarico adaptations which would permeate the literary culture of Europe for the next century; Frances Seymour's Inkle and Yarico renditions are also included (1738). Edmund Hickeringill's *Jamaica Viewed* (1661), like many of the pieces in the collection, helped sustain British interest and investment in the colonies. Unlike his British counterparts, Hickeringill addresses the indigenous culture of the Caribbean, although merely to assert that while the Guyanese barbecue and eat human flesh as "choice meat," it is not "for food, but as Sacrament" (p. 46). The collection also brings together some important proto-abolitionist works that have scarcely been recognized. Selections from Thomas Tryon's *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen-Planters of the East and West Indies* (1684) include a dialog between an Ethiopian and his slave master, where the slave argues so successfully that "your Houses are cemented with *Blood*" (p. 72) that the master must conclude that his treatment of slaves has been most unchristian. This poem dovetails with the concerns of two anonymous contributions, *A Speech made by a Black of Guardaloupe* (1709) – "one of the earliest purported representations of slave speech and point of view" and an "anti-slavery tract not connected closely with dissenting Protestant theology" (p. 93) – and *The Speech of Moses Bon Sàam* (1735), which in turn influenced Robert Robertson's *The Speech of Mr. John Talbot Campo-bell* (1736).

One of the most refreshing contributions is Edward Ward's *A Trip to Jamaica* (1698), a biting and often humorous parody of glorified accounts of the British West Indies. He likens his pamphleteering to "whoring," rendering the British literary production of and about the colonies as a trope of white prostitution – an analogy that might extend to other entries in the anthology. He depicts white immigrants to Jamaican in the most satirical of terms and describes Jamaica itself as "the Dunghill of the Universe, the Refuse of the whole Creation" (p. 88) primarily because the whites "regard nothing but Money, and value not how they get it" (p. 91); this is in stark contrast to Hickeringill and Grainger's glowing accounts of the land and white people of the colonies. One of the only full-text contributions is James Grainger's georgic poem, *The Sugar Cane: A Poem, In Four Books* (1764), a fascinating attempt to appropriate the natural and social world of the Caribbean into Creole aesthetic politics. The flora of the Caribbean are rendered alongside human transplantations in a way that naturalizes the plantocracy system and which inscribes a Creole epic bolstered by laboring "negroes" and the "Imperial Cane" (p. 224). Grainger's position as a doctor, planter, and member of an exclusive literary circle in London are brought together in this long

poem which vividly documents the indigenous and transplanted flora of the region, eulogizes Christopher Columbus and select Creole planters, offers concrete practical advice in planting and cultivating cane, laments the problem of absentee landlordism, and concludes, in Book IV, with tips on how to purchase the best slaves and the moral imperative to clothe and feed them well. Given Grainger and his colleagues' obvious attempts to naturalize the Creole plantocracy through the depiction of Caribbean landscape it's surprising that Krise does not address the relationship between transplantation, plantocracy, exile, and the Creole literary imagination – this is a connection that has far-reaching consequences for contemporary Caribbean production.

The only contribution from a black writer is Francis Williams's "Carmen, or, an Ode" to the Scot George Haldane, recently appointed governor of Jamaica. Ironically, Williams's poem was included in Edward Long's *History of Jamaica* (1774) to deride black literary aspirations but as Krise points out, Long's copious footnotes attest to the broad scope of Williams's education and literary vision. Anthologizing fragments from Caribbean literary history is always fraught with difficulties – while I have no quibble with the pieces chosen, *Caribbeana* inadvertently raises questions about the political undercurrents that inform the regionalist colonial imagination and its distribution. Krise includes only one selection from the original *Caribbeana* (by the "Ingenious Lady" of Barbados) (1741), yet this collection of colonial literature was as informed by the previous decades' Maroon and slave uprisings in Suriname, Jamaica, and Antigua as the many other pieces in Krise's anthology. By neglecting to address this historical depth and the ways in which colonial literature is entangled with indigenous and black resistance to imperial narratives, this anthology renders the relationship between literary and material production invisible.

*The Poetics of Empire: A Study of James Grainger's The Sugar Cane (1764)*. JOHN GILMORE. London: Athlone Press, 2000. x + 342 pp. (Cloth £47.50, Paper £16.99)

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*The Sugar-Cane* is a four-part, 2,562-line "West India georgic" that was written in St. Kitts by James Grainger, an Edinburgh M.D., who lived and worked there from 1759 until his death in 1766. Though published to considerable acclaim in England in 1764, the poem has, since the mid-nineteenth century, fallen into neglect even among specialists in the field, and is not a text likely to be found among the assignments in many Caribbean literature courses. It is, then, much to John Gilmore's credit to call this early Caribbean poem to the attention of postcolonial scholars. Rather than blithely dismissing it as either "bad" Virgil or inferior Milton (or both), Gilmore argues that *The Sugar-Cane* is a successful poem in its own right and, further, that among the many poems produced in the Anglophone Caribbean during the eighteenth century, there is "no earlier poem comparable to [Grainger's] own in scale or aspirations" (p. 22). But the poem's real importance, to Gilmore, lies in its "transculturation of poetical form" (p. 1), the result of its – for the time – peculiar subject. Grainger believed strongly that the cultivation of sugarcane, given the importance of sugar to the economy of the British empire, was indeed a suitable topic for poetry. As someone related by marriage to several prominent West Indian families and hoping, one day, to become himself a member of the "heroic" planter class we encounter in his poem, Grainger celebrated that empire and its profitable transatlantic trade. For Grainger, unlike his friend Dr. Johnson, was no abolitionist – admittedly, hardly unusual in those days. But he was also, according to Gilmore, "an essentially humane man who realises that he is compromised by his economic dependence on the fundamentally inhumane system of slavery, and who is trying to reinterpret this fact in a manner which is a little more palatable" (pp. 59-60). Grainger was a Scot by birth, which, Gilmore claims (drawing on the work of Linda Colley), made him "to some extent a victim of an English cultural imperialism in the same way as the sugar colonies in the Caribbean" (p. 33). He even goes so far as to call Grainger a "doubly colonial writer" (p. 35) who, even though he did not condemn slavery, at least enjoined the planters to "let humanity prevail."

Gilmore's case for why we should read this ponderous poem depends heavily on his view of Grainger as a humane humanist. For only a poet aware, though not necessarily overtly critical, of the imperial practices and politics could have written a unified and coherent poem on such a wayward subject and insisted on including among what Grainger himself called "many new and picturesque images" the names of Caribbean trees, fruits, and herbs that many Britons found "unpleasant sounding." This is precisely why, Gilmore argues, these inclusions constituted "acts of unprecedented boldness" (p. 64), both artistically and ideologically speaking. Even if one is skeptical of Gilmore's rehabilitation of Grainger, and of his reading of *The Sugar-Cane* as "subversive" (p. 64), one still has to admire an argument that does not feel the need to elide opposing evidence and viewpoints.

With Gilmore's ambitious scholarly edition, Grainger's poem takes its place not only among other eighteenth-century, mainly narrative accounts of the West Indies, but also among early Hispanic Caribbean poetry, ranging from Silvestre de Balboa's 1608 epic *Espejo de paciencia* (Mirror of patience) to Richard R. Madden's *Poems by a Slave in the Island of Cuba, Recently Liberated*. British abolitionist Madden, like Grainger, was an M.D., and he included his poem in his 1840 edition of the autobiography of Cuban poet Juan Francisco Manzano. A more recent long poem on sugarcane is Agustín Acosta's *La zafra* (*The Sugar Cane Harvest*), published in Havana in 1926. Cuba is worth mentioning here because no other country has produced as extensive a body of belletristic and scientific writing on sugar, and it is odd that John Gilmore does not seem to find any of this relevant to his work on Grainger's poem. Ramiro Guerra's *Azúcar y población en las Antillas* (1927) and Manuel Moreno Fraginals's three-volume study *El ingenio* (1978), not to mention the voluminous work of Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz, are other notable omissions in a book that purports to elaborate not only a British but also, especially, a Caribbean context for *The Sugar-Cane*. Gilmore does far better with the former than with the latter, and, contrary to the claims of his publisher, he has surprisingly little to say about the poem's "influence on later Caribbean writers," represented, narrowly, by Kamau Brathwaite and Derek Walcott.

While it may be unreasonable to hope that a book on the Anglophone Caribbean might include references to texts that deal with the Hispanic Caribbean, it is decidedly not so to expect at least a mention of a well-known book such as Sidney Mintz's *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (1986) in a study that lays claims to authoritativeness and reliability through the sheer weight of its scholarly apparatus. Compared to Grainger's own notes to his poem, which take up a mere thirty-three pages in this edition, Gilmore offers an eighty-five-page introduction, plus several appendices and additional notes which total more than a hundred pages. These offer a wealth of information about historical, geographical, and medi-

cal matters (including the Latin names of every single plant and insect Grainger mentions), and they are navigable with the help of the fairly detailed index. But, unlike the introduction, which succeeds because it shows that the material presented is relevant to the overall discussion, Gilmore's notes too often create the impression of excess, and of a scholar who is trying to best the poet at his game of erudition.

*Winds of Change: The Transforming Voices of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars.* ADELE S. NEWSON & LINDA STRONG-LEEK (eds.). New York: Peter Lang, 1998. viii + 237 pp. (Paper US\$ 29.95)

*Caribbean Women Writers: Fiction in English.* MARY CONDÉ & THORUNN LONSDALE (eds.). New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999. x + 233 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00, Paper, n.p.)

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*Winds of Change* is a collection of essays by participants at the International Conference of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars held in 1996 on the campus of Florida International University. Since its first gathering in 1988, this conference has been the main catalyst for the study and encouragement of Caribbean women's writing. The volume is divided into four parts: "Language, Orality, and Voice"; "Politics and Economics of Caribbean Life"; "Beryl A. Gilroy: World Griot"; and "Expressions: Literary Theory and Exile." Although there is much overlapping of themes relating to such topics as diversity, identity, and attachment to place, all of the essays offer fresh ways of thinking about Caribbean women's writing.

In Part One, Opal Palmer Adisa emphasizes the importance of the use of "nation tongue" to assert a Caribbean cultural identity apart from that of the metropole and the responsibility of writers "to speak in a language that their sisters can understand [and] that others can empathize with" (p. 28). Although the title of Adisa's essay is "De Language Reflect Dem Ethos: Some Issues with Nation Language," the editors say in their preface that "With the exception of Sybil Seaforth's fictional narrative, the language of many of the essays has been converted to Standard American English for editorial purposes" (p. viii). Since several contributors speak of the importance of writing in their

mother tongue, rather than in the tongue of the Mother Country, their message may be somewhat diluted. In her essay on the poetry of Lorna Goodison, Velma Pollard provides a valuable overview of “the Jamaican linguistic environment,” which includes the official language of Jamaica (Jamaican English, a dialect of English), Jamaican Creole (“a Creole of English lexicon”), and Dread Talk (the language of the Rastafari). To these she adds a fourth code, which is “foreign and alien to the environment” – the language of the tourist – and illustrates how Goodison renders “complex behaviors, the sound of complex voices in a single statement by the manipulation of lexicon and grammar” (p. 34). Merle Collins explains the process by which an author puts oral language on paper, referring to her own rendering of the talk of not only her mother (and father) but also of African speech, which the Caribbean draws on, ending her essay with an examination of a student’s poem that weaves the strands of her African, Jamaican, American, and Venezuelan heritages into a single fabric. Merle Hodge points out that, unlike Goodison or Collins’s student, Jamaica Kincaid tends to ignore such linguistic nuances, as if Caribbean people did not have their own languages. Occurrences of Creole speech are rare, with both the narrator and character speaking in the style of the author. Hodge attributes this habit to Kincaid’s concern with the individual experience, rather than the collective, suggesting that her “major achievement . . . is the beauty of the language she herself has created, the diamond-like clarity and precision of her English prose” (p. 50).

Yoked together with these essays are two others with somewhat different focuses. Régine Altagrâce Latortue compares Marie Chauvet’s *Amour* and Maryse Condé’s *Hérémakhonon*, both of which depict “an upper-middle-class, educated Black woman of the Diaspora” who is “trapped between two worlds and alienated from both” (pp. 57-58). And Maryse Condé discusses Suzanne Césaire’s rejection of *négritude* in her reconstruction of Caribbean identity as not the simple binary model described by her male contemporaries but the far more complex reality of African, European, Indian, and Asian components merged through the plantation economy. Part One ends with an excerpt from Sybil Seaforth’s recently published novel, *In Silence the Strands Unravel*, which returns readers to the topic of voice, this time silenced. Seaforth’s tale, which she presents as common occurrence in Caribbean life, is a moving account of a husband’s abandonment of his twenty-five-year-old marriage. Told by the woman, who has, interestingly, chosen writing as her career, it attributes the break-up to the power of the tool men use to “accomplish . . . desolation”: silence. Thus Part One ends in irony, with female language, orality, and voice silenced.

Part Two, on politics and economics, includes Daisy Cocco De Filippis’s piece on Dominican feminist Delia Weber (1900-82), Marie-José N’Zengo-Tayo’s discussion of depictions of children’s migratory experience in the writing of Maryse Condé and Edwidge Danticat, Marion Bethel’s reflections on

the death penalty, Lourdes Vázquez's account of Puerto Rican balladeers in New York, and Sherezada (Chiqui) Vicioso's description of the trials of the Caribbean woman writer, who must cope with a bevy of challenges not faced by Western writers.

Part Three is devoted to Guyana-born Beryl A. Gilroy – teacher, clinical psychologist, and “the most prolific female writer of the Anglophone Caribbean.” It includes essays by Australia Tarver and Joan Anim-Addo, as well as Gilroy's own account of her experience as a black woman writer in Britain, where “We were the first feminists because we had been forced to think, serve, and do for ourselves out of bald necessity” (p. 149). Gilroy's definition of the overworked word *identity*, quoted in Anim-Addo's essay, is one of the most interesting I have encountered: “the fear of being forgotten, or failing to resist the anguish of indifference, rejection and betrayal, and of being unable to fuse all the expressive moments of life into a panorama of reality that could be called authentic. Identity is having the strength of will to love deeply, and this struggle to love is an intriguing part of the human existence” (p. 138).

In Part Four Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert warns of the danger of writers being tempted by Western theories of postcolonialism, postmodernism, and feminism and abandoning the realities of Caribbean women's lives to satisfy outside designs on Caribbean literature and authors, blaming in particular Rosario Ferré for marginalizing herself by writing in English. Elaine Savory analyzes the difference between exile, and ex/isle writers, noting that “it is not where you locate the body but where you live in the mind which signifies” (p. 172). Despite this collection's overall antipathy toward such imposed terms as postcolonial, some of the essayists can't seem to help using them to describe Caribbean literature. Thus Astrid Roemer in her essay denouncing Western theory nonetheless finds it convenient to say her novel exposes “the struggle for dignity and a decent life for African Caribbean men and their families in a postcolonial context” (p. 180). Patricia Powell returns to the theme of identity in an account of her new novel, *The Pagoda*, in which the main character is a Jamaican of both African and Asian heritage. Leda Maria Martins concludes the volume with an overview of contemporary black Brazilian authors, who are breaking away from the male authors' images of the Brazilian woman as the smiling “Black mammy,” the ugly black maid, or the lascivious *mulata*.

*Caribbean Women Writers* is divided into three parts: “Literary Autobiography,” with short essays by Beryl Gilroy, Velma Pollard, Merle Collins, and Vernella Fuller; “Theoretical and Critical Responses”; and “A Guide to Fiction by Caribbean Women Writers” with a relevant bibliography. The brief section on autobiography, though one of the most valuable parts of the volume, is overshadowed by the long critical section, which provides an overview of several authors' works as well as ways of reading them.

Thorunn Lonsdale examines the influence of European literature on Jean Rhys's fiction and of Rhys's work on other Caribbean writers. Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson shows how Paule Marshall's novels express "Caribbean African American" identity in different settings. Denise deCaires Narain looks at Erna Brodber's use and subversion of post-colonial and feminist attitudes in her movement toward "a moral focus which ... suggests an eschewal of sexual pleasure in favour of the 'spiritual,' even as the aesthetics of her novels assert powerfully the sexual pleasures of the text" (p. 114). Alison Donnell examines how Olive Senior's stories, instead of advocating "a nostalgic view of an authentic way of life or of an essentialized Jamaican identity" (p. 132), provide the reader with "a culture of crossings and of complexities in which the often fragile and cusping identities of those who do not belong to society's designated categories can still be accommodated" (p. 140). Sarah Lawson Welsh explains how Pauline Melville's short stories cross borders, "moving between different age-groups, ethnicities, cultures and genders, and between different spaces, times, and worlds in order to challenge received boundary demarcations and to unsettle certain assumptions" (p. 146). Laura Niesen de Abruna shows how Jamaica Kincaid's fiction focuses "on the relationship between her narrator and her mother," always with "a correlation between the political difficulties afflicting the island-'mother' country relationship and the problems affecting the mother-daughter family relationships" (p. 174). Adele S. Newson explains how Zee Edgell's novels, through the characters of a young girl and a mature woman, "chart, in miniature, the development of Belize over a 30-year period" (p. 184). And Charlotte Sturgess tries to make clear how both the poetry and prose of Dionne Brand, "a Trinidadian Canadian black lesbian feminist,"

seek to problematize those perceptions of race, gender and sexuality which continually reject the Other to the margins in order to reproduce a white, heterosexual, phallic "centre" ... In Brand's fiction "authorship" conflated with "authority" is marked textually by characters whose inscription in the linear teleologic "real" is precarious, where fissures and gaps speak to "texture" as poetic signifying strata rather than to narrative closure. (pp. 202, 214)

The opaque language of this last essay may suggest why so many participants at the 1996 International Conference on Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars were suspicious of the language of Western literary theory.

*Mother Imagery in the Novels of Afro-Caribbean Women.* SIMONE A. JAMES ALEXANDER. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001. x + 214 pp. (Cloth US\$ 32.50)

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*Mother Imagery in the Novels of Afro-Caribbean Women* is a laudable attempt to thread major works of Jamaica Kincaid, Maryse Condé, and Paule Marshall into a holistic argument. Overlaying postcolonial issues of identity and redefinition with a feminist critique, Alexander argues that from the initial stages of rebellion against mother, the daughter protagonists of these authors journey into relationships with alternative homelands in the belief that a sense of self will accrue. But whether to the colonial mother country (France, United States, England) or to the ancestral motherland of Africa, these journeys prove disappointing. According to Alexander, although the spirit can be called anywhere, it is only when the daughter protagonists “beg pardon” and reengage ancestral ritual particularly in the “nation dance” inherent in their submerged Caribbean culture and connection with community that they find self and achieve synchronic attunement with their motherland.

Stated like this, Alexander’s argument seems both familiar and plausible, her text itself being a well-researched reference of the last two decades of Caribbean feminist postcolonial criticism in an introductory essay and five chapters. The introduction, “Reclaiming Identities” sets out the biological, political, and symbolic parameters of its use of the term “mother.” Chapters 1 and 2, “Resisting Zombification” and “I am Me I am You,” examine the paradoxes of resistance mainly in the work of Kincaid, while Chapter 3, “Imagined Homelands,” focuses on Condé’s *Heremakhonon* and, *I Tituba* in which the illusory thought of being finally at home in adopted homelands is developed alongside Condé’s problematizing of the portrayal of Africa as the Afro-Caribbean homeland. It is Marshall’s oeuvre, however, that is given the celebratory climax of the argument in the final two chapters. One cannot help but notice, though, the glaring omission of a discussion of Marshall’s 1991 novel, *Daughters*, in which the daughter-protagonist of diasporic citizenship appears to renege on the Caribbean in the final pages.

Alexander’s analysis of the intricate mother-daughter relationship in *Annie John* and *The Autobiography of my Mother*, which launches the body of her analysis, is thorough, sustained by discussion of key themes of Kincaid’s work such as rejection, negotiation, separation, dependency, alien-

ation, deceit, betrayal, loss, fragmentation, and death that characterize the development of her protagonists. However, in Chapter 5, "Call[ing] Your Nation," Xuela seems misunderstood, leading to her being pejoratively compared to Marshall's protagonists. Giving the impression that Xuela remains deficient, Alexander concludes:

Deprived of the womb, the mother's and the island, Xuela is unable to call her nation. She is culturally and spiritually vacuous. Although the island does not provide Xuela with the support and love she craves, it is a source of spirituality for Avatara Johnson and Tituba, who are conferred the status of ancestress after they have unequivocally claimed the island and the island's (African) culture. (p. 195)

Here, not only is the comprehensive self-exposition of one of the more perspicacious avatars of Caribbean literature underestimated, but Kincaid's feisty reference to the whole business of "nation-calling" in Caribbean literature (even that of such worthy male ancestors as Derek Walcott and Kamau Brathwaite) seems missed. For Xuela of the "vanquished" and the "defeated," for whom "the past is a fixed point, [and] the future is open-ended," may not be a "people," or a "nation," but she certainly wishes "from time to time to make [her] actions be the actions of a people," and "[her] actions be the actions of a nation" (*Autobiography* 215-16).

One of the strengths of *Mother Imagery* is that it compares the work of three principal Afro-Caribbean female authors with divergent ideologies. In her treatment of their novels as fictional autobiographies, though, Alexander's over-identification of protagonist with author, coupled with her practice of citing author interviews and author statements to support her argument, leads at times to the impression that the authors are given the permission to evaluate their own achievement while the critic merely supplies endorsement. Critical analysis is further affected by Alexander's own apparent personal Caribbean quest, which seems to coincide with the alleged quests of her author-critics themselves. Such synchronization of purpose leads to closing statements such as:

Without a doubt, these works have offered young black women a more truthful image of themselves in literature. Condé, Marshall, and Kincaid have created a space, a female space, a mother's land, wherein history and myth coalesce, where fiction and reality are conflated, and where the black woman is at home with herself. They have successfully captured and depicted the complexities of the black female being. (p. 196)

In her presentation of the Caribbean spirit, Alexander is guilty of similar enthusiasm in statements such as:

Noted for its insularity and suggestive of containment and isolation, the Caribbean simultaneously possesses transcendent qualities, for it is depicted in the novels as a safe haven, the chosen ancestral land, a place where African culture is religiously preserved and practiced. The insular nature of the Caribbean connotes a villagelike atmosphere, conducive for the survival of the ancestor and ancestral worshiping. (p. 191)

Ironically, the authors of these "fictional autobiographies" have not returned to these rhapsodized "safe havens." Also, in concluding that "it is no mere coincidence that the ancestors are predominantly women" and that "[women] are the ones who facilitate the lineage and generational continuity" (p. 193), Alexander seems to overlook the influence that the gender of her authors may have had on their presentation of ancestors in their texts.

In spite of such totalizing statements, *Mother Imagery in the Novels of Afro-Caribbean Women* is a worthy comparative analysis of three major Caribbean women novelists. Although its footnoting is at times unorthodox, overall the text is a lucid presentation and an organized compendium of criticism on Afro-Caribbean women writing.

*Puerto Rican Cultural Identity and the Work of Luis Rafael Sánchez*. JOHN DIMITRI PERIVOLARIS. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. 203 pp. (Paper US\$ 32.50)

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Today Luis Rafael Sánchez is the best-known Puerto Rican writer in and outside of his country. With his plays, essays, short stories and, above all, his first novel, *La guaracha del Macho Camacho* (1976), he has established himself as an important figure in Caribbean and Latin American letters. His popularity has attracted translators and critics, and several books have been published on his writing. Now, a young British professor, John Dimitri Perivolaris, joins the list of commentators who have tried to explain Sánchez's way of constructing a literary work and the relevance of his pieces to Puerto Rican and Caribbean culture.

Perivolaris generously recognizes the critics who preceded him, including Luce López-Baralt, Efraín Barradas, Juan Gelpí, and Carmen Vázquez-Arce.

Drawing on contemporary critical and theoretical perspectives, he approaches Sánchez's oeuvre from a postcolonial perspective, a theoretical approach that is somewhat problematic when applied to an author who comes from a country still under colonial rule. At the same time he does not hesitate to disagree with a few critics whose prejudices, he believes, have led them to misinterpret Sánchez's work, especially his short stories. He is even critical of the theoreticians who serve as foundation to his study, and applies postcolonial ideas fully aware of the contradictions of Puerto Rican history and society.

Perivolaris places Sánchez's work in a broad cultural context. In order to do this he deals with different genres in separate chapters. After an interesting introduction which explains his goals and methods, he devotes a chapter to Sánchez's theater, concentrating on his most recent play, *Quintuples* (1985), a piece that represents for him Sánchez's major contribution to the theater and to his interpretation of Puerto Rican society. A second chapter is centered on an essay, "La guagua aérea" (1983), that has had major repercussions in Puerto Rico since it puts forward a definition of the national identity as a shifting entity, not a concrete essence. Much of this chapter is devoted to a film based on the essay. A third chapter focuses on short stories. Perivolaris does not comment on all of Sánchez's production in this genre, but selects a few stories that aid him in building an argument about the issue of marginality in some sectors of Puerto Rican society, especially among blacks, women, and homosexuals. Chapter 4 analyzes Sánchez's two long fiction texts: *La guaracha del Macho Camacho* and *La importancia de llamarse Daniel Santos* (1988). The use of popular culture in these texts is central to Perivolaris's approach. A last chapter looks at Sánchez's essays. Again, Perivolaris selects a few texts for the construction of his central arguments.

The book ends with a brief section which addresses postcolonial theory, especially Homi Bhabha, Roberto Fernández-Retamar, and Frantz Fanon, and evaluates Sánchez's indirect contribution to this important theoretical framework which has been used so often to study Caribbean writers. For me, Perivolaris's principal contribution is the ideological ambivalence, the political tug of war that he reveals in Sánchez's development as an intellectual. In his view, Sánchez adopts the voice of Puerto Rican popular culture, but at the same time silences it with the creation of his personal voice, one that speaks in a neo-baroque language synthesizing the hybridity of his culture. Perivolaris's thesis is that the author's voice conceals and at the same time reveals Puerto Rican social and cultural reality: "sustained by the dying echo of Puerto Rico's populist past and feudal paternalism, the increasingly discreet silence of Luis Rafael Sánchez's work testifies to an eloquent egalitarianism" (p. 191).

One could argue that Perivolaris fails to see the literary elements of the texts he studies and that he takes characters as real-life entities. This is particularly true in his analysis of *La importancia de llamarse Daniel Santos*,

where he sometimes forgets that even though the work is based on the life of a real person, the great Puerto Rican popular singer, the character in the book is a fictional creation. Furthermore, he sometimes uses small details in the texts to reach major political and ideological conclusions. In spite of these reservations, *Puerto Rican Cultural Identity and the Work of Luis Rafael Sánchez* is an important contribution to the study of a central figure in contemporary Caribbean letters and an excellent example of academic literary criticism.

*The Internet: An Ethnographic Approach.* DANIEL MILLER & DON SLATER. Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2000. ix + 217 pp. (Paper £14.99)

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It is indeed a pleasure to encounter a work that takes up the daunting task of approaching the Internet ethnographically, and in the Caribbean no less. Such a project is fraught with challenges, since one must decide where to locate a dispersed subject, determine what to say about an emergent phenomenon, accept the fact that the time lag of academic publication will render these statements historical at best, and confront the awkwardness of crossing categorical registers between steel drums and MP3 files. Daniel Miller and Don Slater seem an appropriate pair to face such challenges, given the former's familiarity with both Trinidad and consumption and the latter's prior investigations of cyberspace. Relying on their overlapping backgrounds, they swept through five weeks of ethnography in 1999 and a rapid phase of composition thereafter, hoping to find out what Trinidadians make of the Internet, and by doing so learn more about both the island and the technology. Rather than attempting a definitive study, their goal was to challenge more abstract presentations of cyberspace, and to urge others to take up a task of comparative ethnography.

The book is divided into seven chapters. Miller and Slater adopt an unusual structure by presenting an introduction entitled "Conclusions" and outlining their main findings alongside their justification for the project as a whole. Given the topic involved, this approach is something more than a coy experiment: here we have a book that is very much modeled on a website, with the first section

as its front page. The ensuing chapters provide greater depth for those who wish to move on; they could easily be read out of order, or – by a real surfer, careening on to other things – not at all. The conceit is made more real in that the book does have an associated Internet venue where the illustrations cited in the text are actually housed (<http://ethnonet.gold.ac.uk>).

In the second chapter Miller and Slater provide background on Trinidad as a locale and the Internet as a phenomenon within it. Here we are introduced to the Internet as a “hot topic,” and to the way that the image of its entrepreneurial possibilities for self-realization resonates with Trinidadian history. We are also quickly briefed on four sample households that provide a sense of the breadth of socioeconomic terrain involved, which ranges from middle-class comfort to borderline poverty. Chapter 3 explores shifting patterns in social relationships, both kin and non-kin, as mediated by new technologies. Unsurprisingly, the possibility of quick, long-distance communication has been significant for Trinidadians’ diasporic sense of community, while also widening the scope of possibilities for new encounters beyond it. Miller and Slater qualify this expansive spatial effect of the Internet in the next chapter, exploring ways in which identities of place (and in this case “being Trini”) remain important within the new reconfiguration of distance. They also note that Trinidad has had prior experience with the distortion of global diffusion, due to the prominence of its Carnival tradition. They then turn to the political economy of the Internet in Trinidad, examining both the technological infrastructure involved and its attendant politics, including widespread frustrations with perceived “bottlenecks.” The book closes with a pair of chapters addressing aspects of consumption, both material and spiritual. The first looks at the attractions and frustrations of doing business online, presenting the 1999 Miss Universe pageant as a key case. The second focuses on religion and the changing dynamics of positioning within cyberspace. As a final bonus Miller and Slater leave readers with an appendix concerning the household survey and a glossary.

Overall the work merits the attention of both Caribbeanists and the many prophets of the global future – one can only hope that the latter group might actually read it. Miller and Slater give us a Caribbean facing the future as much as the past, and the image of people – even people of quite modest circumstance – imagining an expanded array of possibilities. At the same time they are appropriately skeptical about both the Internet and its representation as placeless, homogeneous space. However partial and incomplete, their quick sketch is a welcome antidote to a long stream of universalizing discourse. At points the text does reflect the rush of its production – for example the small, but oddly glaring error on page 38, where we are told that a Trinidad dollar holds a value of six U.S. dollars. A brief check online reveals that the inverse is indeed the case, a fact that makes the subsequent monetary figures in the text much more comprehensible. I mention

this not so much to chide the publishers as to illustrate the problems that different media face. What could easily be caught and corrected overnight in a website interrupts the flow of a book. Conversely a printed text is a fairly stable entity, whereas a number of links on their website proved less than operational when I visited them. At a moment of generational flux (witness the disdain shown by a group of schoolgirls for printed as opposed to electronic sources on page 77) such distinctions are worth recalling. I also find it a bit curious that in a work calling for comparison the authors chose to subordinate Tobago so completely to its larger neighbor, especially given the parallel way that both islands vanish in discussions of the Internet or globalization. And finally, given all the effort that the book devotes to grounding cyberspace, it is perhaps telling that the specific place in question does not appear in the title. In the end we are still amid a field of dreams, extending well beyond the small set of households surveyed, keyboards clicking under a steady, hot sun.

A comparative postscript: Through circumstance, I am writing this review in a South Asian neighborhood of Paris. There are at least two commercial venues offering Internet access within a block of me (which from casual observation look fairly well-used), not to mention an extraordinary array of cell phones and discount calling cards, some sporting what appear to be allusions to Indian mythology. At the same time with every evening regular knots of people (especially young men) appear on the street-corner, chatting, watching, being seen, being there. I make this minor empirical observation in closing to underscore what I take to be Miller and Slater's main point: yes, a revolution of sorts is arriving, and no, it is not as singular or complete as we may sometimes think.

*High Tech and High Heels in the Global Economy: Women, Work, and Pink-Collar Identities in the Caribbean.* CARLA FREEMAN. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2000. xiii + 334 pp. (Cloth US\$ 54.95, Paper US\$ 18.95)

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Protests against globalization are intensifying with each meeting of the World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, and other international

financial giants. Activists ask the fundamental question of whether expanding employment by multinational firms engaged in agribusiness, manufacturing, or service provision liberate or exploit workers around the world. Freeman's study of women in Barbados employed in the "informatics" industry, or computer-based information processing, reveals that answering that question on the effects of transnational economic activity is no simple job. Assessments of impacts on workers and their families must attend to the complexity of local culture as well as histories of engagement with larger political-economic systems.

The book contributes to a growing literature on women's experiences and engagement in multinational enterprises. Freeman adds a global dimension to a now robust collection of studies about women workers on the factory floor. The first two chapters document the history of women's work in Barbados and the rise of transnational economic activities from early sugarcane "factories in the field," to classic manufacturing enterprises and tourist services, and the more recent emergence of computer-based data entry. This study expands the scope of investigation from the behavior on the shop floor among the women who enter data (from airline ticket stubs and medical claims or manuscript pages) to the construction of contemporary ideologies about work and identity. It links the production conditions of the informatics industry ("high tech") to women workers' appearances and consumption choices ("high heels"). Freeman's book places work – its practices and its role in shaping people's identities – at the center of her inquiry, seeking to connect gendered Barbadian cultural practices to the larger political economy of multinational information processing. Later chapters explore how local definitions of femininity expressing tensions between docility and strength are used to incorporate women into informatics work, how appearance operates as both an expression of individuality and conformity, and how the duality of production and consumption shape employees, gender, and work personae.

Bajan informatics employees reframe two important cultural themes, reputation and distinction, in uniquely gendered ways. Women take on what Freeman calls hidden labor as well as obvious expense to wear clothing that is both professional and feminine, and that actively expresses their sense of distinction, marking the difference between them and industrial, blue-collar workers. While giving visibility to gender, individualism, and professionalism, women's appearances also become an avenue of corporate discipline and control. Dress codes become a way for the companies to enforce conformity, and by conveying the symbols of professional work, they not only camouflage some of the more factory-like conditions of informatics work but also permit more exploitative professional practices such as unpaid overtime.

The research builds on other innovative Caribbean ethnographers who have argued against the simple dichotomies of tradition/modernity and local/global and emphasized the power of local initiative and culture in shap-

ing articulation with the world economy. This process is reflected throughout the analysis of women's dress and its importance in the workplace. The study gives concrete expression to the intersections between transnationalism, capitalism, and local cultural aesthetics, mediated by the consumption practices of these waged workers striving to embody modernity in brightly colored suits and manicures. Quotations from the women employed by the two pseudonymous companies, Multitext and DataAir, reveal the multivalent meanings of dress as both a criterion and a product of informatics work. There is no doubt that "The informatics workers demonstrate at every turn that globalization is not enacted in a uniform manner, nor is it simply homogenizing in its effects" (p. 260).

Less satisfying are Freeman's discussions comparing the specific cultural processes at work in Barbados to similar ones practiced by women elsewhere on the global assembly line. On the one hand, it is the specificity of Barbados' location in a transnational economic history that gives shape to women's unique patterns of employment and meanings of dress in the informatics industry; on the other, foreign corporations show great elasticity in incorporating cultural differences without any disruption in their ability to make a profit. Is there any pattern as to which cultural elements more effectively blunt the negative impacts of globalization? Are some more important than others in promoting women's empowerment, higher wages, or better working conditions? Policymakers looking for ways to minimize the negative consequences of multinational expansion on women workers are not afforded much guidance in Freeman's argument that "women workers have been important actors in the process of defining and making use of difference" (p. 138). Although we gain a better understanding about how local values shape Barbadian women's willingness to take employment in the informatics industry, we are not much closer to answering the activists' questions about whether it is ultimately a liberating or exploitative relationship.

The text would have benefited from stronger editing. A tighter manuscript would have allowed Freeman room to expand the rich vignettes of home life and excursions that she notes so tantalizingly in the first chapter. The placement of footnote numbers at the end of sentences, rather than at the most relevant point, created some confusion. Could this choice have been intended to simplify the input of text at some offshore data processing center ...?

Freeman's study advances our knowledge about a new and growing sector of women's work in informatics. It helps to push ahead our thinking about women as cultural agents affecting the process of globalization. The book deserves a wide readership among scholars of the Caribbean region as well as those who study transnational economic processes, information technology, and gender and development issues in other regions.

*Wake the Town and Tell the People: Dancehall Culture in Jamaica.* NORMAN C. STOLZOFF. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2000. xxviii + 298 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95, Paper US\$ 19.95)

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*Wake the Town and Tell the People* represents a milestone in scholarship on Jamaican music. Stolzoff documents the evolution and dynamics of dancehall music and argues it is best understood as mode of cultural production and performance – an influential site of musical celebration and cultural contestation that has been largely neglected in scholarship. The title, gleaned from the 1970 song "Wake the Town" by dancehall pioneer U-Roy, may be taken as a symbolic wake up call for the community of scholars and journalists interested in Caribbean popular musics. To document dancehall's roles in Jamaican society Stolzoff integrates the insights of performers, engineers, and scholars with the knowledge he gained from eighteen months of dissertation fieldwork. Unlike accounts that pinpoint the emergence of dancehall music to electronically produced rhythms of the early 1980s, Stolzoff argues that the genre's evolution must be traced back to the pre-emancipation period.

Chapters 1-4 document "the dancehall" as the primary social space where generations of urban and rural Jamaicans experienced live and recorded music. The preface and first chapter describe Stolzoff's first encounters with reggae music and introduce dancehall as an alternative sphere of cultural mediation and reproduction. Live dancehall sessions represent "zones of conflict" or *clashing* (p. 8). The crews of mobile sound systems and dancehall DJs battle musically and verbally with rivals in these sessions. Elsewhere, upper- and lower-class segments of Jamaica's population debate dancehall's musical merits and the social implications of dancehall lyrics.

Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the historical dimensions of the dancehall phenomenon from the days of slavery through the decades leading to Jamaica's independence. The nature of the "slave dance" and the emergent "creole culture" in Jamaica is discussed. Genres like *mento* reflect such creolization and blend distinctly African, American, and European components. Popular music in Kingston between the 1930s and 1950s was powerfully influenced by the political developments and the technological innovations taking place on the island. The origins of first mobile sound systems and local recording studios are emphasized in Chapter 3. Quotations from sound system pioneers like

Hedley Jones are utilized to stress the impact of local, national, and international influences on the creation and consumption of Jamaican musical genres during this period.

Chapter 4 examines the nature of dancehall performance from Jamaica's independence in 1962 through trends in 1998. Linkages between music, politics, urban violence, and highly charged lyrical themes – including sexual and religious topics – are explored. For example, the violence associated with the “political tribalism” of the 1960s and 1970s was counterbalanced by a surge in the popularity of Rastafari. Pioneering dancehall figures such as U-Roy creatively incorporated Rastafari ideology into their *talkover* (live verbal commentary) and performance.

The next four chapters, based primarily on Stolzoff's fieldwork experiences, emphasize the centrality of dancehall culture in contemporary society, and the types of dancehall performers popular in the 1990s. Chapter 5 highlights the production of dancehall music in a studio environment in Kingston. Stolzoff's participant observation of the Dub Store (1994-99) provided insights into the ways in which *dub plates* (specially commissioned dancehall recordings) are created. The work both inside and outside of the studio is influenced by the social network of dancehall artists, record producers, studio owners, and record companies.

Chapter 6 provides a survey of the “career trajectory” of a dancehall performer. The personal experiences and initial struggles of the novice DJ are generalized based on the narratives of artists such as Tenor Star. Later sections explore the career paths of dancehall DJs and singers who *bust out* and become professional performers. Stolzoff's analysis of a typical dancehall performance, an “ideal dance event,” in Chapter 7 is constructed based on observation of dozens of live performances. The social dimensions of live dancehall music are described ethnographically. Musical and lyrical analysis of a dancehall “clash” and the distinct “performative modes” employed by selector Ricky Trooper of the Killamanjaro sound system are analyzed as well.

Chapter 8 ends the book by contextualizing the public debate surrounding dancehall music in Jamaican society. This debate centers on the opposition between what is commonly described as *slackness* (sexually explicit lyrics) and *culture* (message-oriented “reality” lyrics). Stolzoff draws on the work of scholar Carolyn Cooper (1993) in exploring such oppositions. While upper- and middle-class Jamaicans, representing “uptown perspective,” frequently view dancehall in a negative light, the majority of lower-class Jamaicans from “downtown” areas embrace the art form. The controversy surrounding female DJ Lady Saw and her sexually explicit lyrics is interpreted from oppositional perspectives.

Despite the book's valuable contributions, readers will likely be frustrated by two particular limitations. First, it lacks a Jamaican Patois (Jamaican Creole) glossary. Stolzoff defines many terms and phrases in each chapter, but

his coverage is inconsistent. While some dancehall terminology is italicized and defined within parentheses, other items are left untranslated. A glossary would have facilitated a more consistent approach and aided readers in understanding crucial dancehall terminology. Second, Stolzoff's presentation of narrative quotations is inconsistent. Certain passages are treated to an English transcription, while others receive no such attention. This unequal treatment privileges certain narratives at the expense of others. Additional information on the methodology used in selecting and interpreting the narratives included in the book would have been helpful.

These limitations aside, *Wake the Town and Tell the People* is essential reading for scholars interested in Jamaican music. Dancehall culture permeates the day-to-day lives of thousands of Jamaicans and deserves continued attention as an influential musical, social, political, and economic force within Jamaica. Stolzoff's book, especially the later chapters, sets the stage for future research projects on Jamaican popular music.

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*East Indian Music in the West Indies: Tān-Singing, Chutney, and the Making of Indo-Caribbean Culture*. PETER MANUEL. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000. xxv + 252 pp. (Cloth US\$ 89.50, Paper US\$ 29.95)

*Music of Hindu Trinidad: Songs from the Indian Diaspora*. HELEN MYERS. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. xxxii + 510 pp. (Cloth US\$ 85.00, Paper US\$ 39.00)

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The publication of Peter Manuel's *East Indian Music in the West Indies* and Helen Myer's *Music of Hindu Trinidad* sheds long overdue light on the story of East Indian diasporic culture in the Caribbean. Addressing issues of cul-

tural continuity, syncretism, and innovation, these studies dovetail neatly in terms of subject matter. Manuel's work focuses on two styles covered only summarily in Myer's book: the unique Indo-Caribbean genre of *tān*-singing and the more recent popular genre of chutney music. Myer's highly original volume is based on extensive ethnographic research of musical life in Felicity, Trinidad. Each book is accompanied by a compact disc.

East Indian migration to the Caribbean was spurred by the emancipation of enslaved Africans in the British West Indies (1834-38), as sugar plantation owners sought new sources of exploitable labor. Between 1845 and 1917, over four hundred thousand East Indians were lured to the Caribbean as indentured laborers, with the majority landing in Trinidad and British Guiana. Overcoming extreme oppression at the bottom rungs of colonial society through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the East Indian community established a vibrant presence in Trinidad, Guyana, and to a lesser extent Suriname, with a strong economic and, more recently, political presence through the late twentieth century. In the past generation, a secondary diaspora to North America (especially New York City and Toronto) and the Netherlands has extended this community and its cultural forms. Notably, about 85 percent of the indentured migrants came from the Bhojpurī-speaking regions of northeast India (Bihar and Uttar Pradesh), providing scholars with a unique opportunity for exploring questions of cultural continuity and change. Unlike Afro-Creole populations in the Caribbean, in which people from diverse regions and ethnic groups were thrown together and forced to create new lifeways under the yoke of slavery, East Indians were a relatively homogenous group that managed to sustain many aspects of their culture. Manuel and Myers both trace the links between Indo-Caribbean culture and its Bhojpurī roots, making for a rich and exciting perspective on Caribbean diasporic processes.

Peter Manuel, who has written extensively on both Indian and Caribbean music, focuses here primarily on the history of *tān*-singing, a local-classical genre performed mainly at weddings and religious gatherings that is based on Indian forms but unique to the Indo-Caribbean context. The first three chapters establish the basic trajectory of East Indian music and culture in Trinidad, Guyana, and Suriname and provide an overview of *tān*-singing from the nineteenth century to the present, loosely reconstructed from historical sources, interviews, and ethnographic research. Owing to the dearth of historical documentation of *tān*-singing before the 1960s, Manuel is obliged at several points to speculate about the development of this style, but does so in a convincing and well-argued manner. Chapter 4 of the book concentrates on aesthetic issues of repertoire, transmission, composition, and innovation in *tān*-singing, while Chapter 5, geared more towards specialists, provides a solid discussion of sub-genres in *tān*-singing, complete with musical examples and detailed analysis of melodic and rhythmic treatment.

Chapter 6 explores the chutney phenomenon, which is replacing *tān*-singing as the preferred music for wedding parties and other social gatherings. Based on Bhojpurī erotic folk-songs, chutney was traditionally performed in the gender-segregated context of the *matkor* (or *matticore*) ceremony held on the first night of the weekend-long traditional Hindu wedding. In modernized form, it burst onto the popular scene in the 1970s and 1980s as a genre where men and women danced together, and was decried by shocked elders for its licentiousness. Manuel analyzes chutney's joyous and irreverent flouting of social inhibitions – particularly the pelvic gyrating known as “wining” which is also central in Afro-Creole Carnival dancing – within the context of increased independence and sexual assertiveness among East Indian women. The final chapter of Manuel's book briefly concludes with general observations about the nature of contemporary Indo-Caribbean culture in the context of modernity, diaspora, and multicultural societies. Photographs, musical examples, and twelve compact disc selections of field and commercial recordings illustrate the volume; a glossary and an appendix with selected song texts in Devanagiri script are also included.

Manuel's book is smoothly crafted and should interest specialists in both South Asian and Caribbean Studies. Of particular interest for scholars of Indian music is the way that Manuel positions the rise of *tān*-singing between elite and folk cultures, as Indo-Caribbean musicians assembled their own version of Indian classical music from an incomplete knowledge of elite Indian art forms and intermediate theater and dance music genres. He skillfully invokes the Great/Little Tradition paradigm that has framed South Asian cultural studies since the 1960s, while illustrating the actual fluidity of individual artistic choice and practice between these two poles. Scholars of Caribbean culture will take interest in Manuel's consideration of patterns of cultural continuity and creolization in the Indo-Caribbean diaspora, which differ substantially from those that shaped Afro-Caribbean societies. He looks at how the experience of East Indians in the Caribbean was conducive to the decline of certain cultural traits while promoting retention of several traditional and neo-traditional Indian customs. The emergence of hybrid forms such as chutney reflects dynamic new shifts in Indo-Caribbean culture as East Indians renegotiate their position as equal participants in an ethnically heterogeneous society. As in his 1993 book, *Cassette Culture* Manuel also adeptly addresses issues of homogenization and reappropriation with the advent of mass media in the early twentieth century. He looks at the strong influence of Hindi films on East Indian music and culture, and the role this has played in establishing a neo-traditional presence of “India” for this diasporic community, at once threatening conservative genres such as *tān*-singing and offering resources for its elaboration.

Helen Myers, for her part, presents an impressive study of life and music in one small East Indian village in central Trinidad. Her idiosyncratic narrative combines rigorous musicological analysis with personal anecdotes and conversations with Felicity residents, as she weaves between academic prose and engaging literary passages. Myers's study is based on nearly twenty years of ethnographic research in Felicity, including eight trips to the ancestral villages of community members in India. Her work is lavishly illustrated with photographs, several musical examples, and twenty-nine compact disc selections from her large collection of field recordings; a glossary, discography, and appendix of song texts in Devanagari script are also included. Chapters 1 and 2 focus on the migration of East Indians to the Caribbean and the roots of Afro-Creole and Indo-Caribbean society in Trinidad. Chapters 3 and 4 establish the setting of Felicity and Myers's field methodology. Chapters 5 and 6 present the seasonal calendar and folk taxonomies that organizes musical life in Felicity, while Chapter 7 offers a general historical overview of studies of East Indian music in Trinidad from the nineteenth century to the present. Chapters 8 and 9 concentrate on the important context of weddings and wedding songs, particularly the saucy *lachārī*. Subsequent chapters document other important folk and religious songs, including a visit to the aunts of Trinidadian author V.S. Naipaul, and another to his ancestral village in India. Chutney is also covered, although in a rather impressionistic manner; Myers analyzes only chutney song texts and does not discuss the dancing. The book concludes with two chapters that summarize her general observations of musical life in Felicity and then trace her "passage to India" where she played tape recordings of Felicity songs for women in the ancestral Bhojpurī villages from which Felicity residents came.

Readers expecting a straightforward, linear ethnography of musical life in Felicity may find Myers's volume a little confusing, since she defies a strict chronological or taxonomical format in organizing her narrative. Her important general observations about the nature of continuity, change, and revitalization in East Indian diasporic musical culture also tend to be buried among the lengthy analytic descriptions of performance contexts, song texts, and musical structures. Brief summaries at the end of most chapters, and also parts of Chapters 7 (p. 126) and 18 (pp. 402-3) help anchor the discussion. One great strength of Myers's study, however, lies in its polyvocality; through extensive and quasi-literary interview fragments, we gain diverse perspectives on East Indian musical life in Trinidad. It almost feels as if we are *liming* (hanging out) with Myers and the Felicity folks, listening to their conversations. The book's other strength is its documentation of a large body of songs, many of which may not survive into the current generation. Myers's comprehensive and comparative examination of songs across important

domains of Felicity musical life (weddings, temple devotion, the Rāmāyan tradition) is a significant ethnomusicological feat in itself.

Together, these volumes fill a large gap in the field of Caribbean studies, long dominated by scholarship on Afro-Caribbean culture and history, and also provide an important Caribbean perspective to the growing body of South Asian diaspora studies, which has tended to concentrate on ethnic groups (e.g., Punjabis) and social classes (e.g., urban professionals) that are culturally distinct from the Indo-Caribbean community. The lack of research on Indo-Caribbean expressive styles and forms is astounding, reflecting, perhaps, the pattern of East Indian marginalization in colonial and Creole society from their first arrival until recently. These two books are a welcome contribution to the area of Indo-Caribbean research, at a time when many of the community's older expressive forms are on the verge of disappearing.

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*Drumming for the Gods: The Life and Times of Felipe García Villamil, Santero, Palero, and Abakuá*. MARÍA TERESA VÉLEZ. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000. xx + 210 pp. (Paper US\$ 19.95)

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*Drumming for the Gods* differs from many volumes in the library of Cuban testimonial literature. Although the account is rich in biographical details, Vélez does not relate García's life story in full, or narrate significant episodes he witnessed. Instead, she focuses on García's career and the history of his trade. A master drummer, García has a command of secular music and sacred Afro-Cuban *toques* in the Matanzas style, a combination of specialized knowledge that gives him the right to call himself *completo*. Vélez, who is an ethnomusicologist, pays a good deal of attention to instrumentation, the composition of ensembles according to musical genre, apprenticeships, the construction and sanctification of instruments, and the ritual functions of drums. Relying on

García, who now earns his living as an instrument maker, she reconstructs the genealogy of sets of *batá* drums with origins in the Matanzas region. Because consecrated *batá* drums must be “born” of instruments of established sanctity, here the researcher’s preoccupations, which hark back to Fernando Ortiz’s early work on *batá* lineages in Havana, echo the concerns of Santería practitioners who require evidence of the drums’ bona-fide ancestry for religious purposes.

The book is divided in three sections that trace the triumphs and vicissitudes of García’s professional development, from his training in Cuba to the revolutionary upheavals that led him to become a “folkloric” musician in the 1960s, to his post-Mariel migration to the United States, where he has had limited success establishing himself as a sacred drummer because of his adherence to the traditions of Matanzas in a country where Havana’s modalities predominate. Along the route, Vélez offers revealing, if at times abbreviated, analyses of the social and political circumstances shaping Afro-Cuban traditions in Cuba and the United States in the twentieth century. Rather than seeking evidence of African survivals, Vélez espouses a creolization model that emphasizes the creativity of African-Americans. She notes that “what flourished in Cuba was not just a continuation of Yoruba religious and cultural practices but something new” born of encounters among Africans and Europeans “in a new environment and a new social order governed by set of institutions different from those of Africa” (p. 10).

Cuban revolutionary policies dictated a division between high and folk arts and the staging of Afro-Cuban music in the service of state-sponsored nationalist narratives. For García, the performance of sacred music in secular contexts presented a dilemma. For the first time the master drummer saw an opportunity to make a living from music alone, but to take advantage of the opportunity he first had to overcome the misgivings of elder practitioners as well as his own. He decided that “theatricalization” would not desecrate his practice so long as no secrets were revealed and no plants or animals were put on stage. He argued that stage performances could even serve a didactic purpose and help improve the status of religions that many revolutionaries regarded as backward and politically suspect. Vélez avoids facile judgments that decry “folklorization” and points out that revolutionary policies were “aimed at valuing the contributions of Afro-Cuban culture” (p. 103). However, she does not fully articulate how an awareness of revolutionary intentions should alter the long-standing scholarly debate surrounding authenticity and tradition.

In an effort to suggest that García’s “ethnic awareness” was a response to postrevolutionary conditions, Vélez follows the master drummer in portraying the period before 1959 as an age of innocence. Then, she reports, García “exercised his trade and practiced his religion without feeling the need to question or justify his practices” (p. 138). However, Vélez herself points out that the status of Afro-Cuban traditions had been contested in Matanzas since the late 1910s. García’s own relatives were among those forced underground

following a violent repression of “witchcraft” that, as Ernesto Chávez Alvarez (1991) and Aline Helg (1995) have shown, came to a murderous end in 1919. Following the arrest of Afro-Cubans charged with sacrificing white children, a lynch mob demanded that the army – which had imposed martial law in Matanzas – hand them over. The officers refused, but soon shot the men, alleging an escape attempt.

The final section of the book deals with García’s activities as a “diasporic musician.” Vélez argues that the U.S. climate transformed García’s notions of tradition. Since migrating, García has been engaged in what she calls a “meta hybrid practice.” He recognizes that black peoples from throughout the Americas lay claim to Lucumí traditions in the name of racial and diasporic identities rather than in the name of Cubanness or direct descent from old practitioners. Teaching newcomers has become important for García’s own efforts to constitute memories of home, Cuba, and “tradition.” Finally, García must reconcile his interpretations of tradition with commodification, such as is seen in world music, and purification, as manifest in an African-American desire to disown impure syncretism.

Of obvious interest to specialists, Vélez’s book should prove a powerful stimulant to classroom discussions. Besides introducing readers to issues of cultural change and policy-making, migration, and the work of memory, the volume offers a succinct introduction to three major Afro-Cuban religious traditions: Santería, Palo Monte, and Abakuá. Rather than viewing them as discrete orthodoxies, Vélez highlights the porous nature of these practices and emphasizes their interconnectedness. As she puts it, there are “three doors” to García’s house. *Drumming for the Gods* offers blueprints and shows the routes between a house in Matanzas and an apartment in New York.

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*Praising His Name in the Dance: Spirit Possession in the Spiritual Baptist Faith and Orisha Work in Trinidad, West Indies.* KENNETH ANTHONY LUM. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers. xvi + 317 pp. (Cloth US\$ 60.00)

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A number of lexical pairings may be used to describe aspects of the ongoing debate in the social sciences (particularly anthropology) that pits cultural materialists against postmodernists – universalism vs. cultural relativism, “outsider” vs. “insider,” “operational models” vs. “cognized models” (Rappaport 1967), scientism vs. symbolism, and so on. In *Praising His Name in the Dance*, Kenneth Lum places himself squarely in the postmodernist camp, a position he defends on numerous occasions. In fact, his work goes far beyond postmodernistic “decentering” and “deconstruction.” Not only does he de-emphasize the traditionally “privileged” component of the binary opposites; he reestablishes the ascendancy of one of the terms (but, in this case, the heretofore “marginal” component) and thus produces an ironic and curious modernistic-type realignment.

Many readers will no doubt appreciate Lum’s sincere attempt to grasp the “insider’s” point of view and his empathetic exploration of the religion of the “other.” He certainly does an admirable job in this regard. A careful reading of this book will leave readers with a copious knowledge of African religious life in Trinidad from the perspective of “insiders,” at least as that could be determined by Lum. While this appears to have been Lum’s sole intention, it nevertheless left me feeling as though the book was not quite finished.

For example, the practice of spirit possession in Trinidad, which is the book’s primary focus, is presented in great detail, drawing on Lum’s excellent fieldwork and on worshipers’ comments. Unfortunately, the analysis is never contextualized within the available body of scholarship, both general works and those that focus on Trinidad itself. This scholarship is not totally ignored (a summary review of many of these works is provided in an appendix), but it is presented almost as an afterthought, with little or no commentary, and no attempt on Lum’s part to relate it to his own work. The writings of his predecessors are mentioned from time to time in the body of the book, but, again, they are merely noted in passing and virtually no attempt is made to integrate or incorporate them into the text. Lum does, of course, defend his strategy by pointing out, among other things, the discrepancies that were evident when

earlier studies and his own fieldwork were compared and his initial inability to truly understand the religions he was observing, an inability he attributed to his "previous research" of the existing literature. (It should be noted here that the published works of native Trinidadians – many of whom are involved in the religions under discussion – are referred to, integrated in the work, and discussed.)

While I can certainly understand (to a degree) Lum's intention to "explicitly acknowledge" the worshipers' claims and comments "as being authentic accounts of reality" (p. 12), one must keep in mind that the "other," like the anthropologist, can be mistaken and may sometimes resort to exaggeration and hyperbole. Consider, for example, Lum's comments regarding the number of Spiritual Baptists on the island. Although he writes that there are no official estimates of this population, he does report the figures put forth by ranking members of the religion – 77,000, 90,000, and 200,000 (p. 36). On the basis of almost two years that I've spent in Trinidad researching African-derived religions, I feel that the first two estimates are exaggerations and the last totally implausible. Africans, the ethnic group from which the large majority of Spiritual Baptists are drawn, comprise approximately 40 percent of the population or about 400,000 people. The 200,000 figure would imply that approximately one-half of the African population of Trinidad was affiliated with the Spiritual Baptist church. Given the large number of Pentecostals, Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, etc., in Trinidad, this is clearly not possible. Two earlier estimates made by anthropologists – 10,000 (Houk 1995) and 11,000 (Glazier 1983) – are not mentioned.

This is not the only instance in which Lum has overlooked existing published work on the Orisha religion. On the question of the number of Orisha shrines on the island, he writes "I was aware of at least 24 orisha centres in Trinidad" (p. 102), but as I have noted, on the basis of fieldwork conducted about a year after Lum's, "During my stay in Trinidad, I visited 106 shrines and learned of the location of an additional fifty" (1995:147). While one could argue that these oversights are not egregious, I feel that they reflect Lum's rather negative assessment of the value of existing scholarly literature.

Setting aside my epistemological reservations, I should emphasize in all fairness, that Lum's primary focus here is the view that "insiders" hold of their religion. Given my familiarity with the subject matter, I would have to say that his fieldwork was outstanding and his ethnographic summaries excellent. His attention to detail and his sometimes intimate relationship with his contacts make for a fascinating account of African religious life in Trinidad. For example, Lum's culturally-rich analysis of spirit possession in the three primary groups discussed (the Spiritual Baptists, Orisha worshipers, and the Kabbalists) constitutes a significant contribution to the literature on this phenomenon. I would recommend the book for Caribbean specialists as well as those who have some interest in ritual possession.

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*Representations of Blackness and the Performance of Identities*. JEAN MUTEBA RAHIER (ed.). Westport CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1999. xxvi + 264 pp. (Cloth US\$ 65.00, Paper US\$ 24.95)

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In the introduction to this thought-provoking volume, editor Jean Muteba Rahier takes one step further the cardinal premise that "representations constitute, in part, the world in which we live," characterizing the essays that follow as focused on "the struggles of dominated people who ... challenge, manipulate, combat, negate, and sometimes invert representations of themselves that are reproduced in the dominant discourses of their national society and/or of the society in which they live" (p. xiv). The overarching theme unifying this diverse collection of essays about the Americas, Benin, and Spain and a variety of cultural materials and perspectives (ethnographic, sociological, ethnomusicological, literary) is that these representations, performed in various contexts, speak directly and specifically to identity politics of blackness at different points in time and space. The eleven essays are grouped into three vaguely defined sections: "Celebrations," "Social Arenas," and "African and Native-American Perspectives." A fair selection of informative photographs is included, and a single, combined bibliography at the end offers a valuable, updated guide to scholarship on the African diaspora.

Although the organizing principle laid out in the introduction might imply a dichotomous view of power relations (dominating/dominated), what the essays actually offer are multidimensional and cross-cultural readings on rep-

representations of blackness, in which rich historical information and fine-tuned sociological analyses preclude the creation of essentialist images.

Indeed, the most interesting contributions are those that clearly show the dialectics of self-representation – that is, those that trace how negative representations become the source for producing counter-representations or “oppositional representations of blackness” as “imagined and performed by black peoples” (pp. xiv-xv). This, I think, is the most powerful aspect of the collection.

Several scholars have been pondering the issues of representation of Self and Other in colonial and postcolonial contexts, but they usually have left me with a moralistic aftertaste. Not this collection. Although the essays address the social and life experiences of disenfranchised groups (mostly blacks), they show that their cultural maneuvers need not be disenfranchising as well. On the contrary. If disenfranchised groups are those subjected to political, economic, and social forces that they do not necessarily control, then in taking control of their own representations of identity these groups, as the essays show, cease being merely “victims” and turn into “subjects” – in Michel-Rolph Trouillot’s phrase, “voices aware of their vocality.”<sup>1</sup>

In elaborating the politics of identity at different locales, and in various situations and performative events, the essays enhance current discussions of structure vs. agency and of festive vs. everyday-life practices. Without dwelling on purely theoretical ruminations, these works do challenge current scholarship through their case studies. And even without an explicit, unifying analytical framework, they nonetheless succeed in suggesting an underlying unity of perspective in examining each and every case study.

Departing from the original sections, I find that four essays highlight particular historically-based, inter-group class, color, or gender configurations of black identity in festive contexts (Isidoro Moreno, Carole Boyce Davies, and Myrian Sepúlveda dos Santos) and popular culture and music (Peter Wade) that contest prevalent racial and/or nationalist orders. Two other articles reflect on the political economy of a variety of Afro-Creole ideologies. For example, Maryse Condé makes a compelling critique of the Creolization paradigm – specifically, the use and abuse of exoticizing imageries of *créolité* by two Martinican writers, pointing at the political limitations of what she aptly terms the “pyrotechnics of the text” (p. 95). From an ethnographic but equally persuasive perspective, Gina Ulysse examines the local politics of female representations of class and color in Jamaica as oscillating between the prudishness of uptown “ladies” and the exuberance of downtown and dancehall-type “women.” She painstakingly draws on various layers of experience, showing

1. “History, as social process, involves peoples in three distinct capacities: 1) as *agents*, or occupants of structural positions; 2) as *actors* in constant interface with a context; and 3) as *subjects*, that is, as voices aware of their vocality” (Trouillot 1995:23).

that the production of such representations emerges at the interface of social, economic, and political arenas.

The five other essays can be regrouped as a set dealing more explicitly with the dialogical construction of identity. For example, Percy C. Hintzen examines the ambiguities of West Indian identity in the United States vis-à-vis African-Americans. Controversial relationships between an imagined Africa and the dynamics of U.S. ethnic politics emerge in Ariana Hernandez-Reguant's analysis of the invention of Kwanzaa. Peter Sutherland explores the opposite phenomenon – Africans imagining the African diaspora in the newly created Whydah festival, a festival that shows a Nigerian revalorization of the slave trade. In both cases it is the myth about the Other (African, in the former case, and African-American, in the other) that feeds strategic representations of blackness on both sides of the Atlantic. Rahier tells about another myth, that of the white Other, as it is performed in Ecuador during *Semana Santa*, when Afro-Esmeraldians enact the character of the “demonic” Jew as a wild forest-dweller. Norman E. Whitten and Rachel Corr explore how “blacks” are symbolized in Native-American myths, discourse, and ritual, revealing that even phenotypic blackness has been historically constituted.

This edited volume is an exciting addition to recent works on the African diaspora that have taken the lessons and criticism of the Herskovitsean era to a new realm. Remarkably, what this scholarship has in common with performance studies within the discipline of folklore is that insider critics have contended with their respective paradigm's initial lack of historicity, or disregard of class, gender, race, or color relations of inequality. Although in the introduction Rahier does a fair job in presenting a general framework for the collection as well as in summarizing each chapter, he fails, unfortunately, to address more than obvious issues. For example, the introduction could have profited from a discussion of recent performance scholarship in folklore, more than from superficial allusions to Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-Francois Lyotard, especially since the title directly refers to performance. However, the contributions are rich enough to draw readers into exciting discussions of the cases presented. This book will be of interest to students of the African diaspora, the Caribbean, Latin America, popular culture, anthropology, black studies, and folklore.

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*Sinterklaasje, kom maar binnen zonder knecht.* LULU HELDER & SCOTTY GRAVENBERCH (eds.). Berchem, Belgium: EPO, 1998. 215 pp. (Paper NLG 39.90)

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The co-editors of this provocative volume, both students at the University of Utrecht of black Surinamer descent, are leaders of a campaign organized to protest the *Zwarte Piet* bogey-man figure in the Dutch *Sinterklaas* tradition – hence the title: “Come on in Santa, but without your servant.” The campaign adopted the slogan *Zwarte Piet is Zwart Verdriet* (“Black Piet is Black Sorrow”) and Helder has served as its main spokesperson over the years since its founding in the mid-1990s. Its supporters, who demand that *Piets* accompanying the Saint on his rounds be multi-colored, have organized small public demonstrations and engaged in debates in the print and electronic media. The book’s foreword is by Philomena Essed, a scholar at the University of Amsterdam’s Centre for Race and Ethnic Studies, whose writings in the 1980s and 1990s first laid out the main outlines of the public discussion in the Netherlands about racism against blacks, beginning with her widely read book *Alledaags racisme* (“everyday racism”). One of her main points, that a reputation for tolerance can be used as a shield to hide one’s racism, is the main theme in this volume. Comprised of contributions from more than a dozen individuals in the form of essays, short interviews, and poetry, the book poses two main questions. Is there good reason for the feeling of insult that *Piet* produces for some? And could the celebration be done in a way more acceptable to them? Essed and all of the other contributors offer a strong affirmative answer to both these questions.

In the introduction, Gravenberch presents a highly personal view, focusing on his emotional reaction to encounters surrounding his darker skin color and experiences with *Piet* from childhood on. The novelist Astrid Roemer’s essay recounting her agony as a parent with a harassed black child complements his story. Teun van Dijk, a scholar in the University of Amsterdam’s Department of General Literary Studies, presents the most focused treatment of whether *Piet* really represents racism. Drawing upon letters to the news media and surveys, he concludes that it does, but that the very subject is painful for the [white] Dutch because it threatens their national pride. Their positive self-image concerning racism is bolstered by several factors: the Netherlands has

officially observed a European Year Against Racism; it has both a National Bureau for Struggle Against Racial Discrimination (LBR) and a National Foundation seeking to find appropriate ways to repudiate the Dutch role in slavery; and it has shown little support for extremist nationalist electoral candidates. Lulu Helder presents the most detailed overview of the evolution of the tradition, placing it in the context of black stereotyping in Europe and the emergence of "scientific" racism with theories such as social Darwinism. For the sociologist Jan Nederveen Pieterse, the main implication of *Piet* that is beyond dispute concerns his inferior social status and servant role, rather than any suggestion of racism per se. On this point Waldo Heilbron's essay also sees a colonial-subject image to be obvious in the black-white relationship. Nederveen Pieterse contributes an especially insightful historical perspective for viewing this debate within the context of broader social and economic changes in the Netherlands, describing his society as "schizophrenic ... cosmopolitan and local, strongly globalized and culturally provincial" (p. 38). Hence, the virtual sanctity of *Piet* is in part a result of the fact that the *Sinterklaas* celebration is much more of a private, family celebration than it is a public display; it thus resists change just as attitudes about family have resisted change.

This volume provides a stimulating discussion and opens a small window into the Dutch experiencing of a type of culture clash that is now emergent in a number of European societies. A brief overview of the history of this debate in the Netherlands, in the Foreword or Introduction, would have been helpful for readers unfamiliar with this subject. Instead that outline must now be culled from the various chapters, which are themselves redundant on a number of themes. It would also have been helpful to readers to have a brief list of the contributors and their occupations or other grounding for their views. The authors do not provide a plan for how to bring about the type of multi-cultural solution to the dilemma they describe. In one of the interviews the journalist Anil Ramdas points out the complexities of the ethnic and religious differences hampering even basic communication between the various non-Dutch minorities. However, the new demographic trends may favor their quest anyway. The fabled duo may be challenged more as a truly multi-cultural society emerges – a society where even the black population is more diverse with the recent influx of over a hundred thousand refugees from several black African lands, where Islam is already a major second religion, and where it may therefore soon appear strange to privilege just whites and blacks in the central *Sinterklaas* celebration figures. The contributors to this volume have set very demanding standards for their society, appealing for the highest ideals of tolerance, rather than comparison with other world societies. It is somewhat ironic that mischievous *Zwarte Piet*, gifted with the power to reward and to punish, has in this case at least inspired a very healthy debate.

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*Diaspora and Visual Culture: Representing Africans and Jews*. NICHOLAS MIRZOEFF (ed.). London: Routledge, 2000. xiii + 263 pp. (Paper US\$ 24.99)

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Rooted in theories from cultural studies and drawing primarily on contributions from artists and academic art historians, *Diaspora and Visual Culture* offers innovative thinking on what and who is diaspora (or diasporic) as well as new ways of considering visual theory. Exploring diaspora as a dynamic and multifaceted identity or experience (sometimes space), the volume considers how it is expressed, formulated, and defined within and through art and visual cultures linked to peoples of African and Jewish descent. Addressing such questions as: "what are the varieties of diasporic visual images?," and "how and in which contexts does diaspora become configured and presented in art and by artists?," most of the authors avoid focusing on conventionally understood sites of diaspora such as music and religion. Instead, most look to visual culture, broadly conceived, and the manifestation of the (diasporic) self through and within it.

What also makes the volume unique is its use of diverse examples from Jewish and African contexts. Self-reflexive pieces from artists claiming a Jewish or African diasporic identity, art history pieces analyzing the visual images produced within these contexts, and more general theoretical pieces by Jewish and African diasporic theorists are what form the base of this volume. The Jewish and African connection, however, is not meant to engage ideas of a common experience around historical dispersal. Rather, analysis of the visual from these contexts helps interpret identity formation and construction(s) amidst sentiments and negotiations of belonging and becoming. As Mirzoeff contends in his introduction, diaspora is an interactive, dialogic *process*, marked particularly by tensions, contestations and/or negotiations among individuals, communities, and cultures.

Two chapters comprising the book's first part provide theoretical points of departure that emphasize diasporic identities and their expression as changing, multivocal, diverse, and non-linear. Stuart Hall's piece on Afro-Caribbean cultural identity and representation in part contends that diaspora identities are produced, reproduced, and lived through hybrid experiences and histories. Painter R.B. Kitaj's "Diasporist Manifesto" theorizes diaspora especially by centering the self and self-reflexivity, considering nomadism as a part of the diaspora experience and, like Hall, suggesting the tensions within that experience. He writes "my Diasporist painting . . . owes its greatest debt to [my] growing sense of myself of a Diasporist Jew" (p. 37). Seeing himself in perpetual exile from any possible "homeland," he states that while art was his sanctuary, diasporic art is necessarily contradictory and inconsistent.

The book's second part, "Diasporic Identity in the Nineteenth Century," addresses how various political trends, politicized categorizations, and public discourses surrounding race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and nationalism in the nineteenth century helped shape the development of specific visual and artistic forms and themes. Yet, although they are substantive individual pieces, these three chapters seem thinly connected both to one another and to some of the volume's opening theoretical assertions. They range from an exploration of artist Mary Edmonia Lewis's suppression of African American themes over Native American to help popularize her paintings, an examination of shifting themes of black Caribbean experience and Jewish experience in Camille Pissaro's paintings, to an analysis of anti-semitic, masculinist and homophobic ideologies within French representations emerging through the context of the Dreyfus Affair.

The third part, "Engendering Diaspora," begins with a chapter on the negotiation of homosexual identity. A profound piece that makes important claims about the meaning of diaspora and that offers significant possibilities for conceptualizing lesbians and gay men as dispersed and hybrid selves, its place in the larger work focused on Jewish and African contexts remains unclear to this reviewer. (At the very least it might have been better placed in the overall theoretical section.) The remaining four chapters are split evenly between African and Jewish contexts. Many of them explore the meaning of diaspora through the self, either through self-reflexive engagement about one's own experience and identity formations in various contexts or through interpreting notions of the self in the work of specific artists. Moyo Okediji's intriguing and especially impressive chapter explores how diaspora is a multi-layered experience by looking at two black women artists' self-portraits. For Okediji, self-portraits that purposefully examine and represent the self through a contemporary and historical Other reveal the many levels of distancing and negation one encounters beyond one's relation to Africa.

The final section, "Poland and Brazil," offers interesting and diverse accounts. The early twentieth-century examples from Poland touch upon how artistic symbols and images attempted to create a sense of belonging and modernity, while the two cases from Brazil partially address themes of Afro-Brazilian identities as hybridized and operating at multiple levels of consciousness while negotiating viewpoints and cultural forms from Africa, Europe, and Brazil.

Overall, this book is a much-needed appreciation for diaspora as an elusive, fragmented, constantly changing, and pervasive category and experience. Yet, the volume seems relevant not merely to scholars of diaspora studies or visual culture but also to those interested more generally in research on identities. Indeed, from the chapters it often is hard to grasp, theoretically, what would distinguish a diasporic identity from a "non-diasporic" one. As Allen Sinfield, referring to Claude Lévi-Strauss, says in his chapter, "it is quite hard to envisage a culture that is not hybrid ... *bricolage* is the vital process through which cultures extend themselves" (p. 101).

*Existential Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought.* LEWIS R. GORDON. New York: Routledge, 2000. xiii + 228 pp. (Paper US\$ 21.95)

*Caliban's Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy.* PAGET HENRY. New York: Routledge, 2000. xiii + 304 pp. (Paper US\$ 21.95)

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In the past decade, there has been a flurry of activity in the area of Africana philosophy. An outpouring of publications by such notable philosophers as Charles Mills, Lucius Outlaw, Naomi Zack, Tsenay Serequeberhan, Joy James, Kwame Gyekye, Sandra Harding, and others, has included a number of groundbreaking works that explore various dimensions of Africana philosophical expression. Lewis R. Gordon and Paget Henry make significant contributions to the burgeoning field with these two inaugural books in Routledge's "Africana Thought" series.

Gordon's *Existential Africana* probes the contours of Africana existential philosophy. Readers familiar with his work will note that most of its essays

were previously published. However, each one has been reworked and in some cases, significantly expanded. The effect is a critically aware, richly informed, and deeply impressive collection.

The book's first five chapters define the boundaries of an Africana philosophy of existence and interrogate historical and contemporary Africana existential philosophers and their projects. For Gordon, Africana thought is synonymous with what he terms "Caliban studies." In other words, anyone who takes the existential conditions and experiences of Africans and their descendants throughout the Diaspora as the point of departure for philosophical inquiry is necessarily "thinking through the periphery, the underside, the subaltern [which] could as well be characterized as 'Caliban studies'" (p. 3). But for Gordon, the point is not just to subvert the prospects and paradigms of Prospero's language. It is, more importantly, to raise "ironic self-reflective, metatheoretical questions" (p. 3). In this vein, Africana existential philosophy is a systematic codification of reflective, critical thought concerning the problems, contradictions, anxieties, and ambiguities confronting Africans and people of African descent as a result of the massive transactions of culture, capital, and commerce across the Atlantic. As such, it raises two interrelated problems: the "problematic existence and suffering" of Africans and people of African descent, and the uninterrogated primacy of the "traditional ontological claims" of European man (p. 8). Gordon's particular production of Africana existential philosophy has enough space to accommodate a diversity of thinkers – from Anna Julia Cooper to W.E.B. Du Bois and from Frantz Fanon to Sylvia Wynter.

Gordon next turns his attention to a critical medium for the presentation of Africana existential philosophy – the biography. Although this literary genre has tremendous possibilities for Africana philosophical expression, it is not without limitations. Gordon writes: "The biographical is almost mandatory fare in the order of blackness. The implication – insidious, patronizing, and yet so familiar and presumed – has achieved the force of an axiom: *White intellectuals provide theory; black intellectuals provide experience*" (p. 29). Gordon mines the rich field of African diasporic intellectual history in order to prove that the linear equation summed up in his axiom is a reductionist reading of Africana existential thought. Holding out the historic examples of David Walker, Maria Stewart, Frantz Fanon, and C.L.R. James and their contemporary heirs such as Joy James, Cornel West, and Leonard Harris, he opts for an "emancipation of ideas" (p. 40) that would open up wider horizons for understanding the theoretical dimensions of Africana existential thought as presented through the biographical medium.

Gordon next turns his attention to what can best be described as *doing* Africana existential philosophy. He produces three readings concerning existential dimensions in the thought of Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Naomi Zack. His presentation of Douglass as an Africana existentialist philo-

sophical resource is couched in Douglass's navigation and negotiation of slavery, struggle, and freedom. To exhume Douglass and investigate his philosophical legacy is, as Gordon poignantly remarks, to confront "a concrete challenge to existential thought" (p. 43). In the case of Du Bois – whose specter, like that of Frantz Fanon and Jean-Paul Sartre, haunts every page of the text – we are presented with a master technician of the art and science of Africana existential thought. Gordon's thick and generous re-reading places Du Bois at the crossroads of the themes of identity and liberation as manifested in his social scientific scholarship. Through such a reading, a critical space is opened up for "the hermeneutical considerations and the experiential considerations of looking at blacks from the *inside*" (p. 92). Naomi Zack's text, *Race and Mixed-Race*, presents the opportunity for Gordon to enact and critique the possibilities produced by his reading of Du Bois. His rigorous interrogation of Zack's work challenges the assumptions and existential impact of discourses that perform a Kierkegaardian leap from "raced" to "unraced" or "mix-raced" plateaus.

Before concluding with a reflective essay on the power and possibly of words, Gordon continues his existential odyssey through the worlds of black religious expression and the problematics of the nation-state. "Can Men Worship?" and "Recent Africana Religious Thought" explore various areas of black religious expression. The former concentrates on the gendered and embodied religious expression of African American men, while the latter highlights a recent strain in Africana religious thought focusing on identity and teleology as presented in the works of Josiah Young and Victor Anderson. In "Existential Borders of Anonymity and Superfluous Invisibility," Gordon theorizes the problematics of the nation-state in light of the massive movements of people, culture, and capital across national borders in our current moment. Here, Gordon argues, "There is an epistemology of closure and a dialectic of disappearance and extinction" (p. 154) for those grouped and identified by the technologies of race. His prescient observation is a critical reminder that a celebratory embrace of globalization must be severely qualified when taking into account the existential conditions of indigenous and racially marked populations.

Lewis Gordon begins his book by invoking Shakespeare's Caliban and the concept of "Caliban studies." Paget Henry extends this signification with his superb and rigorously argued *Caliban's Reason*. Although a sociologist by training, Henry's longstanding interest and aptitude in philosophy is evident in a text that promises to become a landmark in Afro-Diasporic intellectual history and Africana thought. In responding to Tim Hector's probing question, "Where is our philosophy?" (p. xi), *Caliban's Reason* is a nuanced critique that brings to light the original philosophical insights of some of the Caribbean's most challenging and intriguing thinkers, themes, and texts.

The book is divided into three sections, each brimming with original insight and provocative readings. After an introduction that contextualizes the significant markers of Afro-Caribbean philosophy, the first part establishes the historicist foundations of Afro-Caribbean philosophical thought. Henry acknowledges the African antecedents and residuals in the construction of Afro-Caribbean philosophy in particular and Africana thought in general. Then, by way of C.L.R. James, Frantz Fanon, and Wilson Harris, he explicates some of the critical themes and methods that characterize the historicist and poeticist schools of Afro-Caribbean philosophy. Through James, Henry explores "the links, or the lack thereof, between Afro-Caribbean historicism and African philosophy" (p. 48). In the more specific and contextualized study of Frantz Fanon, Henry provides an illuminating portrait of the Caribbean thinker battling the entrenched legacies of the European philosophical heritage. The goal of Fanon's project was the liberation of Afro-Caribbean philosophy from "the practices and institutions" of the European philosophical tradition along with "the misrepresentations of the [European] tradition that had been internalized" (p. 69). Through the literature and philosophical grounding of Wilson Harris, Henry is able to articulate "the way to a contemporary dialogue with traditional African philosophy" (p. 90). This articulation of Wilson's poeticist leanings encourages a rethinking of the historicist foundations of Afro-Caribbean philosophy so as to bridge it with the creative and mythopoetic influences in Africana thought.

The final two sections of the book present in-depth explorations of the major problems and possibilities of a renewed Afro-Caribbean philosophy. Harris's examination of the work of Sylvia Wynter suggests a rapprochement between Afro-Caribbean philosophy and poststructuralist and postcolonialist streams of thought. Although Henry's production of a strong dichotomy between historicism and poeticism in Afro-Caribbean philosophy may need further clarification (particularly with reference to C.L.R. James), he elegantly underscores the significant possibilities of "Wynter's more dialectical engagement" (p. 119) with these two positions. Taking off from an Afro-Caribbean philosophical tradition, Henry next probes the relationship between Afro-Caribbean and Afro-American philosophy while arguing for Caliban's visibility in the contemporary debates surrounding rationality in Western philosophy, with specific and sustained reference to Habermas's project of communicative action and Husserl's phenomenology. Chapters 8 and 9 revisit the historicist dimensions of Afro-Caribbean philosophy by examining Caribbean historicism as manifested in its Pan-Africanist and Marxist orientations. In Chapter 10, the culmination of this introductory project, Henry draws together the threads of his exploration – the divergence between Caribbean historicist and poeticist tendencies as presented in the thought patterns and streams of major twentieth-century Caribbean philosophers and philosophical traditions. He also presents a carefully nuanced argument for a "reconstructed historicism" (p. 250) that

draws on both the historicist and poeticist tendencies in Afro-Caribbean philosophy while making a critical linkage with residual African philosophical orientations. In attempting this heroic feat to "bridge" what Wilson Harris has termed "the gap between history and art" (p. 268), Henry seeks to create a critical space "to facilitate dialogues on topics such as differences in conceptions of the self, in approaches to objects of knowledge, and to praxis between these two schools" (p. 268). The need for internal unity in Afro-Caribbean philosophy can (and should) be continually argued. Nevertheless, Henry provides us with an extremely useful framework where any such debate should begin.

Henry's book is a remarkable initial exploration of a complex and contested philosophical terrain. Although, as Henry readily admits in his conclusion, *Caliban's Reason* is by no means exhaustive in its treatment of the subject, it very successfully presents a number of challenges, questions, and opportunities for further discussion and investigation. Coupled with Lewis Gordon's *Existential Africana*, it allows Routledge to inaugurate its *Africana Thought* series with two excellent additions to the rich and growing field of *Africana* philosophy.

*The Immaculate Invasion*. BOB SHACOCHIS. New York: Viking, 1999. xix + 408 pp. (Cloth US\$ 27.95)

*Upholding Democracy: The United States Military Campaign in Haiti, 1994-1997*. JOHN R. BALLARD. Westport CT: Praeger, 1998. xviii + 263 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95)

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*The Immaculate Invasion* and *Upholding Democracy* are two of the most recent analyses of the second U.S. military intervention in Haiti in the twentieth century. The first, which occurred in 1915 and ended after a nineteen-year occupation in 1934, was unilateral and had as its primary objective the substitution of U.S. for French and German dominance in Haiti. It was a bloody, repressive, and typically colonial occupation whose consequences are still very much in evidence today. Its most significant legacies were the cen-

tralization of political and economic power in the capital city of Port-au-Prince, and the creation of a modern and unified army that monopolized the use of violence and made it the strongest political force in Haiti.

Ironically, the military as an institution and as a power came to an end in 1994 as a by-product of the second U.S.-led intervention. In contrast to the first occupation, the second lasted only three years (1991-94). It was multi-lateral (because other foreign governments contributed forces to the operation under U.S. leadership), relatively peaceful, and typically neo-colonial (because it maintained U.S. dominance but without the United States having to install and directly control the government as it did in 1915). One of its primary objectives was to remove the Haitian military rulers from power and reinstate the democratically elected government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide which had been ousted in a *coup d'état* in 1991. The fact that the United States did not control the reinstated Aristide government directly made it possible for him to unilaterally abolish the Haitian armed forces despite U.S. objections.

The two books under review, however, do not analyze the second intervention from the standpoint summarized above. Both authors view U.S. policy toward Haiti more sympathetically than the above paragraphs would suggest, even though Shacochis's interpretation lends itself to a more critical reading of the intervention than Ballard's.

Shacochis is an independent journalist who went to Haiti when the U.S. troops entered the country. His book is mainly a descriptive, eyewitness account, and derives its title from the peaceful and unopposed nature of the intervention. Ballard is a professor of military history and strategy at the National Defense University who was assigned to the U.S. Atlantic Command staff in charge of operations in Haiti and went there with the multinational force that returned President Aristide to power in 1994. He draws his title directly from the ostensible reason for the intervention, baptized "Operation Uphold Democracy." His interpretation is partisan, but this does not mean that it is invalid.

Shacochis reveals some of the underlying strategies and objectives of the intervention through his observations about what the U.S.-led military forces did once they took control of the situation "on the ground" and his interviews with high-ranking and non-commissioned U.S. military officers. The intervention, conducted under the Clinton administration, lacked the full support of the Republican-controlled U.S. Congress and was carried out under the cloud of the botched U.S. intervention in Somalia in 1992 when U.S. soldiers killed many Somalis and lost several of their own in pursuit of strongman Mohammed Farah Aideed. As such, the Clinton administration was determined to avoid casualties among the forces in Haiti. It refused to allow them to subdue and fully disarm members of the defunct armed forces and the paramilitary terrorist organization known as the *Front pour l'Avancement et le*

*Progrès d'Haiti* (FRAPH—Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti), who opposed Aristide's return and threatened his new government.

This policy appeared to have been confusing – especially to the soldiers and lower-ranking officers in charge of implementing it – and was even contradictory to the intervention's stated objective of restoring stability and democracy in Haiti. But Shacochis shows that it had another, unstated purpose: to maintain an opposition to Aristide and prevent him from monopolizing the use of force and hence the political situation in Haiti. This explains why the United States, which had denounced the FRAPH and its leaders as thugs before the intervention, protected them and tried to portray them as a legitimate opposition after the intervention. One of the most important contributions of Shacochis's book is to show that the intervention, in addition to removing the military junta from power and reinstating Aristide as president, sought to contain him and prevent him and his popular supporters from seeking revenge against their enemies and pursuing a political agenda deemed unacceptable to the United States. Thus, although this may not have been Shacochis' intention, *The Immaculate Invasion* may be read as a critical commentary on the operation of a neo-colonial power in the post-cold war era.

Ballard makes many of the same points as Shacochis concerning the reluctance of the U.S. forces to pursue and disarm the former members of the armed forces and the FRAPH. He argues that the intervention had two principal goals – first, that it was aimed at creating a stable and secure environment for the return of President Aristide and the resumption of constitutional government (hence the naming of the intervention as “Operation Uphold Democracy”), and secondly, that it planned to withdraw U.S. troops as quickly as possible and transfer the policing and peacekeeping operations to a multinational United Nations force, albeit still under the command of a U.S. military officer. However, Ballard does not draw the same critical inferences as Shacochis about the other underlying purpose of a policy that appeased the enemies of democracy in the name of upholding it, namely to contain a president whom the United States distrusted. Moreover, contrary to Ballard's argument, one must also understand the intervention in Haiti as a U.S. intervention, despite the participation of other foreign forces and the eventual transfer to the United Nations of authority and control over the situation in Haiti.

Ballard contextualizes the 1994 U.S. intervention differently from Shacochis. The intervention, he argues, served a dual purpose for the U.S. military. On the one hand, it helped to correct errors in previous U.S. interventions in other parts of the world since World War II caused by the parochialism and rivalry among different services of the armed forces. On the other hand, it reinforced the value of close coordination among the different services under a unified military command for the successful implementation of their missions. Thus, one of the conclusions that could be drawn from his

analysis is that the second intervention in Haiti served to make the U.S. military more effective in the global projection of U.S. power.

Ballard explicitly rejects that interpretation, however. For him, the military option was the only alternative left after the other "elements" of U.S. power – primarily the embargo and the diplomatic initiatives – had failed to convince Raoul Cédras and the other joint leaders of the junta to step down and allow Aristide to return as president. Ballard does not ask *why* the diplomatic initiatives failed and hence does not investigate critically the duplicitous role of the United States in the negotiations between Aristide and the military junta. Such a critical analysis could have revealed that one of the underlying objectives of the United States (under the Bush and initially the Clinton administrations) was either to find a solution to the crisis that excluded Aristide altogether, or to get him to reach a compromise with the junta that would leave the latter's power unchallenged. Thus, contrary to Ballard's assertions, the diplomatic strategy failed largely because the United States wavered in its commitment to Aristide, which in turn emboldened the junta to defy all peaceful initiatives to remove them from power. (For an alternative interpretation of these events, see Dupuy 1997.)

Ballard further argues that the principal reasons for the military option were to eliminate the cause of the illegal migration of Haitians to the United States and to end the systematic violence of Haitians against Haitians by helping to create some degree of stability for the government and the resumption of the democratic process. No doubt these were important factors in the decision to intervene. But Ballard seems to suggest that the causes of these ills are largely internal to Haiti. Here, too, he fails to consider more critically the significant, if not determinant, part played by U.S. economic policies and its support for the dictatorships that have ruled Haiti since 1915.

Lastly, Ballard defines the success of "Operation Uphold Democracy" as reinstating constitutional government and establishing the conditions for the democratic transfer of power from one government to another. He rightly sees these steps as necessary pre-conditions for the economic and social reconstruction of the country. But he does not consider the simultaneous constraints that the United States and other external actors place on such democratically elected governments and hence on the ability of Haitians to decide on an agenda that responds to the interests of the majority. In short, Ballard does not question whether the type of democracy the United States envisioned for Haiti is one that would really empower the majority or, even more, the wealthy minority who hold the levers of the economy.

Despite these limitations, *Upholding Democracy* is a more comprehensive, historically informed analysis of the causes of the second U.S.-led intervention than *The Immaculate Invasion*. Both books offer valuable insights and extensive documentation on the decision to intervene, as well as the plan-

ning, execution, and character of the intervention. To that extent both make important contributions to the study of those events and U.S.-Haiti relations.

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DUPUY, ALEX, 1997. *Haiti in the New World Order: The Limits of the Democratic Revolution*. Boulder CO: Westview Press.

*Canadian-Caribbean Relations in Transition: Trade, Sustainable Development and Security*. JERRY HAAR & ANTHONY T. BRYAN (eds.). London: Macmillan, 1999. xxii + 255 pp. (Cloth US\$ 65.00)

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Most recent accounts of relations between Canada and the Commonwealth Caribbean have not felt it necessary to do much more than retrace a familiar and conventional portrait. This is described by Haar and Bryan in their preface to this volume in the following words:

The Caribbean remains the only developing area in which Canada, through an integrated set of policies, is capable of exerting significant influence, while Canada remains the most benevolent and reliable developed nation with whom the Commonwealth Caribbean interacts and continues to enjoy a special relationship. (pp. xiii-xiv)

Central to this relationship was the fact that Canada was not the United States. It did not come across to the Caribbean as excessively paternalist or interventionist, even less imperialistic. Canadian-Caribbean trade ties went back a long way and were given new impetus by the signing in 1986 of CARIBCAN – the Canada-CARICOM Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement; in addition, Canadian tourists loved the Caribbean and the Canadian government for many years devoted a large proportion of its foreign aid budget to the Commonwealth Caribbean via the multifold activities in the region of the Canadian International Development Agency. Support also extended during the 1980s to

the training and equipping of the military and police forces of the region. In short, the Canadian-Caribbean relationship was happy and benign, quintessentially the "special" relationship it was so frequently proclaimed to be on both its sides.

However, much of this has changed and it is these changes in the relationship as a whole and in its various dimensions which this edited volume sets out to analyze and assess. It emanates from a conference which was jointly sponsored by the Dante B. Fascell North-South Center of the University of Miami and the Institute for Business of the University of the West Indies and held in Port of Spain, Trinidad, in June 1994. Both editors work for the Center. The papers given at the conference have been updated for publication, although they appear to have been sent in to the editors around the end of 1996. There are barely any citations in the references dated later than this. Nevertheless, several new and important themes emerge from the various analyses which collectively suggest that, as the century neared its end, the Canadian-Caribbean relationship was nowhere near as "special" as it had been. No contributor asks if it had really ever been particularly special, which is a pity. The general deterioration in relations is deemed to have derived principally from Canada's reorientation of its foreign and development policy towards Latin America as a whole, symbolized most dramatically by its negotiation of and subsequent accession to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) during the early 1990s. Certainly CARIBCAN has not brought about the expected improvements in Canadian-Caribbean trade relations. A good chapter by Sahadeo Basdeo shows that not only have the trade flows remained small and generally insignificant, but that lately this trade has declined relative to that of the European Union and Japan over the same period. None of this, of course, is to go so far as to argue that the relationship as a whole has disappeared. There is still a lot of contact and cooperation in all sorts of areas, not to mention the presence of a 140,000 strong Caribbean community resident in Canada, mainly in Toronto. But all contributors are agreed that the Commonwealth Caribbean now bulks much smaller in official Canadian perceptions than it did not so long ago and that, by implication at least, Caribbean actors, perhaps excessively imbued still with a nostalgic view of Canadian possibilities, need to wake up to some of the harsher geo-economic realities of the post-cold-war world.

This Haar and Bryan collection gets this broad message across. It is the first book (to my knowledge) published on Canadian-Caribbean relations since Tennyson's 1990 collection (which, in any case, was published by the University College of Nova Scotia and was never widely available or read). As is often the case with edited volumes, the quality of the chapters varies considerably. The most authoritative, in my view at least, are those by Jennifer Hosten-Craig, Ivelaw Griffith, Hal Klepak, Harold Robertson and, as mentioned, Basdeo; the weakest those by Patricia Lane and M.C. Ircha, the

former including (even in its title) one of the more absurd acronyms of our time, namely the Test of Common Sense (TOCS)! The editors might also usefully have imposed a tighter regime on their contributors, because there is a lot of overlap and repetition between the chapters. Nevertheless, the book is unquestionably useful and will be footnoted every time there is need of a citation to contemporary Canadian-Caribbean relations.

*Conquering Nature: The Environmental Legacy of Socialism in Cuba.* SERGIO DÍAZ-BRIQUETS & JORGE PÉREZ-LÓPEZ. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2000. xiii + 328 pp. (Cloth US\$ 50.00, Paper US\$ 22.95)

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The objective of *Conquering Nature* is “to provide an overview of ... Cuba under socialism, highlighting ... the most obvious environmental issues” (p. xii). Pérez-López, an economist, and Díaz-Briquets, a demographer, are both based in Washington DC. Each has published a good deal about Cuba, and though neither is an environmental specialist, they have pulled together a good deal of useful information, most based on observations made by other researchers. As with everything else written in and about postrevolutionary Cuba, environmental discussions by both pro- and anti-Cuban sources are ideologically tainted, and, in weighing often contradictory claims, the authors seem to have succeeded in their goal to “avoid extremes” (p. 3).

The book has ten chapters – three background essays followed by those dealing with agriculture, water, forestry, industry, and nuclear energy, with the last two covering the postrevolutionary environmental neglect of Havana and then the “special period” of the 1990s after the collapse of Soviet communism. The prose is clear and unexciting with repetitious reminders to the reader about what appeared several chapters earlier or what will come later. There are tables and a few fairly useful small-scale maps of Cuba. At times, the study has the flavor of a consultant’s report. Chapter 8 is almost entirely devoted to the partial construction of a nuclear power plant at Juraguá on the southern coast which has never begun to operate; this discussion is embellished with extraneous information about Eastern European nuclear reactors,

and it inaccurately dates (twice) the Chernobyl meltdown as 1984 rather than 1986.

The book's overall theme is that, especially in the 1960s, revolutionary Cuba "eagerly embraced" (p. 2) socialist claims and then adopted policies for Cuba to show that nature could be transformed without the environmental deterioration that capitalism had produced. More often than not, however, the opposite has occurred, with serious environmental conditions later appearing in both rural and urban areas. The main reason has been inflexible top down planning, with prescribed goals and procedures of the state embodied by those leading production areas or units outweighing local environmental knowledge. A worrisome example is the heavy use of pesticides and herbicides, a prescribed tenet of capital-intensive central planning; by 1989 these inputs included several chemicals harmful to human health and banned elsewhere in the world which also created deleterious local changes in soil chemistry (pp. 104-5.) This islandwide problem was exemplified clearly at local levels; even if workers saw no crop infestation, they applied heavy doses of pesticides "because that's what the central planners had decreed" (p. 251).

Cubans themselves acknowledge some of these environmental problems, and in a few cases officials have not hesitated to extend "the blame for many of the country's most serious environmental concerns to the Soviet Union" (p. 10). For example, the most obvious instances of air pollution exist in Havana where the well-known dearth of vehicular traffic is still responsible for foul exhaust and associated respiratory hazards. In particular, the fuel inefficient buses from Eastern Europe which have since stopped running owing to a lack of spare parts had no pollution reduction devices. And Fidel himself decried the presence of Havana's Hungarian buses that used a gallon of fuel to travel six kilometers; in 1990 he condemned these vehicles that "fill the city with smog ...(and) ... poison everybody" (p. 198).

In several places the authors point out that Cuba was seriously damaged environmentally prior to the Revolution and that we have no way of knowing what might have occurred without it. Of course a staple of Caribbean ecological history is the rampant deforestation and burning of much of the island in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to make way for sugar cane. And one of the few environmental bright spots for postrevolutionary Cuba is the limited success of reforestation resulting in a greater area forested in 1989 than in 1959 (pp. 153-54). Yet even this hopeful sign may now be an anachronism because the special period has tended to throw the Cuban populace back on local resources, exemplified by, among other environmental stresses, widespread charcoal burning.

The last two chapters, based on very recent first-hand observations, are the most revealing. The description of the deterioration of Havana's water and sewage systems makes for depressing reading. Similarly, Havana Bay "is among the most polluted bodies of water in the world" (p. 239). In the special

period of the 1990s, the Cuban government, desperate for hard currency from tourism, has developed too quickly unspoiled areas with serious consequences. Among other problems, a series of stone embankments (*pedraplenes*) now allow access to some of the small cays off Cuba's northern coast, yet these structures block water flow and have thereby ruined formerly extensive fish, fowl, and flamingo habitats (pp. 264-65). The authors conclude *Conquering Nature* with brief remarks about Cuba's "environmental tomorrow" (p. 280). One hopes it will be better than either today or yesterday.

*Na'na Kali'na: Une histoire des Kali'na en Guyane.* GÉRARD COLLOMB & FÉLIX TIOUKA. Petit Bourg, Guadeloupe: Ibis Rouge Editions, 2000. 145 pp. (Paper 164 FF)

*Indigenous Peoples, Land Rights and Mining in the Upper Mazaruni.* UPPER MAZARUNI AMERINDIAN DISTRICT COUNCIL, AMERINDIAN PEOPLES ASSOCIATION OF GUYANA, FOREST PEOPLES PROGRAMME. Nijmegen, Netherlands: Global Law Association, 2000. 132 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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These two works share an important feature – the participation of indigenous persons in their production. There can be little doubt that anthropology has been faced with an ever more pressing need to adequately represent the contributions and presence of indigenous people in its ethnographic texts. At the same time academic ethnography is not necessarily the best the vehicle for the kind of presentations that appear in these volumes. In this way they may be seen as an important complement and extension to the existing ethnographic works on the Karinya and other Carib-speaking peoples in the Guianas.

*Na'na Kali'na* is a superb visual and textual account of Karinya history in French Guiana (Guyane) and the authors are to be congratulated for realizing a work that is both informative for specialists and accessible to general readers, including native people themselves. The book is divided into a series of chapters that narrate discrete junctures in Karinya history with regard to the coming of the Europeans. These discrete junctures – the first arrival of the Europeans, the establishment of colonies, a "re-foundation" or relocation of

the Karinya as a result of these events, the interactions with colonial authorities designed for administering the native population, and the current situation of the Karinya – are presented via a combination of Karinya oral narratives and the use of colonial records.

Particularly notable and informative for specialists is the array of images of the Karinya through time that accompany the text. The inclusion of visual materials from the colonial records and Karinya self-representations produces a highly illuminating dialog within the text of the book itself, with external descriptions clashing against internal representations to give the overall effect of revealing a distinct Karinya historiography. This is a most valuable and pertinent exercise as our knowledge of the external ethnohistory of the Karinya is far greater than our appreciation of the forms and functions of Karinya historiography itself.

For example, Chapter 2 is concerned with the consequences of initial contacts between the Europeans and the Karinya. As is probably already appreciated by many readers of the *NWIG*, the Karinya, as “Caribs,” were considered by the European colonial sources to be the very incarnation of the “savagely cannibal,” the word itself deriving from this ethnonym. In this context it is fascinating to learn of the Karinyas’ representation of Europeans as monstrous cannibals, covered with mouths that threaten to eat up the native people. This figure, *Pailanti’po*, is said to resemble a young white man with gaping hungry mouths on his back and chest. It is therefore doubly ironic that the idea of a purely European origin to such “men-with-heads-in-their-chests,” which appear in a number of early accounts of America, has been a central plank in scholarly arguments concerning the inability of early observers to discriminate native realities from their own fantastic projections. It would seem that early observers were accurate, if hermeneutically confused, in their reports regarding such “monstrous races” in native thought. Even though the Karinya battled this monster with arrows and clubs, his blood merely gave rise to new ferocious creatures. The image nicely suggests the persistence and apparently inexhaustible rapacity of colonialism in this region. In other accounts, *Pailanti’po*’s exclusive identification with the whites is more uncertain and his gender is likewise ambiguous. However, this need not be taken as showing the undeveloped or contradictory state of Karinya historiography, but rather its flexibility, complexity, and evolving nature. In other words the meanings of historical metaphors can no more be fixed in a timeless structural analysis than can the meanings of myth and symbol, of which such historiography makes use.

The use of images in this volume is impressive. A number of illustrations are reproduced in full color and thereby do justice to the visual vivacity of Karinya material culture, particularly hammock decoration. Color photography seems also appropriate for fully expressing the contemporaneity of Karinya culture. Black and white photography, the form of museological recording, tends to pro-

duce a vision of a culture already fixed, classified, and known; the color in this work firmly underscores the continuation of Karinya culture in the present day. The authors and their collaborators, Jean Apollinaire and Odile Renault-Lescure, have also recovered little-known images of the Karinya, in the form of drawings, engravings, and prints, as well as photography from the early twentieth century. The effect is to remind us that such images are important historical texts in their own right – not merely a decorative aspect to the written word.

The volume on mining and land rights in the Mazaruni River, Guyana is less concerned with the nature of Amerindian cultures of the region per se than with their survival in the face of mining developments of the last decade or so. It represents a collaborative effort between the political representatives of some of the Akawaio and Arecuna communities of the Mazaruni River and the Forest Peoples Programme, an NGO based in the United Kingdom. The work also has the endorsement of the Rainforest Foundation in the United States. It therefore offers a detailed and credible account of the current political issues that face the Akawaio and Arecuna in the upper Mazaruni, but is probably not of interest to a more general reader. However, the work places the Akawaio and Arecuna within a global context of mining, legal rights, and development and in this way is a most useful document of record. There is also a fair amount of legal analysis of the various provisions in the Guyanese legal code for the regulation of Amerindian communities and the extractive industries now present in Guyana, and this is most usefully contrasted with examples of legal provisions from elsewhere, particularly Canada.

The work is therefore an important document to assist in the struggle of these native communities for recognition of the exploitation that is produced by the mining activities. This is exploitation, not simply of Amerindian labor, but also of the environment which is thereby damaged. And the consequences of environmental damage are not just ecological, but human as well, as contempt for the habitat moves easily into a disregard for native land rights. Whether a volume like this can achieve its aims is a different matter, but experience has shown, as this volume itself points out, that external interest in the plight of native communities may yet produce real benefits and changes in the policy of governments.

It is to be hoped that this work indeed has that effect.

*Dread Talk: The Language of Rastafari.* VELMA POLLARD. Kingston: Canoe Press; Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. Revised edition, 2000. xv + 117 pp. (Paper n.p.)

*"Broken English": The Creole Language of Carriacou.* RONALD F. KEPHART. New York: Peter Lang, 2000. xvi + 203 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

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These books are being reviewed together more because the *NWIG* editors found the same reviewer for both than because they deal with similar topics. *Dread Talk* is about a counterlanguage, a modified extension of Jamaican Patois/Patwa (JP) that serves as a "we-code" to its Rastafari speakers. It was not intended to present an analysis of a self-contained structural system in the way that *Broken English* was. Below, I review them separately without any comparisons.

*Dread Talk* is a revised edition of a book that Pollard published in 1994 under the same title. The improvements must have been minimal, since the present edition has left this particular reader with the impression that the author hurriedly put together, in nearly their original article forms, papers that largely repeat each other. With a few exceptions, such as when one repetition improves (without cross-reference) an explanation presented in an earlier chapter or when better examples are given in a later chapter, one could close the book after the third chapter. The examples are also inconsistently represented, primarily in phonemic spelling (e.g., /airi/ on p. 13) in Chapters 1 and 3 and parts of Chapter 2, but in eye dialect (a modification of standard English spelling) in the other chapters (e.g., *irie*, *irey*, *ire* on p. 47). It is not always easy to tell nasalization (such as when *don't/don'* is represented as *duo* on p. 37), nor long vowels from short ones (when the digraph *aa* is used both for the long /a:/ in *gyaadn* 'garden' and the short /a/ of *pon*, from *upon*, represented as *paa* on p. 36). This representation problem stems from the fact that, surprisingly, Pollard prefers to cite data from sources other than her own field records, after such a long-term research on the subject matter! In fact she does not talk about her field research.

These problems are a real pity, because the book is a gold mine about "Rasta Patois" (p. 99), identified here as "Dread Talk" (DT, a name which one of my informants this summer did not know), but also known as *I-tally*, *I-*

*ance*, and *Iyaric* (p. 69). It is not clear whether these terms are community-based. In any case, DT is an instance of a language variety deliberately formed by a group (the Rastafari also known as Rastas) toward which members of the mainstream population, especially their elite, have ambivalent attitudes. It is a "language" of protest against what Rastas see in English (the lexifier of Jamaican Patwa [JP]) as an extension of colonialism, European supremacy (p. 83), and oppression.

The variety is also evidence both of a consciousness that Rastas have been keen to raise about their society and of the exclusive nature of some of their communication. Common words are used with different interpretations, such as *bald head* "non-believer of the dread culture") and *Babylon* "any of the established power institutions considered wicked." Words which by the Rastafari folk analysis are considered negative, oppressive, or inaccurate expressions of particular meanings are partly changed. For instance, *understand* is modified to *overstand*, and *appreciate* (in which *-ate* is interpreted as *hate* pronounced without *h*, a common feature of JP) is modified into *apprecilove*. With the *op-* of *oppress* identified as *up* (pronounced əp] in JP) and *press* literally as "exert force on someone or something," the verb has been replaced with *downpress* (p. 102), in order to make its meaning more transparent.

There is clear determination to make the language more transparent where this helps the Rastafari ideology, but the analyses, which are perhaps a good illustration of the distinction between morphology (which is synchronic) and etymology (which is diachronic), seem to work in defiance of facts about the development of English. The verb *dedicate* is surprisingly analyzed as *dead* + *icate* and replaced with *livicate* (<*live/life* + *icate* [p. 103]). Although Pollard does not discuss these word-formations from this particular perspective, she shows that these modifications are to some extent rule-governed. For instance, there is a sequential constraint that blocks *lovepreciate* in favor of *apprecilove* (p. 105).

A negative attitude toward cigarettes (analyzed as *see* + *garette*) has likewise produced *blindgarette* (pronounced [blaindʒaret]). Noteworthy in all these productions is the fact that they are made possible by the phonology of JP, which Rastas want to liberate from oppression. Pollard also claims that this latter word-formation category, intended to make words semantically more transparent, is the most productive (p. 49), but this is supported neither by her illustrations nor by her discussions. Category 1, which includes common words with new interpretations, and Category 3, including words in which /ai/ is substituted for the first syllable or vowel of a word, are more extensively illustrated. The latter category includes *idren* (< *children*?) "friend", *inana* (< *banana*), *irate* (< *create*), and *ises* (< *praises*). It is, however, not clear what *irie/irey/ire* "all right, truth" (among other meanings) is from. It might be an affective substitute for *all right* itself (pronounced [arait])

in JP, but only experts of DT can answer this question conclusively.) Nor is it clear what principle is at work in words such as in *yook* (< *jook*) "prick," or *yudd/yude/yudde* (< *food*). For a person not familiar with DT, the problem is compounded by the fact that Pollard does not give the pronunciation of these words.

Aside from all the above, DT has also innovated some new words from scratch, such as *deader/deadahs/deddas* "meat" (apparently based on the adjective *dead*, which functions also as a verb) and *freenana* "banana." Surprisingly, *red stripe* "police(man)" is in none of Pollard's lists in *Dread Talk*. Nor does the book contain any discussion of the semantics of *Rasta*, *Rastafarian*, and *Rastafari*. The term *Rasta man* is completely absent from the author's discussions.

In other respects, Pollard reports that DT has spread among Rastas in other Caribbean islands such as Barbados and St. Lucia. In the latter it has even been enriched with borrowings from French (creole) such as *wassin* (< French *racine*) "roots" and *sa te* (from French *sa terre* "this earth") with the idiomatic meaning of "roots." The spread reflects a receptive response to Rastafari philosophy, which is largely propagated through Reggae music, whose lyrics are composed in JP. It is allegedly also widely spoken among the Jamaican youth.

DT has no grammar of its own that is different from that of JP. The most conspicuous divergence from it lies in the avoidance of the pronoun *me* [mi], because it is considered an expression of servile "subservience" and "self-degradation" (p. 11), given the accusative form of its etymon. Instead, a pronominal form *I* [ai] or *I an I* (with the reflexive *Iself* or *I an Iself*) – which is also used for second and third persons – is used in subject and object functions alike. Everybody supposedly represents *Jah* "God" and should be referred to, or addressed, with *I* or *I an I*. The final *-i* of the original name *Ras Tafari* of the late Emperor Haile Selassie (worshiped as "Lion King" or "King of kings") is also interpreted as the same first person pronoun, hence the pronunciation [rastafarai] for the full name of the Rasta movement.

Turning now to the second book, Ronald Kephart's intention is "to provide a portrait of the Creole English spoken on the island of Carriacou" (p. 1), "focus[ing] on those local speech patterns that seem to form a coherent system" (p. 2). I do not know that any language has a "coherent system." Every spoken language is subject to ad-hoc adjustments (similar to exaptations in biology) during its usage and it evolves through such adjustments in an uncoordinated way.

Kephart's project developed from teaching English as a Peace Corps Volunteer on Carriacou. He thus found it more practical to collect his data primarily from school-age children. Users of this book should thus beware that, although the grammar presented in it undoubtedly captures adult competence too, it has this inherent limitation, compounded by the disadvantage

of being pioneer work and not having previous studies of the language. In any case, I am impressed by the "portrait" that he has produced under these specific research conditions.

Though undoubtedly related to other Caribbean English creoles, the structure of Carriacou Creole English (CCE) Kephart presents also reminds me of Gullah, especially in having *ain* as a verb phrase negator, the verbal suffix *-in* as an alternative way of expressing the durative aspect, *doz*, as a habitual marker (the Gullah marker is pronounced [dɔz]), and an indefinite article *a*. However, it has neither schwa nor the vowel /æ/, and its definite article is pronounced [di], as in JP. These peculiarities make it intermediate between Caribbean creoles and Gullah from the point of view of restructuring from its colonial lexifier.

The Grenadine island of Carriacou was first colonized by the French in the seventeenth century. The English took it over toward the end of the eighteenth century, when a creole French must have developed already – and this is still spoken today mostly by the older population. It is not clear whether this situation is similar to that of Trinidad, where creole French (CF) survived as long as its speakers remained isolated in the mountains, or to those of Dominica and St. Lucia where CF is still spoken. Perhaps the situation is more similar on all four islands than I imagine! Kephart says nothing about this (understandably, as his book is not a comparative one). But he shows that CCE has been influenced by CF, as evidenced by the question tag *wi* (< French *oui* "yes"), the constructions *i av* (lit.: "it has" < French pattern of *il y a* "there is"), the subjectless construction *meikin hat* (< French *il fait chaud* "it is hot"), and words such as *soley* "bigeye fish" (< French *soleil* "sun") and *lajables* "witch" (< French *la diablesse*, feminine of *le diable* "devil").

English Creole was allegedly brought to Carriacou during the second half of the eighteenth century, from elsewhere in the Caribbean, in a form that is more akin to what is attested in Jamaica and Guyana, based on what Kephart's older informants say CCE used to sound like (p. 27). Based on the monogenetic position he espouses (pp. 20-21), which assumes a pidgin ancestor for Caribbean English creoles, CCE would have lost some of its basilectal features locally, under ethnographic conditions that he unfortunately does not articulate. The history of Carriacou suggests that it may have developed like Guyanese, another second-generation creole, which actually became more basilectal, due to massive importation of slave labor from Africa during precisely the same eighteenth century of the economic development of the colony under British rule. Kephart does not discuss the possibility that the present speech continuum has obtained since the introduction of English varieties (including Creole) to the island. It seems that the topographic ecology of Carriacou, with the lowland being mostly coastal, would have favored a heterogeneous economic development in which sugar cane cultivation would have claimed part of the labor, although this was the majority of the non-

European population. Patterns of interaction between Europeans and non-Europeans would have varied from the beginning, which would have produced a speech continuum.

The description of CCE's structures is generally acceptable, especially since it is presented in a theory-neutral but informed way. The book also includes some texts (pp. 111-56), a glossary (pp. 165-200), and a token index (pp. 201-3). It is certainly a good starting point for whoever is interested in learning about CCE.

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THE FAMILY TREE IS NOT CUT:  
MARRIAGE AMONG SLAVES IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY  
PUERTO RICO

A people without the knowledge  
of their past history, origin and  
culture is like a tree without  
roots.

Marcus Garvey

The frequency and nature of slave marriages in Puerto Rico has long been a subject of controversy. Scholars including Luis Díaz Soler (1953:174) affirm that marriages were not only common but, more importantly, that owners, along with religious and civil authorities, encouraged marriage and family life among slaves throughout the colonial period. This served as a means of increasing the number of enslaved laborers on the island without having to rely on the introduction of African slaves. Using nineteenth-century census records and other archival sources, James Wessman (1980:288), James L. Dietz (1986:39), and Pedro San Miguel (1988:86) have refuted notions that civil and religious authorities alike sought to promote slave marriages. These same scholars have also cast doubt on the actual number of formal unions that occurred. Since then, the assumption has been that marriage among slaves in this Caribbean island was not common and that slaves were unable to establish links of association or ties of kinship either within the structure of the dominant society or outside of it. Unlike other areas of Latin America, many documents in Puerto Rico relating to the first centuries of Spanish colonization have disappeared (Silvestrini & de Castro Arroyo 1981:157), making it difficult to assess these dimensions of slave life.<sup>1</sup> Because of the scarcity of primary sources from the colonial period, slaves have often been perceived as a people without a reconstructable past.

1. The deficiency of primary sources for the study of Puerto Rico's colonial period is the result of various events. "Archives of the jurisdictional office of Puerto Rico at the Audiencia de Santo Domingo were lost, the city of San Juan was burned by the Dutch in 1625, [and] the Archivo Histórico suffered a fire in 1929" (Silvestrini & de Castro Arroyo:157).

The use of a method known as family reconstitution is the key to filling this gap in our understanding of colonial Puerto Rico. Family reconstitution, which is based mostly on parish registers, consists of two stages (Knodel 1988:3). The first involves linking together births (baptisms), marriages, and deaths (burials) to form family groups consisting of a married couple and their children. The second stage entails computing measures of demographic behavior, such as birth and death rates. However, the family reconstitution I have used is limited to the first stage and is not the classic form developed by Louis Henry, *et al.*<sup>2</sup> I use parish baptismal, marriage, and death registers surviving from the agriculturally and geographically diverse island communities of Arecibo (1708-57), Caguas (1731-1804), Coamo (1755-1800), and Yauco (1751-90) to reconstruct the vital statistics of individual slaves, their families, and their owners over several generations. In order to follow slaves, their families, and their owners, who may have moved to communities adjacent to ones selected for this study, I consulted, whenever possible, surviving parish registers from bordering communities.<sup>3</sup> In this way, I was able to document 237 marriages in which one or both spouses is a slave. With this information, I will discuss the frequency of slave marriage in the eighteenth-century communities to determine whether it was higher than in the nineteenth-century communities examined by Wessman and San Miguel, or by Dietz. The data set that I compiled also enabled me to ascertain with whom, at what age, and at what times of the year slaves most frequently married. These data will allow me to demonstrate that marriage among slaves was not uncommon and that they had a family history – a reconstructable past – much like the rest of society.

This article is divided into several parts. My strategy is to provide first a historical framework for understanding economic conditions that shaped the island's slavery, then to examine slavery within the context of the work regi-

2. My use of family reconstitution and genealogy as a tool for social history is based upon the recent work of Fernando Picó.

3. I have reconstituted the oldest marriage and death registers (1750-84) for La Tuna, known as Isabela, a community located on the island's north coast, and east of Arecibo. Additionally, I have reconstituted the oldest baptismal (1763-98), marriage (1771-1800), and death (1764-1800) registers for Río Piedras as well as the oldest baptismal and marriage registers (1773-1810) for Santurce. Both of these communities are located in the vicinity of San Juan, and north of Caguas. Furthermore, I have also reconstituted the oldest marriage and death registers for both Juana Díaz (1787-1805) and Cayey (1776-1800), in addition to the oldest death register for Guayama (1746-81). Once part of Coamo, these communities now border Coamo on its eastern and western flanks, respectively. Finally, I have reconstituted San Germán's oldest marriage (1759-74) and death (1762-74) registers. This community borders Yauco on its western flank. The inclusion of material obtained from surviving parish registers in bordering communities allowed me to create a much more complete and statistically significant database than is typically possible employing the standard techniques of family reconstitution.

mens and material conditions of life associated with Puerto Rico's eighteenth-century agricultural economy. I continue with a brief overview of the religious context and social implications of marriage among slaves. Then, I will look at the examples of Pedro and Francisca and Lázaro and Agustina, two slave couples married in the southern coastal community of Coamo on December 29, 1793, in order to provide greater insight into spousal selection patterns as well as the impact of the liturgical and the agricultural calendars upon the seasonality of slave marriage.<sup>4</sup> Finally, I will explore the ways in which slaves pursued marital strategies in order that they might manipulate material conditions of life within the constraints of slavery. Many slaves in Puerto Rico during the eighteenth century not only asserted their humanity by marrying but also created viable patterns of family life that we can reconstruct.

#### THE AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY IN PUERTO RICO, 1508-1800

The institution of slavery in the Caribbean was shaped by unique cultural and economic forces. Some Spanish colonies including Puerto Rico experienced an initial cycle of sugar and slavery that began in the 1540s. The Spanish Crown encouraged the rise of sugar cultivation through grants and loans, and the production of this commodity was initially lucrative. However, sugar production in Puerto Rico declined following the attack on and subsequent brief occupation of San Juan in the summer of 1598 by an English fleet under the command of the third Earl of Cumberland. All ginger, hides, and sugar in the city and surrounding countryside were seized as booty. Cumberland made off with 2,000 slaves and 200,000 pounds of sugar, and Puerto Rico's agricultural economy never recovered. In the year 1600, several years after the attack, the Spanish Crown ordered that monies be distributed among the island's sugar mill owners and that 200 African slaves be introduced on the island as a compensation for the losses sustained (Moscoso 1999:75). However, these concessions were not immediately implemented. This, along with restrictive trade policies associated with mercantilism, such as those requiring all Spanish colonies to trade exclusively with Seville using Spanish ships and merchants, limited opportunities for legal trade and was disastrous for the island's sugar industry.

Spanish mercantilist policies fostered an increase in smuggling by British, Dutch, and French traders and, even more harmful for Spanish trade, in piracy. This occurred precisely at the same time that production of sugar began in the non-Hispanic Caribbean during the 1630s and 1640s. As a result, the focus of Puerto Rico's agricultural economy was gradually transformed

4. Archivo Parroquial San Blas de Coamo (APSB), Primer libro de matrimonios: 1778-98, folios 150-50v.

from one based on the produce of sugar plantations to one based on cattle ranching and the production of foodstuffs. For nearly a century, beginning around 1675, these pursuits, together with the export of hides, dyewoods and hardwoods, along with the cultivation of tobacco and cotton became the island's principal economic activities (Moscoso 1999:98-100).

If we look at the geography of the Caribbean economy from 1675 to 1765, two distinct zones emerge. The first consists of the plantation zones, or sugar islands, of the non-Hispanic Caribbean; the second comprises the provider colonies of the Spanish Caribbean including Puerto Rico. The provider colonies supplied draft animals and foodstuffs for slaves needed to support sugar production elsewhere, as described by Picó (1986:94), González Vales (1990:120), and Giusti Cordero (1993:6 and 22). With few legal outlets for their goods, planters and ranchers throughout the island were increasingly drawn into the complex web of intra-Caribbean contraband trade. In effect, there were two Puerto Rican economies: legal and illegal. Legal trade with Spain or Spanish colonies was practically non-existent, a fact that has led some scholars such as López Cantos (1975:93 and 127) and more recently Padilla (1985:108) to conclude that the island's economic development reached its nadir at this time. Notwithstanding, an illegal trade thrived. Livestock, dyewoods and timber, and foodstuffs were exchanged with adjacent islands in the non-Hispanic Caribbean for clothing, iron tools, and slaves.

After 1765, Puerto Rican agriculture entered a period of rapid expansion. This resulted from the easing of trade restrictions, the liberalization of the slave trade, and the influx of monies earmarked for the construction of military fortifications in San Juan (Bergad 1983:4-12). These factors were instrumental in laying the foundation for the subsequent rise of labor-intensive export agriculture, especially sugar. Through the dawn of the nineteenth century, Puerto Rico's agricultural economy had required few slaves, causing sugar planters and slavery to be relegated to a largely peripheral role in the island's predominantly rural economy. Yet as sugar production came to dominate the agricultural landscape, especially between 1820 and 1845, the institution of slavery on the island was again transformed, since the production of this commodity came to occupy a prominent role in the agricultural economy.

#### SLAVERY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PUERTO RICO

Scholars, including Higman (1984:362, 374, and 396) and Bush (1990:37), have demonstrated that slaves' chances of survival were better when and where sugar production was not the principal economic activity. Thus, better treatment of slaves and more stable family structures than those of the nineteenth century probably prevailed among slave populations in Puerto Rico for nearly a century, beginning around 1675. In these years, the island entered a period of mini-

mal economic stress, providing greater opportunity for slaves to marry and establish family lives. Access to garden plots as well as the right to market any surplus in exchange for other goods or for specie may have promoted marriage not only among slaves, but also between slaves and free persons. Owners often set aside time, and sometimes even designated a specific day, for slaves to work on these plots of land (Mintz 1984:204). Where slaves received rations and had access to provision grounds, they usually benefitted from a healthier and more varied diet (Díaz Soler 1953:161; Cabanillas de Rodríguez 1973:358; López Cantos 1985:151). More importantly, slaves were permitted to bequeath freely the right to continue to cultivate a certain piece of land for as long as the owner permitted that land to be cultivated (Mintz 1984:209). According to Sidney Mintz (1984:192), "the slave with a better diet, a small source of income, and a feeling of proprietorship in land was less discontented, less likely to run away, and less dangerous as a potential rebel." To this, I would also add that slaves were more likely to marry and/or form a family.

During the late seventeenth and early to mid-eighteenth century, sugar production was largely confined to San Juan, and distinct agricultural regimes evolved on either side of the Cordillera Central, which bisects the island. Animal husbandry and cattle ranching were combined with the export of hides in communities such as Arecibo and Caguas to the north of the mountain ridge, and with the export of dyewoods and hardwoods or other cash crops like tobacco or cotton in communities such as Coamo and Yauco to the south. I have recreated the contours of adult slave ownership as well as data on the minimum levels of slave importation into these geographically diverse communities, with the information gathered through family reconstitution. Variables such as ownership and importation influenced the likelihood of marriage and family formation among enslaved populations.

But first a few comments on the availability of historical records and demographic data on slavery in Puerto Rico. Such information is limited: only one manuscript census, a household census conducted for San Juan in the year 1673, survives from the seventeenth century.<sup>5</sup> No other census was undertaken for San Juan – or, for that matter, for the island – until 1765. While this census provides information on the age structure of the island's free population, it does not for the slave population. Annual censuses were conducted from the years 1779 through 1802, with the exclusion of the year 1796. However, these do not list the age structure of the island's free or slave population. Notarial records from this period are also scarce, as are wills and other primary sources which would enable us to establish the size and/or distribution of slave popu-

5. Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Sevilla, Censos de población, Sección Santo Domingo 173, Ramo IV, ff. 838-852v., "Padrón del año 1673 de las personas que hay en la ciudad de San Juan de Puerto Rico." A complete transcription of this census appears in David M. Stark & Teresa de Castro Sedgwick 1997.

lations in island communities at any point between the years 1673 through 1765. Therefore, it has been difficult for scholars to reconstruct the demography of slaves.

Patterns of slave ownership in areas such as Arecibo, the island's leader in animal husbandry, cattle ranching, and the export of hides, differed from those observed in communities such as Coamo. In Coamo, where foodstuffs were grown along with tobacco, cotton, and later coffee, the agricultural economy was more labor intensive. There were few slaves in areas along the northern coast of the island, including Arecibo and Caguas, because economic pursuits such as animal husbandry, and the harvest of dyewoods and hardwoods, did not require a large labor force. Furthermore, owners lacked sufficient capital for the purchase of additional enslaved labor. The lives of slaves in these communities were probably less heavily regimented and disciplined than they were in areas along the southern coast of the island, including Coamo and Yauco, where the cultivation of coffee and tobacco was labor-intensive and the sizes of slave holdings were larger.

The effects of lower labor requirements are clearly discernable in the size of the slave populations and holdings – both were smaller in Arecibo and Caguas. For example, slave holdings in Arecibo during the years 1708 through 1757 were quite small, with an average size of three adult slaves in addition to any children they might have.<sup>6</sup> Similar slave ownership patterns prevailed in Caguas; that is, there were many owners with few slaves and, conversely, few owners with many slaves. The slave population in that community during the years 1730 through 1765 was indeed among the island's smallest, with the average size of holdings being only two adult slaves and any children they might have. Only a handful of masters in these communities possessed ten or more slaves (Stark 1999:128 and 133).<sup>7</sup>

In contrast, the agricultural regime was more labor intensive in communities to the south of the Cordillera Central, such as Coamo and Yauco, owing to the production of cash crops including tobacco, cotton, and coffee. The distribution of slave ownership in Coamo reflects a slight albeit important dif-

6. Adult slaves, for the purposes of this study, include spouses of an individual in the records, parents, godparents, witnesses, and, of course, baptized adults mentioned in the parish registers.

7. The largest slave holding in Arecibo during the years 1708 through 1757 was that of Antonio de los Reyes Correa and consisted of at least fifteen slaves. Correa was arguably northwestern Puerto Rico's most powerful economic and political figure. Not only was he the *teniente a guerra*, or "all-encompassing civil and military leader," of Arecibo from 1700 through 1743, he was also a military hero who, in the fall of 1702, was awarded a lifetime pension for his role in spearheading the successful defense of the community against a British attack earlier that same year. The largest slave holding in Caguas during the years 1730 through 1765 was that of Tomás Díaz, the *teniente a guerra* in that community during the 1750s, and it consisted of at least eleven slaves.

ference in the regional intensity of the island's agricultural regime. For example, the average size of holdings in Coamo during the years 1755 through 1800 was four adult slaves and any children they might have. Coamo also had the greatest number of owners with ten or more slaves.<sup>8</sup> The concentration of slaves on larger holdings probably indicates greater reliance on the commercial production of cash crops.

Although Yauco emerged as one of the island's leaders in the cultivation of tobacco and cotton in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the average size of slave holdings in this community during the years 1751 through 1790 averaged only three adult slaves and any children they might have (Stark 1999:139 and 143). The largest slave holdings on the island were located in the sugar-growing area concentrated in San Juan and its surrounding communities. Here, we find a handful of sugar plantations worked by up to 200 slaves (Bergad 1983:5).<sup>9</sup> While slave ownership throughout the island was common, few owners possessed ten or more slaves.

Trade in slaves flourished as long as sugar production remained profitable for planters on the island, but levels of slave traffic to Puerto Rico declined in the early seventeenth century following the near collapse of sugar production. Portuguese traders were the major providers of African slaves to the Hispanic Caribbean. They trafficked in slaves from the Congo and the Gold Coast. Dutch traders gradually assumed a more active role in the introduction of African slaves to Puerto Rico in the waning years of the seventeenth century (Picó 1986:105; Morales Carrión 1995:66-7). Consequently, there was an influx of slaves from the Loango region, located along the southwestern coast of Africa (Alvárez Nazario 1974:71). During the early years of the eighteenth century, when the French controlled the legal slave trade, slaves from Upper Guinea and the Congo River region were introduced to Puerto Rico (Uya 1987:86). After the British assumed control of the legal slave trade in 1713, the majority of slaves brought to Puerto Rico came from the Gold Coast. This trend continued into the mid-eighteenth century.

It is virtually impossible to determine how many slaves were legally or illegally introduced by the British, Dutch, or Portuguese, since most records

8. The largest slave holding in Coamo during the years 1755 through 1800 was that of Antonio Colón de Torres and his wife, Juliana de Aponte, and consisted of at least thirty-seven slaves. The largest slave holding in Yauco during the years 1751 through 1790 was that of Fernando Pacheco and his wife, María de Quiñones, and consisted of at least twenty slaves. It is worth noting that Antonio Colón de Torres and Fernando Pacheco were the *tenientes de guerra* of Coamo and Yauco, respectively, which shows how political and economic power were often intertwined.

9. Manuel Díez del Barrío and his son-in-law Valentín Martínez were probably the owners with the largest slave holdings on the island during the late eighteenth century. Each was reputed to own at least 200 slaves.

of such transactions have been lost or destroyed (Scarano 1984:128; López Cantos 2000:25).<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, from 1675 to 1765, low levels of legal slave importation probably affected the structure of slavery. This conclusion is based on the surviving records from the years 1710 through 1714 and 1731 through 1733. A total of ninety-six slaves (eighty-eight adults and eight boys aged twelve or younger) were legally sold in Puerto Rico between 1710 and 1714 (López Cantos 1994:113-14), while the number of Africans legally introduced to the island between 1731 and 1733 totaled only 115 (López Cantos 1994:37). We can infer that the levels of illegal slave importation during the early years of the eighteenth century were also low. I base this upon the small number of African slaves baptized in island communities selected for this study. Because the baptismal entry in the parish register contained information on the individual's legal status, it provided proof of ownership in the case of slaves. The number of adult slaves baptized during the years covered by this study in Arecibo, Caguas, and Yauco averaged less than one per year, while in Coamo they averaged two per year (Stark 1999:113). Prior to the liberalization of the slave trade in the 1760s, which brought about a sizable influx of African slaves to Puerto Rico, many planters and ranchers undoubtedly relied on the contraband trade for increasing the size of their holdings and/or encouraged the growth of the island's enslaved population through natural means by promoting marriage and family life.

The low level of legal and illegal slave importations to Puerto Rico had a lasting impact on the demography of slaves. Since fewer adult African males were purchased from slave traders, the imbalance between male and female slaves was lessened. And as the ratio of women increased, so did the proportion of children, whereby there was an increase in the group's natural growth. The resulting transition from a predominantly African-born to a native-born slave population, a transition that most likely occurred during the late seventeenth century, further evened out the sex ratio among the slave population. The possibility for natural growth continued until the second coming of sugar, which occurred early in the nineteenth century. Moreover, the emergence of a creole majority among slaves facilitated social cohesiveness. Opportunities gradually evolved over the course of the eighteenth century for a more settled family life within a larger, nascent Afro-Puerto Rican community.

10. According to Francisco Scarano (1984:121), "No official records or estimates of slave imports have ever been found [for the nineteenth century], not even for the period of legal trading before 1820." Comparable records or estimates do not exist for the eighteenth century.

RELIGIOUS CONTEXT AND SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF  
MARRIAGE AMONG SLAVES

In areas of the Spanish Caribbean, including Puerto Rico, where Catholicism was the officially recognized religion, slaves were forcibly baptized in the Church. Thus, it is difficult to gauge how well slaves in Puerto Rico were taught the dogma of the Catholic faith, and what the extent of their subsequent adherence to its tenets was. The degree of religious instruction that slaves received, as well as their compliance with religious practices, probably varied from one parish to another and over the course of the eighteenth century. Some priests, such as Juan Apolinario Herrera, who served in the rural parish of Toa Baja, located on the island's northern coast, during the 1750s and 1760s, were particularly attentive to the spiritual needs of their parishioners.<sup>11</sup> In contrast, other clergy, such as José Correa, who served in north-western coastal community of Añasco from 1754 through 1767 and later in the northeastern coastal community of Loíza, were apparently preoccupied with their own material well-being and therefore lax in providing the catechism to slaves, as required, following Sunday mass and on holy days of obligation (Morales Muñoz 1949a:137; López Cantos 2000:87).<sup>12</sup> Owners, too, played a role in whether slaves were inculcated with the beliefs of Catholicism. Often they would make it difficult for their slaves to attend mass and receive religious instruction by forcing them to work on Sundays and other major feast days of the Church (Morales Muñoz 1949b:249-50). The extent of slaves' compliance with Church norms was also contingent on the staffing of diocesan parishes and the level of training among the island's clergy at the time. Thus, the extent of slaves' compliance was sometimes constrained by factors beyond their control.

Slaves' adherence to the customs and practices associated with Catholicism may have been related to the proportion of Africans comprising an area's overall slave population. Newly arrived African slaves probably found it difficult to create their own community, one in which they could openly continue to practice their own forms of religion. In such cases, slaves may have embraced Christianity outwardly, as a means of integrating into their new surroundings, while secretly continuing to adhere to their own beliefs.

11. Juan Apolinario Herrera was praised by Bishop Julián de Arraiga in 1760 for the dedication shown to his priestly duties and also for his charitable acts. "Informes reservado de las cualidades, circunstancias, meritos, servicios y conducta de todos los sujetos [religiosos] que ejercen empleos de todas clases en esta provincia." AGI, Santo Domingo 2521.

12. José Correa was reprimanded by Bishop Julián de Arraiga in 1760 for participating in contraband trade and consequently neglecting his parishioners. "Informes reservado de las cualidades, circunstancias, meritos, servicios y conducta de todos los sujetos [religiosos] que ejercen empleos de todas clases en esta provincia." AGI, Santo Domingo 2521.

The African slaves selected for this study, those introduced annually as a part of the trade in human cargo to the island communities, often spoke mutually unintelligible languages and were of different ethnic origins. Moreover, the structure of slavery in Puerto Rico during the years 1675 through 1765, characterized as it was by low levels of slave importation and widely dispersed slave holdings, was probably not as conducive to the survival or the transmission of African religious beliefs and practices as it was later in the nineteenth century following the resurgence of sugar as a primary export crop (López Cantos 2000:75). Of course, some assimilation of African religious beliefs and practices did take place. According to Angel López Cantos (1992:11), however, it was much less common than has previously been assumed.

Canonical marriage offered slaves tangible benefits. Laws governing marriage among slaves possibly encouraged formal unions among them. For example, when two slaves belonging to different owners married, the law stated that the husband's owner was obliged to purchase his slave's wife from the other owner, along with any of her children younger than three (Rípodas Ardanaz 1977:378-82; Sued Badillo & López Cantos 1986:273; Rodríguez León 1990:45 and 54). Should the husband's owner fail to purchase the slave's wife, then the wife's owner was obliged to buy the husband. Married slaves could not be separated through sale and neither could they be separated from their minor children. This benefit for slaves was an inconvenience for owners, who were often reluctant to allow slaves the right to formally legitimize their unions through marriage.<sup>13</sup>

The scarcity of primary sources has made it difficult to ascertain the actual number of slave and slave/free marriages occurring throughout the island, prompting a historiographical debate concerning the frequency of slave marriages in Puerto Rico. My findings show that marriages among slaves were common on the island in the years leading up to the nineteenth-century resurgence of the sugar industry. Referring to marriage records consulted for this study, I found a total of 2,712 marriages, including 237 in which one or both spouses were slaves. Assuming that 11 percent of Puerto Rico's population consisted of slaves, as the 1765 census shows, it is striking that nearly 9 percent of all marriages involved at least one slave spouse. Thus, a significant portion of the island's slave population married in the eighteenth century.

Let us examine the formal union of Pedro and Francisca as well as that of Lázaro and Agustina in order to provide greater insight into whom slaves married, at what ages, and at what time of the year they did so. I will do this by drawing attention to the vital statistics of slaves that can be reconstructed through the linking of data contained in parish registers.

13. Examples of owners' resistance elsewhere to slave marriage laws can be found in Acosta Saignes (1967:214-18).

## AN EXAMPLE OF TWO SLAVE MARRIAGES

On the morning of December 29, 1793, two slave couples were married in the Catholic church of Coamo.<sup>14</sup> The first couple consisted of a thirty-year-old groom named Pedro and his thirty-one-year-old bride named Francisca, both of whom belonged to Juan Pacheco. The second couple consisted of a twenty-six-year-old groom, named Lázaro who belonged to Andrés de Aponte; his twenty-eight-year-old bride, named Agustina, belonged to Aponte's wife's second cousin Juan Pacheco.<sup>15</sup> Although marriage among slaves was not uncommon, it was not often that two slave couples in one community were married on the same day.<sup>16</sup> Because the brides were sisters, I suspect that they may have opted (with their owner's approval) to be united in marriage with their spouses in a joint ceremony.

The newlyweds, the slave owners, and their respective spouses were all born in Coamo.<sup>17</sup> Pedro had been baptized on February 13, 1763, at the age of fifteen days. He was the second of the two children born to Guillermo and María, a married slave couple belonging to Francisco Pacheco.<sup>18</sup> Francisca had been baptized eleven months earlier on March 23, 1762, at the age of fifteen days.<sup>19</sup> She was the second of the four children born to Antonia, an unmarried slave belonging to Juan Pacheco. In contrast, Francisca's sister

14. The original entry in the marriage register reads (my translation): In this community of Coamo on the 29th day of December of 1793, I the undersigned curate having proclaimed the three ordinary banns on three festival days within solemn Mass according to the Sacred Council of Trent, and having expressed their mutual consent Lázaro, a slave of don Andrés Aponte, and Agustina, a slave of don Juan Pacheco, members of this parish who by the present words make a true marriage and in the presence of the undersigned witnesses joined the couple in marriage and simultaneously performed the nuptial blessings having first examined them in Christian doctrine and after they had received confession and communion. The witnesses were Josef Berríos and Josef Ortiz, along with many others who were present, of which I give a faithful account, Josef Navarro. APSBC, Primer libro de matrimonios: 1778-98, folios 150-50v.

15. Age at marriage is not listed in the parish marriage registers, but was calculated by linking baptismal and marital records. Andrés de Aponte's wife was named Juana de Rivera. Her maternal grandmother, Eugenia Pacheco, and Juan Pacheco's paternal grandmother, Gerónima Pacheco de Matos, were sisters. Moreover, Eugenia and Gerónima are siblings of Domingo Pacheco de Matos, who oversaw the spirited defense of Guayanilla against a Dutch attack in 1703.

16. This was only the second time in Coamo in the years 1778 through 1798 that two slave couples were married on the same day.

17. Andrés de Aponte was the son of Domingo de Aponte and Constanza de Rivera, while Juan Pacheco was the son of Juan Rodríguez Pacheco and María Berríos Santiago. Juan's wife was named Rosalía Alvarado.

18. Francisco and Juan Pacheco were brothers.

19. APSBC, Primer libro de bautismos: 1701-73, folio 78.

Agustina had been baptized on September 11, 1765, at the age of fifteen days.<sup>20</sup> She was the third of the four children born to Antonia. Lázaro had been baptized fifteen months later on January 6, 1767, at the age of fifteen days.<sup>21</sup> He was the second of the eight children born to an unmarried slave named Marcela – who died on March 13, 1808, at the age of sixty – belonging to Andrés de Aponte.<sup>22</sup> There was no record of the spouses' fathers.

This was the first marriage for both brides and grooms. Francisca was childless at the time of her marriage. However, Agustina had previously given birth to two children.<sup>23</sup> Agustina's first child named Ignacia had been baptized on January 25, 1785, at the age of fifteen days, and the second child named Buenaventura had been baptized on July 28, 1793, at the age of fifteen days, only five months prior to Agustina's marriage. The relatively brief interval between Buenaventura's birth and Agustina's marriage to Lázaro suggests that he was probably the child's father.<sup>24</sup> It may be that the child's survival was a factor in Agustina's decision to formalize her union with Lázaro, a hypothesis that I will discuss further in greater detail.

In neither marriage were the bride and groom related, and no consanguineal or affinal impediments requiring a dispensation were noted. Unlike Puerto Rico's free population, in which marriage among near relations and distant cousins was common, Puerto Rican slaves generally avoided marrying their kin, as occurred elsewhere in the Americas (Kulikoff 1986:346-47).<sup>25</sup> Finally, two local citizens, José Berríos and José Ortiz, along with the bride and groom's owners, served as witnesses to the marriages, which were celebrated by José Navarro, the forty-seven-year-old assistant to the parish priest and a native of San Juan (Zayas León 1997:89).<sup>26</sup> Following the marriage ceremony, the slave couples joined hands and pledged their *fidelidad mutua*, or mutual fidelity, as the parish priest pronounced a special nuptial blessing known as the *velación*. The newlyweds then embarked on their new life together and the marriage was duly noted in the parish register.

20. APSBC, Primer libro de bautismos: 1701-73, folio 121.

21. APSBC, Primer libro de bautismos: 1701-73, folio 139.

22. Marcela died on March 13, 1808, at the age of sixty. APSBC, Primer libro de defunciones: 1773-1810, folio 393.

23. APSBC, Segundo libro de bautismos: 1773-90, folio 263 e.v.

24. This hypothesis is further supported by the fact that Buenaventura's baptismal sponsor was Pedro Pacheco, the child's future uncle who married Agustina's sister Francisca five months later.

25. I observed only one dispensation for consanguinity among slave marriages examined in this study.

26. José Berríos was married to Paula Colón. He was the son of Miguel Berríos and Estebanía de Rivera. José Ortiz (de Peña) never married. He was most likely the son of José Ortiz de Peña and Petrona Figueroa.

## SPOUSAL SELECTION PATTERNS AMONG SLAVES

Whom did slaves marry? Most slaves in the eighteenth-century Puerto Rican communities I examined married other slaves, as was the case of Pedro and Francisca or Lázaro and Agustina. Approximately 60 percent of slave grooms in this study selected slave brides, whereas 80 percent of slave brides chose slave grooms. A slave groom was nearly twice as likely to marry a free bride as a slave bride was to marry a free groom. From the male slave's point of view, marriage with a free woman gave him access to the life of a peasant because his children, who would also be free, would be socially mobile and have greater economic opportunities (Metcalf 1992:166-67). Owners probably also looked favorably upon the marriage of slave husbands and free wives, for they secured free female (and child) laborers since most of the free persons married to slaves lived with the same master as a servant or retainer and worked for the estate alongside their spouses (Goldschmidt 1986-87:11-12). Such marriages afforded owners with the opportunity to maintain, if not increase, their supply of labor.

A more vexing question involves the motives that would influence a free man to marry a slave woman. The answer can be found in the access to land. By the first decades of that century, a significant number of individuals known as *desacomodados*, or "bothersome individuals," lacked access to land and had evolved into a restless people that roamed the countryside in search of land on which to squat (Scarano 1989:31 and Moscoso 1999:126). Land was scarce along the island's northern coast, particularly among free persons of mixed race, who comprised 40 percent or more of the island's population.<sup>27</sup> Unrest in the fall of 1750 among *desacomodados* in Manatí revealed the socially destabilizing potential of these landless individuals. Colonial authorities in San Juan grew increasingly alarmed at the situation and the city's *cabildo* ordered the break up of two *hatos*, or large land holdings dedicated to raising livestock, and their respective *criaderos*, or small land holdings dedicated to animal husbandry, in the highland sectors of Manatí (Gíl-Bermejo García 1970:241). Over 4,800 acres of land were redistributed to 181 *desacomodados* (Moscoso 1999:125).<sup>28</sup> Some landowners faced with

27. For example, free persons of color comprised 42 percent of Puerto Rico's total population in 1779 and comprised 44 percent in 1790. AGI, Santo Domingo, 2302 and 2307.

28. Manuel Meléndez, *teniente a guerra* for Manatí, agreed to the demolition of his *hato* and *criadero* named La Potrada in December of 1750 with the stipulation that he and his sister Ana Lorenza Meléndez and their seventeen children be granted twelve *caballerías*, or 200 acre increments (2,400 acres), of land. However, Manuel and Ana Lorenza only received a total of six *caballerías* (1,200 acres) of land. See *Actas del Cabildo de San Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico: 1730-50*, pp. 296-98.

seasonal labor shortages would allow the landless to live on their holdings in exchange for occasional services. As a result, unions of free men and slave women would be facilitated. It is quite possible that some of the free men who married slave women were squatters whom the slave owner sought to attach to the land out of a desire for secure labor.

Although a majority of slave marriages were between slaves belonging to the same owner, as was the case with Pedro and Francisca, slaves who aspired to marry or establish a family had to overcome demographic obstacles. Nearly one-third of the marriages between slaves in this study paired spouses who, like Lázaro and Agustina, were owned by different masters. For security reasons, owners probably tried to limit the social universe of the slave to the boundaries of the slaveholding unit as occurred in eighteenth-century Bahia, Brazil (Schwartz 1986:383). However, the relatively small size of slave holdings throughout the island meant that slaves who sought to marry would frequently have to look beyond the estate for potential spouses. Slaves likely also avoided marrying first cousins, as occurred in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in the Chesapeake (Kulikoff 1986:346-47). This would further reduce the number of eligible suitors in a community's marriage pool.

Owners probably encouraged their slaves to select a spouse from a marriage pool restricted to those slaves belonging to other immediate family members and relatives. Such may have been the case when Lázaro and Agustina were married, since their respective owners were second cousins. Another example is the marriage of Sebastián Correa and Felipa Correa on June 12, 1753 in Arecibo.<sup>29</sup> Sebastián's owner, the priest Felipe Correa, was the brother of Felipa's owner, José Correa.<sup>30</sup> Other evidence confirms that owners encouraged their slaves to select spouses from among slaves of near relations. Of the forty marriages in this study in which slave spouses belonged to different owners, all but four involved owners with consanguineous ties of varying degree. This information is not contained in the parish marriage register, but by reconstructing the genealogy of the slave owners, I was able to determine the nature of consanguineous ties between owners of slaves who married. Nearly a third of these marriages involved slaves whose owners were linked by ties of the first degree; that is, the owners were either siblings, a parent and child, or a parent and son- or daughter-in-law. The marriage of Pablo and María on June 14, 1785 in Coamo illustrates this point: Pablo's owner, María de Gracia Santiago, was the mother of María's owner, Francisco de Santiago.<sup>31</sup> When-

29. Archivo Parroquial San Felipe de Arecibo (APSFA), Primer libro de matrimonios: 1708-60, folio 146.

30. Sebastián was born on an island in the French Caribbean. Felipa was born in Coamo and baptized on May 15, 1712. She was the daughter of Blas and Aldonza, who belonged to Juan Aponte Díaz, a paternal uncle of Felipa's owner's wife (Stark 1992:82).

31. APSBC, Libro primero de matrimonios en Coamo: 1778-98, folio 52.

ever a slave selected a spouse from those of the estate or those of other immediate family members and relatives who might be living nearby, the owner avoided the additional expense of purchasing a slave spouse. Ownership did not necessarily have to change, and slaves could be allowed to live together.

Of the slave marriages in this study in which the origin of both spouses is known, nearly 70 percent paired slaves who had been born in Puerto Rico. Ethnic preferences among certain African groups in Puerto Rico during the eighteenth century suggest a strong tendency to marry partners from their region of Africa if not from the same ethnic group. The data for the slaves of African origin in this study also shows that they tended to marry other Africans. Because we do not know how many Africans there were among the island's slave populations, their choices may well have been based not on preference, but on availability. The predominance of West African slaves, especially from Guinea, among the African population probably made it easier for such slaves to marry a spouse of similar origin. An example of one such couple is Carlos and Catalina, African slaves from Guinea who belonged to Pedro Ximénez, and who married on July 14, 1780 in Caguas (de Castro Sedgwick 1994:12). It should also be noted that males were over-represented in the African slave trade; thus slave brides would have had a greater pool of African men to choose from and were able to do so with greater frequency than slave grooms would have chosen African women.

Some slave and slave/free marriages were the culminations of long-term illicit relationships. For example, a total of thirty-seven – or 29 percent – of slave brides in the communities selected for this study, were unmarried mothers. Slave brides who had previously given birth had, on average, two children at the time of their marriage. Moreover, their marriage occurred thirty-three months – nearly three years – after having given birth. Survival of the infant(s) might have increased the likelihood of marriage between single parents who had formerly lived in stable consensual unions, as was probably the case with Lázaro and Agustina. With their children having survived the perilous first year or two of life, when mortality posed the greatest danger, unmarried mothers in long-term relationships may well have sought to avail themselves of the legal protections offered by the Church and state and afforded to them through marriage. Families could not be separated through sale or bequest, while marriage provided slaves with opportunities to make their situation more tolerable.

#### AGE AT WHICH SLAVES MARRIED

Since married slave mothers' fertility was higher than that of unmarried mothers, age at marriage affected the number of children a woman could have throughout her reproductive period (Rabell 1990:24). For instance, the num-

ber of children born to married slave mothers is twice the number of children born to unmarried slave mothers: four compared to two (Stark 1996:407). With a low level of slave importation affecting the structure of slavery over the course of the eighteenth century, the increase in the island's overall slave population may well have resulted from high levels of marital fertility. Relatively high death rates among both infants and adults during the colonial period suggest that slaves in Puerto Rico likely married at young ages, as did the rest of the island's population, free and enslaved, at the time.

Age at first marriage among slave populations was calculated by linking information contained in the baptismal and marriage records of these communities. This, however, does not allow me to determine the age at marriage for slaves of African origin or of slaves who were not born in the island parishes selected for this study. Nevertheless, the age of one or both spouses was ascertained for a total of sixty-eight marriages in which the bride and/or the groom were slaves. For the most part, male slaves in eighteenth-century Puerto Rico tended to marry at a later age than their female counterparts. The age difference between spouses varied, with the groom typically two to six years older than a bride. Of course, some grooms were considerably older than their bride, as was the case of a slave named Joaquín who belonged to the priest Felipe Correa and who was forty years old when he married Petronila de la Rosa, a slave aged seventeen years old. She also belonged to Correa, and was married to Joaquín on January 22, 1759, in Arecibo.<sup>32</sup> Not all grooms were older than their brides, however: one bride in Arecibo and six in Coamo were older than their spouses at the time of the marriage. In such cases, the difference in ages between the spouses was less than two years, with one notable exception, a thirty-nine-year-old bride named Inés who was eighteen years older than twenty-one-year-old Tomás, a slave belonging to the priest Tiburcio González Esmurra, when the two married on August 13, 1801, in Coamo.<sup>33</sup>

Other patterns of behavior among slaves who married in these communities suggest that slaves married and formed families in much the same way that other members of society did. This includes a tendency for males to wait until they were at least twenty years old before entering into a formal union. None of the grooms in this study for whom the age at marriage is known are under the age of twenty. Moreover, one-third of the grooms were over the age of thirty, including one groom who was over the age of forty. One possible reason that male slaves put off marriage is that slaves in Puerto Rico were

32. The reference for Joaquín's baptism is APSFA, Libro primero de bautismos: 1708-35, no. 466, while the reference for Petronila's baptism is APSFA, Libro segundo de bautismos: 1735-49, folio 86v. Their marriage can be found in the APSFA, libro primero de matrimonios: 1708-60, folio 175.

33. APSBC, Segundo libro de bautismos: 1798-1813, folios 37v and 38.

permitted to market the surplus produce grown on their provision grounds. Thus, males may have purposely delayed marriage until they had acquired a few personal possessions and/or some small animals like a hog or a few chickens. Such a strategy could result in social mobility and economic opportunity, for it would provide a male slave with the means to marry a free bride.

Female slaves, on the other hand, tended to marry at earlier ages than males. We see that approximately one-third of the brides in this study are under the age of twenty, whereas none of the grooms were. For example, the youngest bride in my sample is a slave named Juliana belonging to Esteban Colón, who was a mere thirteen years and eleven months old on March 21, 1779 when she married, in Coamo, a slave named Pedro belonging to the priest Miguel Rodríguez Feliciano.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, only five brides were over the age of thirty at the time of their first marriage; none were over the age of forty. It may have been that masters encouraged females to marry early in order to exploit their reproductive years, and males to marry late in order to take advantage of their years of youthful energy.

#### SEASONALITY OF SLAVE MARRIAGE

Although marriage is the one demographic event that is most subject to individual human control, factors beyond people's control often determined when they married. The observance of religious proscriptions associated with the liturgical calendar affected the timing of marriage (Cressy 1985:4), while labor demands imposed by the agricultural economy influenced the seasonality of marriages, especially those of slaves (Gunn 1990:217). Formal unions were traditionally frowned upon by the Church during certain periods of the liturgical year, including the penitential seasons of Lent and Advent.<sup>35</sup> According to the diocesan synod of 1645, priests in the diocese of Puerto Rico were prohibited from administering the special nuptial blessing, known as the *velación*, during Lent – which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter Sunday – or Advent – which stretched from the fourth Sunday preceding Christmas until Christmas Eve.<sup>36</sup> Because these seasons were to be

34. APSBC, Libro primero de matrimonios: 1778-98, folio 6v. Juliana was baptized on April 2, 1765, in Coamo. APSBC, Libro primero de bautismos: 1701-73, folio 114v.

35. Cf. Rutman, Wetherell & Rutman 1980:42. Catholicism was not the only religion to discourage Lenten marriage; the Anglican Church also had a proscription on such marriages.

36. Both Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday are movable feast days. The earliest possible date for Ash Wednesday is February 4, while the latest possible date is March 10. Corresponding dates for Easter vary from March 22 to April 25. In contrast, the penitential season of Advent stretched from the fourth Sunday preceding Christmas – which fell between November 26 and December 2 – until Christmas Eve, December 24 (Cressy 1985:1).

marked by abstinence and penance, couples were discouraged from consummating their marriage if they had not performed the *velación* (López de Haro 1986:165), a type of religious oath whereby the future spouses pledged their fidelity to each other as the priest pronounced a special nuptial blessing (Ortiz 1974:87; Quiñones Cuadrado 1974:14). Additionally, the diocese of Puerto Rico prohibited Sunday marriage and also discouraged the celebration of formal unions on sixteen other major feast days, when attendance at mass was required and no work was to be performed. Approximately 130 to 136 days, or nearly 40 percent of the calendar year, was rendered unsuitable for the celebration of marriage.

Important dates for understanding the agricultural calendar and assessing its impact upon the seasonality of marriage among Puerto Rico's slave population along the southern coast revolve around the planting and harvesting of the principal cash crop, tobacco. Planting of this commodity over the course of the eighteenth century was traditionally begun on August 30 – the feast day of Saint Rose – when the seeds were sown. After forty-five days or so, the tobacco seedlings were replanted, usually in the month of October (Fernández Méndez 1997:26-27). Yet not all tobacco was planted at once. Thus, replanting was usually staggered over weeks, even months, and often continued through the months of November and December. The growing cycle of tobacco was approximately four months.<sup>37</sup> Assuming that the tobacco crop was replanted at the beginning of October, it would have been ready for harvest sometime in February and gathered over the next month or so.

This study of 237 formal unions in which one or both spouses is a slave reveals a considerable diversity in the seasonality of slave marriages. Slave marriages in Arecibo and Caguas were more common during the months of December and January. Work in these predominantly cattle-ranching communities probably came to a halt at this time, except for daily tasks such as feeding and caring for livestock. In areas where tobacco was grown, such as in Coamo and Yauco, slave marriages were more common during the months of April and May. Agricultural activity in these tobacco-producing communities slowed down following the spring harvest of tobacco, allowing slaves who aspired to marriage the opportunity to do so.

The impact of the agricultural calendar on the timing of slave marriage in Coamo and Yauco is most apparent during the period that stretched from October 7 through December 2, when few slaves married. During this ten-week period the tobacco crop was sown. In fact, only two slave marriages took place in Coamo during that period in the years 1778 through 1798. Likewise, there were only three formal unions among Yauco's slave population during this same period in the years 1751 through 1790. Conversely, in

37. "Noticias recientes solicitadas y adquiridas sobre los tabacos de la isla de Puerto Rico ... con otras posibilidades que conviene examinar." AGI, Santo Domingo, 2305.

Arecibo and Caguas there were fifteen and ten slave marriages, respectively, during that same ten-week period.

Slaves in eighteenth-century Puerto Rico generally observed proscriptions on Lenten marriage. For example, during the four-week period from February 25 through March 25, which roughly corresponds to the Lenten season, there were a total of seven slave marriages. Moreover, three of the seven slave marriages actually occurred in the days immediately preceding Lent. In contrast, it is likely that compliance with the taboo on marriage during Advent varied by region and possibly waned over the course of the eighteenth century. Only in Arecibo do we find a dearth of marriages observed during the two-week period stretching from December 2 through December 16, which fell within the parameters of Advent.

In what ways do the marriages of Pedro and Francisca and of Lázaro and Agustina conform with previously discussed spousal selection patterns? Like most slaves in this study who married, Pedro and Francisca belonged to the same owner. However, the small size of slave holdings in Coamo and elsewhere throughout the island forced a number of slaves in this community to look beyond the estate on which they lived in order to find a suitable spouse. Such may have been the case of Lázaro, since his master, Andrés de Aponte, only owned about six slaves. Agustina, on the other hand, belonged to one of larger slave holdings in Coamo; her owner, Juan Pacheco, had at least twenty-two slaves (Stark 1999:139). Most slaves who married but belonged to different owners selected a spouse from among those of other family members and near relatives. The formal union of Lázaro and Agustina offers evidence of this trend, as their respective owners were second cousins through marriage. Both brides and their respective grooms were born in Coamo. Thus, their marriages (like many others) paired spouses of a similar origin. Perhaps the newlywed slave couples had known each other since infancy. Families were often separated or broken up through sale if the parents were not married like Lázaro and Agustina, just as they could be dispersed when owners set up dowries or when the time came for heirs of an estate to claim their rightful share. With regard to the age at which the couples were married, twenty-six and twenty-eight years old, and twenty-nine and thirty years old, respectively, it was not common for slave brides to be older than the slave groom. However, the two-year or lesser difference in their ages was typical of those unions in which the bride was older. The fact that Agustina had given birth twice, the second time only five months prior to the date of her marriage, was also not uncommon. As we can see, the marriages of Pedro and Francisca and Lázaro and Agustina were in many ways representative of patterns of behavior observed in other communities selected for this study.

Both Pedro and Francisca and Lázaro and Agustina were married five days following the conclusion of Advent. Compliance with taboos on the celebration of formal unions during this penitential season had waned by the

late eighteenth century. Thus, the liturgical calendar probably did not influence the timing of their marriage. More likely, the timing of these marriages reflects the impact of labor demands associated with the planting and harvesting of tobacco. As mentioned previously, tobacco was replanted in Coamo roughly during the ten-week period from October 7 through December 2, although planting sometimes continued past this date. The timing of Pedro and Francisca and Lázaro and Agustina's marriages suggests that their owners grew tobacco and that its planting in the fall of 1793 may have continued well into the month of December in Coamo. The brief respite from the rigors of the agricultural calendar, which also coincided with the slower pace of work at Christmas, offered an opportunity for slaves such as Pedro and Francisca and Lázaro and Agustina to marry.

#### A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF MARRIAGE AMONG SLAVES

A unique set of demographic circumstances and economic conditions in Puerto Rico during the eighteenth century fostered the rise of a more fluid society. We see evidence of this in the frequency and nature of marriage among the island's slave population. Slaves who married, especially those who wed free people of color, contributed to social stability, which characterized relations between the free and enslaved segments of the population in the years prior to the resurgence of sugar as a primary export product.

Most slave marriages appear to have been determined by the slaves' own choices; there was probably little direct intervention by masters in the spousal selection process among the island's slave population. This observation is based on the study of eighteenth-century marriage registers in Arecibo, Caguas, Coamo, and Yauco, which reveals only one instance (the marriages of Pedro and Francisca and Lázaro and Agustina) in which more than one couple belonging to the same master married in the same ceremony or on the same day. If two, three, or more slave couples belonging to the same master had married on the same day and at the same ceremony, this would likely have indicated the master's direct intervention in the selection and/or the timing of formal unions, a practice more characteristic of the nineteenth century, following the rise in sugar production and the concomitant upsurge of slavery.

Through the use of previously overlooked primary sources, including parish baptismal, marriage, and death registers, this study reveals the extent of slaves' efforts to marry and establish families. Despite their absence or omission from the historical record, slaves are not a people without a family history. Slaves do have a reconstructable past – their family tree is not cut.

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SHANNON LEE DAWDY

LA COMIDA MAMBISA: FOOD, FARMING,  
AND CUBAN IDENTITY, 1839-1999

*Parece que con la alimentación ligera son más frecuentes los ensueños.*<sup>1</sup>

Carlos Manuel de Céspedes,  
President of the Cuban "Republic in Arms," 1873

"In Cuba, every conversation, sooner or later, is about food." That is what a Cuban friend laughingly said to me on a recent visit to Cienfuegos when, not five minutes after we had finished talking about mangoes, other dinner guests arrived and started discussing the local fish market. In the middle-class house in which I stayed, an almost exhausting amount of attention and explanation was devoted to what food was available, how it was prepared, and whether or not I was satisfied. My hosts placed much more importance on meals as a measure of my experience than on the comfort of the room or the availability of hot water. They became anxious if I did not make a serious effort to eat the generous servings of soup, pork, beans, *boniatos* (sweet potatoes), *plátanos* (plantains), salad, and bread they placed before me. Daily mealtimes became anxious times for *me* when I realized that these spreads represented a veritable feast for most Cubans, including my hosts.<sup>2</sup>

1. "It appears that with light meals dreams are more frequent [my translation]" (Leal Spengler 1992:90).

2. This paper was greatly improved by the generous comments of Sidney Mintz, Rebecca J. Scott, Michael Zeuske, and the reviewers of *New West Indian Guide*. Many people in Cuba helped by offering hospitality, tolerating my curiosity, and steering me to new resources. I am especially grateful to Orlando García Martínez, Mitzi Espinosa Luis, Leida Fernández Prieto, the Quesada y Castillo family, and the Linares family. All translations are mine, and I would like to thank Ignacio Fernández for help with them. Any errors remain my own. I wish that this study was worthy of a dedication to the memory of Evelio Castillo, a true gentleman farmer. His life knowledge informs this work.

I experienced another side of Cuban hospitality when I visited a *sitio*, or small family farm, in the area.<sup>3</sup> Most of the produce I ate in the Cienfuegos house is grown on *sitios* such as this one. The couple greeted our small group of American visitors warmly, and urged a plate of fried yuca (manioc/cassava), tomatoes, and onions on us. Everything had been grown on the *sitio*. We were then treated to a tour of the lush and diversely planted plot that the couple had inherited from Ramona's father, who had been born under slavery and served as a *mambí*, or revolutionary soldier, in the 1895-99 War of Independence.

I began to wonder how to connect these two places – the *sitio* and the table. Their relation reflects the locales of production and consumption, but also hints at something more, a relation with a long history and many meanings.

In the novel *Inconsoable Memories*, author Edmundo Desnoës (1967:39) describes counterrevolutionaries as “an endless intestine: obsessed by food.” But Cuba's food obsession is not limited to those who resist revolution. For obvious reasons, the poor peasants of Cuba who fed and inspired revolutionary forces in the mountains in the 1890s and again in the 1950s were driven to think about food in their daily fight against hunger. Eliminating hunger and equalizing food distribution became one of the key platforms of the 1959 Revolution. Although the new regime largely succeeded in eliminating malnutrition, this achievement did not quell a Cuban preoccupation with food. In the street and in policy-making, questions about food demand constant attention – what foods should be on the *libreta* (the ration book)? What is on the blackmarket? What is being imported? What is the quality of what is available? Or simply and frequently, “¿Qué hay?” or “What is there to eat today?” During an extended visit to Cuba in 1999, I indeed found, as my friend observed, that Cubans are always talking about food.

Sidney Mintz (1996:104) defines *cuisine* as “the ongoing foodways of a region, within which active discourse about food sustains both common understandings and reliable production of the foods in question.” Cuban culinary discourse is particularly “active” and while I may not be able to settle the question of *why* it is so active, or why Cubans are obsessed with food, I can follow the contours of the discourse. In doing so, I can connect “understandings” and “production” – table and *sitio*. What I have found is that Cuba's discourse about food is entangled with other discourses and practices, such as agrarianism, emancipation, nativeness, race, and national identity. Though each of these narratives is significant unto itself, I am interested in how they interact at important moments in Cuban history with a daily fact of life – food. The shared vocabulary of these intersecting discourses consists of “self-suf-

3. *Sitio*, which generically means *place* in Spanish, is used in Cuba to refer to a small food farm operated with family labor, though local opinions on the size limit for a *sitio* vary.

iciency,” “variety,” and “independence.” The life-sustaining and quotidian quality of food makes it a symbolically powerful medium.

My central argument is that Cuba developed a national cuisine (i.e. a countrywide system of food meaning and food production) in the mid-nineteenth century that became a *nationalist* cuisine during Cuba’s revolutionary moments. *La comida criolla* (creole food) was an element of Cuban identity at least a century before the 1959 Revolution. In the middle of the nineteenth century, cookbooks began to appear that asserted a unique Cuban culinary tradition. Not coincidentally, during this same period a *criollo* nationalism which sought to distinguish *lo cubano* from things Spanish began to emerge. Food became important in this and subsequent struggles not only as a cultural symbol of native distinctiveness, but also as an economic strategy that embraced indigenous products and encouraged independence from foreign imports. For a long time, food has been a measure of Cuban well-being, not only in terms of individual nutrition, but also in terms of national political and economic well-being. It has been an essential medium through which Cubans measure their social standing and quality of life. These valences are related to the provider of most of Cuba’s favorite “native” foods – the *sitiero*, or small family farmer. *Sitieros*, many of them ex-slaves and their descendants, were prominent among the ranks of the rural poor who enlisted in the armed struggles of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They joined the fight in part to defend their right to practice subsistence agriculture and be independent of the wage system. Through Cuba’s political struggles, food self-sufficiency and emancipation became linked in ways significant to individual *mambís* as well as to the self-image of the neo-nation. Years later in the 1950s, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara reprised the national heroism of the Afro-Cuban peasantry. The needs, desires, and spirit of the *sitiero* and the nation became one: the need to feed one’s family, the desire to be independent of overseers, and a willingness to take radical action in the pursuit of emancipation.

My argument about the centrality of food and farmers within Cuban national identity requires a number of steps to connect emergent conditions of the nineteenth century with their legacies in the late twentieth. My goal is not to explain the present in terms of the past. Rather, I want to show how a thick build-up of words, events, and conditions makes Cubans’ preoccupation with food meaningful. There are three major components to this “build-up.” The first is a cyclical theme in Cuban national discourse that divides Cuba into what Antonio Benítez-Rojo (1986) calls the dominant *Cuba Grande* and the resistant *Cuba Pequeña*. *Cuba Pequeña* is associated with “nativeness,” emancipation, and small farming while *Cuba Grande* is associated with importation, slavery, and sugar. The second component is the development of the Cuban cooking tradition and how this cuisine helped to define “native” culture. Third is the importance of the *sitiero* to Cuba’s foodways, agrarian policies, and national identity over time. I have drawn on a wide variety of

sources including nineteenth-century cookbooks, nineteenth-century newspapers, literature, agricultural surveys, government records, and my own fieldnotes. These diverse evidentiary lines are needed trace the contours of a half-buried dream-symbol in Cuban national consciousness that equates the island and the *sitio*. Both are proudly celebrated by Cubans for their variety, self-sufficiency, and adaptability. Both are cultivated by an “emancipated” people. And both must be defended from the forces of capitalism.

Although I focus on the vernacular discourse and historical logics of Cuba, interconnections between food, farming, and nation resonate through much of Latin America and the Caribbean. Lauren Derby (1998) has recently traced a strikingly similar interpenetration between food and nationalism in the Dominican Republic which includes the opposition between *conuco* and big sugar. Francisco Scarano (1996) has looked at another pairing in this productive discourse – farmer (or peasant) and creole nation. He analyzes the figure of the *jibaro* in Puerto Rico’s early nationalism and finds that its role resembles that of Cuba’s *guajiro*. Another common thread lies in the tensions between latifundia and minifundia and between capitalist agriculture and subsistence agriculture, tensions that have been a significant factor in the recent history of many Latin American countries.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, Cuba’s ambivalence toward imported goods and the relations they engender can be found in much of Latin America, and indeed throughout the “developing” world (Breckenridge 1995; Orlove 1997; Derby 1998). In the Caribbean, the importation of food is an especially sensitive issue, as dependency is tempting for both economic and ecological reasons. Cuba’s native cuisine can be seen as a variant of a general Antillean diet based on the triad of rice, beans, and starchy roots or plantains. Commonalities with the other Spanish islands are even stronger. Much like the cooking of Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic, the national dishes of Cuba exhibit Spanish influences in seasonings and a preference for pork, as well as African preparation techniques and native Caribbean crops.<sup>5</sup> Thus, when it comes to issues of national sustenance, Cuba has much in common with its neighbors despite its unique revolutionary history. My aim here is not to make special claims for the relationship between food, farming, and nation in Cuba. I do believe that an excavation of these material and cultural strata is bound to be fruitful in many contexts. Rather, my intention is to explore the specific ways they interweave in Cuba in order to better understand *cubanidad* as well as the possible ecologies of national identity.

4. Llambí 1991; Baud 1995; Gudmundson 1995; Huber & Safford 1995; Chomsky 1998; Lauria-Santiago 1998.

5. A comparison of the dishes and ingredients from three recent and well-distributed cookbooks from Cuba (Villapol 1997), the Dominican Republic (Ramírez de Carías 1993), and Puerto Rico (Aboy Valdejuli 1989) shows not only a similar repertoire of ingredients and recipes, but many of the same names for dishes, such as that for the racially metaphoric *moros y cristianos*. Nevertheless each country also has its unique national dishes.

IMAGINING A NATION: *CUBA PEQUEÑA* AND *CUBA GRANDE*

Compared to other Latin American countries, Cuban nationalism was a late bloomer. Although colonial tensions with the metropole began soon after settlement in the sixteenth century, Cubans did not begin to articulate clearly their cultural differences from *peninsulares* until the 1830s, when it became evident that liberal reforms in Spain were not going to be extended to colonial citizens (Schmidt-Nowara 1999). An “imagined community” of Cubans was inaugurated with the Havana literary salon of Domingo del Monte, which operated between 1835 and 1844. The del Monte circle is credited with carrying out,

what Octavio Paz has termed the foundational enterprise in Latin American literature: the “invention” of a nation and of a deep sense of identity ... their aesthetic separation from the peninsula anticipated the political break that would culminate in the Cuban struggle for independence. (Méndez Rodenas 1998:70)

While the political ambitions of the del Monte group were ambiguous and at times internally contentious, their aesthetic expressions focused on indigenous Cuban folkways in a movement called *costumbrismo*. *Costumbrismo* works document Cuban dialects, music, material culture – and food traditions – in semi-fictional form.<sup>6</sup> According to Benítez-Rojo, the del Monte intellectuals began a counter-discourse about Cuba that embraced the *Cuba Pequeña* of Afro-Cuban culture and small farmers and criticized the *Cuba Grande* of colonial administrators and sugar bosses.

Cubanness emerges precisely in this schism that divides Cuba geographically, ethnologically, economically, and socially. Of these two Cubas, the one that has always dominated is *Cuba Grande*, with its sugar mill, and whose culture is oriented toward the foreign sugar markets. *Cuba Grande* is an authoritarian Cuba, proud and insensitive – a Cuba that tends to reduce society to the requirements of production, technology and, above all, market demand. *Cuba Pequeña*, by contrast, looks inward, toward the land, and its cultural poles are formed by the diverse elements of folklore and tradition. It is the repository of indigenous cultural values (“lo criollo”), and of the heterogeneity that was characteristic of the society that preceded the development of sugar production. It is in this manufacture-resisting Cuba that the scientific and poetic discourses of Cubanness first appeared. (Benítez-Rojo 1986:15)

These early nationalists identified *lo criollo* with *Cuba Pequeña* and the folk traditions of the countryside. Prominent members of this circle advocated the

6. Schmidt-Nowara (1999:32) gives a nuanced portrait of the groups’ political activities, calling del Monte “a pivotal figure in Cuban political and intellectual life.” For examples of *costumbrista* food descriptions, see Villaverde (1953:186, 667).

end of Spanish rule and the abolition of slavery, for which views they were prosecuted and/or exiled (Schmidt-Nowara 1999:14-36).<sup>7</sup> *Costumbrista* authors also invented a new literary form, the Cuban anti-slavery novel (Méndez Rodenas 1998:75-76). An embrace of *native Cuba* became linked to the dual emancipation from colonialism and slavery.

One can argue that these authors were giving artistic expression to the essential social tension in Cuban society between slaveowners and slaves while identifying a more authentic Cubanness with the latter, though these same intellectuals were far from rejecting their own wealth built on slavery (Benítez-Rojo 1992:121). In the late nineteenth century, when emancipation from slavery became a reality, but emancipation from colonialism was still elusive, the *sitiero* became the figure embodying *Cuba Pequeña*. *Sitieros* could be black, white, colored, *liberto*, or free born; the “authentic Cuba” for committed nationalists was racially heterogeneous. Ideologically, the identity of *Cuba Pequeña* and the *sitiero* ran through José Martí’s vision of racial democracy. Realistically, the inclusion of black *sitieros* was critically important to the final War of Independence of 1895-99.

Among Cuba’s creole elites, the del Monte group was probably one of the most radical in its opposition to slavery and colonialism in the mid-nineteenth century, yet the way in which they voiced their discontent came to influence a wider sector of Cuban society working its way toward independence from Spain. It is important to consider the mainstream of emerging nationalism during the period between the del Monte group’s activities in the 1830s and the first war for independence (the Ten Years’ War, 1868-78). As Christopher Schmidt-Nowara (1999) has argued, nationalist sentiment was far from coherent, nor were anti-colonialists in agreement about major issues. Yet in the 1850s and 1860s the nationalist cause was becoming closely linked to the questions of slavery, agrarian policy, and free trade.

Newspapers of the mid-nineteenth century reflect both a growing discontent with Spanish colonial policies and the emergence of a Cuban identity. Benedict Anderson (1991) observes how newspapers in late colonial Latin America played a decisive role in creating an “imagined community.” In Cuba, the press “furnished elite Cuban creoles with a vehicle to express” a new identity and an agenda of self-interest that ran the gamut from free trade to protectionism, from abolition to increased slave imports (Jensen 1988:21). Some of these views promoted “native” Cuban resources and talent, and celebrated Cuba as part of the progressive “New World,” as opposed to backward, feudal Spain. Others railed against the Spanish administration for blocking

7. There appears to be a parallel movement in Puerto Rico, where Creole elites identified with the native *jibaro* country folk in their move away from the metropole (Scarano 1996).

the importation of North American goods and technology that could bring Cuba up to the “civilized” standard of its northern neighbor.

Those who advocated emancipation and national independence did not necessarily do so out of ideals of racial equality and democracy. Fear of a “race war” was, in fact, one of the motivating factors among many nationalists. They worried that the sugar monopoly’s continued importation of African slaves would lead to a dangerously imbalanced race ratio and eventually, another Haiti. Some voices simultaneously urged the end of slavery and a “whitening” campaign of European immigration (Benítez-Rojo 1986:18-19; Schmidt-Nowara 1999:3-31).

Such was the position of the editors of the Havana newspaper *El Siglo*,<sup>8</sup> which billed itself as the vehicle of “agricultural interests in this country.” *El Siglo*’s editorials from the 1850s and 1860s provide a profile of the moderate nationalism that dominated the day. They also reveal the ways in which nationalist concerns were bound up with issues of food and farming. In addition to advocating the emancipation and whitening of the Cuban population, *El Siglo*’s<sup>9</sup> other major positions were that continued dependence on slave labor was a hindrance to the “modernization” of Cuban agriculture through technology and agronomy, and that the Spanish government’s imposition of high wheat tariffs was unjustifiable, even dangerous.<sup>10</sup> According to the paper, wheat bread was necessary for “progress” and fed all “civilized” nations. In a rather odd alimentary logic, the editor connected this ongoing fight to lift wheat tariffs to the campaign for the *blancaficación* of Cuba through European immigration. He suggests that eating too many *viandas* (the native starchy roots that are a staple of the Cuban diet) may “blacken” Cuban identity and that white bread is necessary for the maintenance of a “civilized” white society.<sup>11</sup> The racial fear of creole elites arises in a food metaphor while the editors also address the injustice of Spain’s protectionist policies (Schmidt-Nowara 1999:70).

Despite the *vianda* anxiety, the men behind this newspaper were also defenders of Afro-Cuban “traditions” and native Cuba. *El Siglo*’s<sup>12</sup> editors frequently lauded the fertility of Cuba’s soil and the almost magical quality of its native fruits, such as the *guayaba* (guava) and the “exquisite” dishes that could be made from it. Although their support of emancipation was tepid, they enthusiastically advocated anti-*latifundia* reforms, and held up the small farmer as

8. *El Siglo* April 6, 1865.

9. *El Siglo* June 30, 1865; July 2, 1865.

10. Schmidt-Nowara (1999:105) describes *El Siglo* as the vehicle of creole reformers, “published in Havana by a knot of former annexationists that included Miguel de Aldama, the Count of Pozos Dulces, José Morales Lemus, and José Antonio Echeverría.”

11. *El Siglo* July 4, 1865.

12. *El Siglo* March 23, 1865.

patriot. Invoking *costumbrismo*, they protested when the Spanish police clamped down on unlicensed slaves coming into the city on Sundays to sell the goods from their provision plots, saying it was an “ancient custom” respected since “time immemorial.”<sup>13</sup> Nearly every edition of the paper in 1864 and 1865 carried news of the U.S. Civil War, with reports favoring the North. The death of Abraham Lincoln was marked with a lengthy hero’s eulogy. Although careful not to launch a frontal attack on slavery on moral grounds, the paper made clear that this antiquated agricultural approach was holding Cuba back from true “progress,” and the editors made suggestions for how emancipated slaves would fit in a new, improved economy.<sup>14</sup>

*El Siglo*’s<sup>15</sup> editors argued that farmers, and the nation as a whole, would benefit from the breaking up of large estates. The editors advocated a size cap of 10 *caballerías* for farms (approximately 330 acres), a goal that was not approached until the Agrarian Reforms of the early 1960s. They claimed that the sugar plantation brought the “death of worker aspirations.” The *sitio*, because it is small and family-run, on the other hand, engenders an “equality, love, and intelligence.” Further, “the true patriotism of today consists in elevating the small proprietor to his legitimate function, developing his rich patrimony.”<sup>16</sup> Even moderate Cuban reformists could see the connection: small farms and food self-sufficiency were the keys to independence from Spain.

Nevertheless, the editors of *El Siglo* were interested in northern imports such as wheat and technology as well as ideas like abolition and agrarianism. In Cuban nationalist discourse two of the strands making up the *Cuba Pequeña* and *Cuba Grande* opposition are what I would call the nativist and importer sentiments. These tendencies have cycled through Cuban politics since the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> Cuba has been described as the “island that repeats itself” and these themes define the contours of the cycle (Benítez-Rojo 1992). At times, one has succeeded in being dominant over the other. Most obviously, importers won out under American occupation in the early twentieth century, while nativists won in the 1959 Revolution. On a smaller scale, struggles between the nativist and importer poles have occurred regarding immigration, technology, and ideology even since the 1959 Revolution. One of these tradi-

13. *El Siglo* March 22, 1865.

14. *El Siglo* June 25, 1865.

15. *El Siglo* April 22, 1865.

16. *El Siglo* March 28, 1865.

17. Louis A. Pérez, Jr. (1999:7) documents the importer side of Cuban identity. He argues that Cuban nationality, “found its dominant expression in an affirmation of modernity, progress, and above all civilization, much of which derived its main characteristics from North American sources.” Pérez (1999:471) may somewhat neglect the counter-discourse of nativism, self-sufficiency, and independence which also runs through Cuban culture, though he notes that “[t]he dominant cultural motif of the 1950s ... involved the affirmation of Cuban as distinct from and independent of things North American.”

tions – nativism/*Cuba Pequeña* – runs through the life-sustaining issues of food and farming, and it has triumphed during crucial moments in Cuban national identity.

#### ROOTS OF *LA COMIDA CRIOLLA*

In the *costumbrista* anti-slavery novel, *Cecilia Valdés o la loma del ángel*, author Cirilo Villaverde (1953:667,186) describes a rural marketplace in the 1830s where slaves and peasants mingle, buying and selling goods from provision plots and farms in a “disordered” jumble of greens, vegetables, live birds, fruits, game, edible roots, fish, beans, and green corn. In another passage he describes a table set for lunch with an incredible variety of meats, fried plantains, and rice. The array of foods in the market amazes Villaverde; he describes the dishes at lunch, but cannot name them. He identifies the elements of Cuban cuisine, but he does not yet share with his readers a vocabulary that can capture it. Yet Villaverde’s effort to describe something essentially “Cuban” marks the beginnings of a national folk cuisine. It is difficult to know exactly when or how a self-consciously “Cuban” cuisine developed, since cooking knowledge more often takes an oral rather than a written form. However, in the 1850s, a new literary genre – the Cuban cookbook – began to appear. This genre may be viewed as a variant of *costumbrismo* through which elite, literate Cubans formally recognized a branch of Cuban folk culture.

The connection made here between the appearance of a national or ethnic cookbook genre and a national identity is not unique. Barry Higman (1998: 77) writes, “[i]t can be argued that the emergence of the cookbook marks a critical point in the development of any cuisine and that the specialization and ramification of texts has much to tell about the character of national, regional, and ethnic identities.” Arjun Appadurai (1988:5) discusses how India’s cookbook market exploded after independence and how cookbooks “construct conceptions of national cuisine” while incorporating ethnic and regional variety. He attributes their rise to “the spread of print media and the rise of the new middle classes,” conditions which themselves go toward nationalizing culture. In fact, the development of a Cuban print culture and a creole middle class date to the same period as the first cookbooks in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup>

In 1857, what may have been the first Cuban cookbook was published in Havana. Its short title translates as “The New Manual of the Cuban and Spanish Cook, With a Select Treatise on Confectionery, Pastry, and Baking in the Cuban Style” (Legran 1857). The “select treatise” indicates that a Cuban style of cooking involving the prime product of the island – sugar – had

18. Jensen 1988; Benítez-Rojo 1992; Méndez Rodenas 1998; Schmidt-Nowara 1999.

already developed. The intended audience was “all classes of society and in particular, gourmets, mothers, and restaurateurs.” In 1858 the *New Manual of the Catalan and Cuban Cook* by Juan Cabrisas (1995) appeared. The author writes that the book is intended to serve both aficionados of the “land of good wine,” as he calls Spain, as well as those with a “fondness” for the land of sugar (Cabrisas 1995:23-24). Although the author had worked in a well-known restaurant, his intended audience was housewives who cooked.

In his introduction, Cabrisas lists items that distinguish Cuban from Spanish cooking, such as *ajiaco*, *boniato*, *maíz*, *plátanos*, and *el Mondongo criollo*. In the long list of recipes, Cuban contributions are clear by descriptive adjectives, such as *Olla cubana* or *Arroz blanco criollo* or by their ingredients, such as *Yuca frita* or *Boniatado asado*. The variety of Cuban dishes attests to an already well-established local cuisine that the author has compiled so that his “dear readers may not forget them” (Cabrisas 1995:23).

In terms of ingredients, the generous embrace of native Cuban, foreign tropical, and African produce is striking. Some of this produce was introduced and nativized centuries earlier, such as the diverse banana genus (*Musa*) which originated in Southeast Asia, but others were plants indigenous to the Caribbean, such as *malanga* (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium*), *sagú* (*Maranta arundinacea*), and *mamey* (*Calocarpum sapota*). Most prominent among the African contributions are yams (*Dioscorea* spp.) and okra (*Hibiscus esculentus*), the latter known as *quimbombó* in Cuba. Dishes linked to Africa, such as *fufu* (a mash of plantains or starchy roots) and potages (thick stews eaten with fingers and accompanied by a starch) were also included.

In terms of produce, 46 percent of the vegetable dishes and 41 percent of the conserves feature fruits and vegetables foreign to Spain and probably never cultivated there (e.g., tamarind, guava, and papaya). Certainly, colonial cooks made do with what was locally available, but more importantly, the middle-class creole households for which the 1858 cookbook was written employed a broad diversity of plants that lack analogues in Spanish cuisine.<sup>19</sup> This native produce was largely supplied by Cuba’s *sitieros*.

One particularly important type of native produce in Cuban cooking is the *viandas*. *Vianda* in its Cuban sense is used to refer to a large and diverse group of roots and tubers such as the *boniatos* (*Ipomoea* spp. [sweet potatoes]) and *Dioscorea* spp. [yams], manioc (also called *cassava* [*yuca* in Cuban],

19. My emphasis on native and locally grown foods is not meant to obscure the fact that Cuba still imported a huge variety of foods. On one day in 1865 the following newly arrived imports were for sale on Havana’s wharf: rice, almond oil, olive oil, olives, garlic, brandy, tuna, saffron, anchovies, anise, almonds, dry cod, champagne, onions, pork, beef, conserves, sausages, plums, chestnuts, beans, ginger, flour, hams, licorice, lard, apples, corn, walnuts, oysters, potatoes, pimentos, cheese, sardines, salmon, grapes, and wine (*El Siglo* March 19, 1865).

*Manihot esculenta*), the native *malanga* (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium*), and green plantains (numerous varieties of *Musa X paradisiaca*, a few of *Musa acuminata*), usually served boiled or fried with savory seasoning (Roig 1975; Santiesteban 1997:422). *Viandas* are a unique feature of Antillean cuisine. Not only are roots, tubers, and plantains a relatively minor component of Iberian cooking, but no folk classification exists for these types of vegetables in Castillian Spanish (nor, for that matter, in Catalan or Basque). In contrast, no contemporary Cuban meal is considered complete without a side dish of *viandas* (Benjamin *et al.* 1986:57). Along with maize and rice, these cheap, calorie-rich foods have sustained Cubans for generations and have been their principal source of carbohydrates.

Since the 1959 Revolution, corn has suffered a decline in popularity due to its reputation as “poor man’s food.” Corn, “was not a preferred staple: hard times for pre-revolutionary workers and small farmers were often described as ‘the days when we ate *harina de maíz*’” (Pollitt 1979:19). Interestingly, however, *viandas* have not suffered the same fate. They continue to be quite a “respectable” feature of Cuban cooking, and many Cubans delight in the variety and special qualities of the *viandas*. Historian John Super (1985:2) notes that cuisines (which he calls “nutritional regimes”) “are usually dominated by one food, so essential to community survival that it has a quasidivine status. Examples include rice in China, taro in the Pacific, maize in Mexico, and cassava in the Caribbean.” I would argue that for Cuba, the quasi-divine food is not cassava (yuca) alone, but the entire class of starchy vegetables known as *viandas* that are “worshiped” for their variety.<sup>20</sup> Their symbolic power is reflected in Cuban beliefs that these foods have special medicinal powers.

In 1862, a third cookbook entitled *The Cook for the Sick, Convalescent, and Those with Lack of Appetite: Manual of Cuban Cooking* (Lagarika 1862), was published anonymously in Havana. It, too, carries many recipes with titles amended *a la cubana* or *criollo*. But it is also dominated by *viandas*; the chapter on “Vegetables and *Viandas*” is comprised almost entirely of the latter (81 percent of the recipes). *Malanga* and plantains, especially pureed or prepared as *fufu*, are said to be fortifying and easy on the digestive system. *Sagú*, a native arrowroot, is also considered a medicinal food. This association between *viandas* and medicine persists today. Modern botanical publications rarely fail to mention the medicinal uses of a plant, including *sagú* which one Cuban source says is “a healthful food for persons with delicate stomachs” (Roldán Oliarte 1940:444; also Roig 1974, 1975). In my own

20. Lauren Derby (1998:454-57) makes a similar case for the plantain in the Dominican Republic, though in an interesting contrast to Cuba, the plantain was blamed for causing the “backwardness” of the population in the nineteenth century. Although one of *El Siglo*’s editors thought *viandas* could “blacken” the eater, this was not a widespread anxiety, to judge by their prominence in Cuban cookbooks.

experience, *malanga*, plantains, and *sagú* were recommended by various individuals as amelioratives for my intestinal ills. One kind soul prepared them especially for me with assurances that I would soon be feeling better.

As suggested by the common *fufu* preparation, *viandas* also have a strong association with Afro-Cuban farming and cooking. An 1865 newspaper article worried that “our workers of color” were so convinced of the nutritious qualities of *viandas* that they ate too many of them and might prejudice their health.<sup>21</sup> In his biography, ex-slave Esteban Montejo describes the food that was available on the plantation, saying that although he liked pork and beef, “*Viandas* were the best of all, sweet potatoes, malanga (or taro), yams” (Barnet 1966:64). Beginning with Fernando Ortíz, African contributions to Cuban foodways have been openly acknowledged by Cuban scholars (Ortíz *et al.* 1956; Bolívar & González 1998).

Another clue that Cuba had developed an identifiable national cuisine by the mid-nineteenth century is that fact that the core repertoire has been relatively stable since the first cookbooks appeared. This does not mean, however, that Cuban eating habits have been unaffected by importation or by class differences. A strong international influence appears in the period following the American occupation. A 1926 cookbook (Crespo y Setien 1926) includes items such as French dishes requiring bechamel and hollandaise sauce, anglicisms such as “beefsteak” and “plum pudding,” as well as dishes with Spanish names that have a parenthetical descriptor regarding origin, such as *Santo Domingo, Mexico, or España*. However, identifiably Cuban dishes still comprise the majority of dishes and are frequently qualified with adjectives such as *a la habanera, cubana, or criollo*. A similar cookbook addressed to the newly identified *ama de casa* (housewife) appeared in 1940, with special directions for preparing foreign dishes, as well as traditional Cuban fare (González Pérez 1940). In the 1940s, a nutritional study in Cuba was valorized for providing the first analysis of “purely Cuban foods” (Neblett 1946). Despite international influence, the distinct character of Cuban cooking remained strong and identifiable in early twentieth-century cookbooks.

The question arises whether the “Cuban” recipes in these cookbooks represent class-specific eating preferences, or a more pan-Cuban pattern. Lowry Nelson’s 1946 sociological survey of rural Cuba examined peasants’ eating habits (Nelson 1950). Although he does not refer to specific recipes other than the ubiquitous *Arroz con pollo*, his generalizations are remarkably consistent with the repertoire of the cookbooks. He notes, “[I]ooming largest of all in the diets of rural Cubans are plantain and vegetables ... grown locally ... [such as] *boniatos* (sweet potatoes), *malangas, yuca* (cassava), *ñame* (yams), and potatoes” (Nelson 1950:208-11) – in other words, *viandas*. In rural households, *viandas* accounted by weight for 68 percent of the starchy foods consumed,

21. *El Siglo* July 4, 1865.

with rice trailing far behind. Nelson (1950:15) also notes that Cubans ate large amounts of beans and were "very fond" of meat when they could get it.

The Cuban Revolution, with its agrarian reforms, food rationing, experiments in agronomy, U.S. embargo, nutritional science, and eastern European imports, has certainly had a profound impact on Cuban cuisine. Yet the core foods and dishes identified as "traditionally Cuban" remain well-defined in the post-Revolution period. We can compare nineteenth-century recipes with those in a 1997 cookbook by the well-known Cuban cook, Nitza Villapol. Nearly 70 percent of the recipes in her modern Cuban cookbook correspond to those in the 1858 Cabrisas text. Some examples are *Ropa Vieja*, *Ajiaco*, and *Quimbombo en ensalada*. *Vianda* dishes, of course, dominate the chapters on stews and fried foods.

The importance of *viandas* to the Cuban diet and the fact that they have not been a major focus of large-scale agriculture has helped ensure survival of the small independent farmer, even during waves of socialized land reform (Benjamin *et al.* 1986:148-49). The historical and cultural roots of *viandas* and other "Cuban" foods are important for substantiating my claim that by the mid-nineteenth century, Cuba had developed a national cuisine.

I should elaborate on what I mean by "national cuisine," since it is an idea that may be more controversial than it first appears. As stated above, I have adopted Sidney Mintz' (1996:104) definition of cuisine: "the ongoing foodways of a region, within which active discourse about food sustains both common understandings and reliable production of the foods in question." This definition underscores two things I have been trying to establish for Cuban cuisine: it has its own special vocabulary and traditions that have survived to the present, and it has sustained a special form of local production. I therefore differ with sociologist Jack Goody (1982) who equates cuisine with elite, specialized cooking. In his sense of the word, "Cuban cuisine" might be an oxymoron, since what is identified as Cuban – *viandas*, fresh fruit off the tree, soups and stews – was not used to distinguish the classes, even in highly stratified pre-Revolutionary Cuba. When cuisine was used as a marker of social status (which it surely was), it was the generalized "international cuisine" of hotel chefs and French and American influence, not anything local or native. In fact, I would argue that one can identify a cuisine of *Cuba Grande* dependent on imports, industrial foods, and elaborate technique, as well as a cuisine of *Cuba Pequeña*, defined by native produce and influenced by African preparation methods.

Sidney Mintz (1996:104) has written that he considers "national cuisine" to be a contradiction in terms, since he sees nations as political entities that cut across and lump cultural regions. Regional cuisine, he argues on the other hand, is a classification that fits better with the realities of, for example, Provençal or Louisiana cooking. When I say Cuba developed a national cuisine sometime in the mid-nineteenth century, I am not using the term "nation"

in the strict sense of a state political entity, rather I mean it in the sense of Anderson's "imagined community." In this more sociological definition, nationality can redraw pre-existing regional and ethnic divisions on a larger cultural scale or be contiguous with them. The latter case applies to Cuba. I think it is clear that Cuba possessed a distinct cuisine by the middle of the nineteenth century. Cuba was not yet an independent nation-state when the first spate of Cuban cookbooks appeared on the scene, yet "Cubanness" and a growing national consciousness were ethnological realities. In none of my historic or contemporary written sources have I found the island broken down into regional cuisines, though in practice some variation in dishes and preparations occurs across the island.<sup>22</sup> Cubans talk in terms of Cuban cooking, which is contrasted to Spanish, American, or international styles. Nor do they place Cuban cuisine within a pan-Caribbean tradition. In its nineteenth-century origin and sense of nationality, Cuban cooking may be distinct from that of the Anglophone Caribbean, which did not develop in any self-conscious, standardized form until quite recently (Higman 1998).

In another way, national cuisine need not be a contradiction in terms. Sometimes a cuisine is explicitly defined and used by a nation-state for political purposes. I believe that just such a national, or perhaps better, "nationalist" cuisine has arisen in certain places and times when the acceptance of new foods, the rationing of old ones, and the support of particular regimes of production become part of the state project and patriotic duty. Revolutionary Cuba is one of these place-times.<sup>23</sup> In addition to the Revolutionary adage that, "everyone eats the same," Castro urged the eating of certain foods, especially native ones: "Why should we eat peaches? We were made to think that peaches were the best thing going, and when we'd visit someone's house they'd offer us peaches. So we all thought that ... peaches were better than mangoes, but peaches are expensive and foreign and mangoes are sweeter, cheaper, and much better" (Núñez Jiménez 1982:243). Edmundo Desnoës (1967:39, 43) harps on the theme that the bourgeoisie were inappropriately obsessed with food:

The only intelligent thing Pablo ever had to say would end up degenerating into a discussion about stupid food. All counterrevolutionaries turn into an endless intestine: obsessed by food. I'm sure that Pablo would love to carry some juicy filet mignons in his pockets as a sign of affluence; ... [i]t's revolting how Pablo and all the counterrevolutionaries are obsessed with food. I'm satisfied with a cup of coffee with milk, and a slice of toast.

22. One finds the occasional recipe from Santiago or Cienfuegos, but the idea of a distinctive regional cooking tradition is weakly developed, to judge by cookbooks and restaurant themes.

23. For example, Villapol's introduction to *Cuban Cuisine* (1997:9) discusses changes to Cuban diets affected by, "a recent revolutionary experience in which an underdeveloped agricultural nation struggles to find its way in the midst of a worldwide economic crisis."

The Cuban Revolutionary diet has changed over time with shifts in the global market and government programs to simultaneously reduce import costs and improve nutrition, but whether mangoes and soy are “in” or peaches and fish are “out,” the Revolution has urged Cubans to think about food production and consumption in patriotic terms.

The Castro Revolution was not the first time Cubans associated food with nationalist unity. One of the mythic echoes that connects the 1959 Revolution with the earlier wars of independence is the struggle to survive off the land that the guerillas endured in the mountains. The poetic figure who bridges these episodes of revolutionary Cuba is José Martí (1946a:593-94), who in his writings describes how the *mambís* made food out of what grew wild, such as mangoes which they ate “raw, grilled, boiled, fried” and made into a bread. In the hills, he recalls, “Cuba-Libre” meant wild honey mixed with water, symbolizing that the liberty of Cuba lay in an ability to live off the land. Martí expressed a preference for honey over sugar, in a symbolic rejection of the island’s export economy and all it represented. And, of course, *viandas* also figure prominently. James J. O’Kelly, a correspondent for the *New York Herald* in 1873 who followed a band of rebel soldiers in Oriente, wrote that “the principal foods of the *mambís* are sweet potato, plantain, squash, cassava, sugar cane, and sometimes corn” (Núñez & Núñez 1998:98).

Food and *el monte* (the uncultivated outback of the mountain ranges) continue to play a significant role in Cuba’s narratives about itself. One of the most remarkable pieces of evidence for this is the recent Havana publication entitled *La comida en el monte: Cimarrones, mambises y rebeldes* (“Food in the Hills: Runaway Slaves, Warriors, and Rebels”) (Núñez & Núñez 1998). The volume consists of an edited and annotated collection of quotations primarily concerning food during wartime from Esteban Montejo, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Máximo Gómez, Raúl Castro, and other Cuban heroes. The preoccupation with food and its importance in Cuba’s political struggles are inscribed in the book’s 341 pages of anecdotes that juxtapose significant events such as battles, assassinations, and strategy meetings with minute accounts of daily diets. Typical of these passages is Raúl Castro’s entry for January 1, 1958: “we breakfasted on sugared oranges and at mid-morning we heard shots” (Núñez & Núñez 1998:317).

As depicted in *La comida en el monte*, the two main sources for what Céspedes dubbed “*la comida mambisa*” (Núñez & Núñez 1998:74) are nature itself (in the form of wild food such as native fruits, roots, *jutía* [a large rodent], and honey) and the *campesinos* of the countryside whose stores are sometimes acquisitioned but more often graciously offered to the soldiers during each of Cuba’s four armed struggles. The *campesinos*, however, are themselves figured as part of the natural landscape, with little reference to their labor or the process of cultivation. In this narrative, the fight for liberty entails a sort of primordial rediscovery of the island’s native bounty which

frees the actors from dependence on an artificial and inequitable economic system. The book claims to “show the original essence of human culture in its relation to nature, which offers its products to feed and strengthen man in his fight for liberty” (Núñez & Núñez 1998:9). As their excerpts show, this discourse on food and natural bounty is not a recent invention of the editors. Céspedes, the man known as *Padre de la Patria*, was intensely preoccupied with food in the diary he kept from 1870 to 1874 during the Ten Years’ War. Although he frequently experienced hunger, he recounts how it was always resolved before long because “the resources of the island are inexhaustible” (Núñez & Núñez 1998:36).

#### SITIEROS: PRODUCERS AND HEROES

I have been using the term *sitio* in a broad sense to refer to a small, independent farm devoted to subsistence and minor production for the local market, without reference to the farmer’s landholding status. The vernacular terminology for Cuba’s myriad agricultural units – *ranchos*, *fincas*, *cafetales*, *centrales*, *colonias*, *ingenios*, etc. – is complex and difficult to pin down. *Sitiero* is similarly difficult to define. Other than the person who cultivates a *sitio*, there is little social identification carried in the term, in the sense that *sitieros* can be either black or white, relatively well-off private farmers, or wage workers working a rented garden plot. However, in the context of Cuba’s nationalist struggle, *sitiero* serves to encompass a noble aspect of the rural poor and to mask racial difference in the countryside. The *sitiero* is a proud and independent variant of the *campesino*, who has figured prominently in Cuba’s revolutionary rhetoric, much as the *jibaro* of Puerto Rico (Scarano 1996). The mythic *campesino* from Cuba’s nationalism has two faces: one the Afro-Cuban slave (and later the *liberto*), and one the white *guajiro*. Economically, *campesino* and *guajiro* are broad terms that lump together hand-to-mouth itinerant wage earners with relatively comfortable, settled *sitieros*. *Sitieros* are distinguished from both proletarian *campesinos* and well-off market farmers (whose operations are more likely to be called *fincas* or *potreros*) by their orientation towards self-sufficiency and their limited involvement – and thus limited dependence – on the market system. Although *sitieros* often do raise extra produce for cash sale, their main goal is self-provisioning.

Within the context of slavery, the *conuco*, or provision plot, represented a common strategy for meeting the subsistence needs of slaves. By allowing slaves to work their plot after hours, planters were relieved of much of the responsibility for feeding their slaves, aside from a stock supply of salt meat and perhaps dry corn. Esteban Montejo (Barnet 1994:25-26) describes the practice:

It was the small gardens that saved many slaves. They provided them real nourishment. Almost all the slaves had their *conucos*. They were little strips of dirt for gardening ... They grew everything there: sweet potato, squash, okra, corn, peas, horse beans, beans like limas, limes, yuca and peanuts. They also raised piglets. And so those products were sold to the *guajiros* who came straight from town ... But they never liked to sell their 'taters [*viandas*]. I learned from the old timers to eat 'taters, which are very nutritious.

As reflected in Montejo's account, slaves with *conucos* could raise a small surplus to trade or sell for household goods, or even to save money toward self-purchase. The symbolic importance of the *conuco* is highlighted by the comments of an observer in the 1850s who noted, "[s]ober and hard-working slaves often find freedom in the *conuco*" (García de Arboleya 1859:139).<sup>24</sup>

With emancipation (finalized in 1886), many ex-slaves made a transition from *conucos* to small freeholds, tenant plots, and squatter lands they called *sitios* (Scott 1985:245). Able to devote more of their labor to farming and probably working larger plots than the *conucos* of slavery, some Afro-Cuban *sitieros* could achieve a degree of economic self-reliance similar to that of their white counterparts. Still, *sitieros* of all colors were squeezed by the spread of sugar.

The role of ex-slaves and Cuban peasants in the wars of independence (Ten Years' War 1868-78, La Guerra Chiquita 1879-80, War of Independence 1895-98) has been a frequent theme in Cuban historiography.<sup>25</sup> A fragile coalition of interests was mustered for each of these struggles. Currents of peasant unrest melded with the political aspirations of the creole elite. And military necessity eventually forced an equivalency between slave emancipation and emancipation from colonialism. A topic that is less often examined in the literature is how the daily life of small farmers entailed a form of resistance to the colonial regime, though recent work by Rebecca Scott and Michael Zeuske (n.d.) has begun to reveal the dynamics of this world "on the edges and in the interstices" of the plantation. Ideologically, the association between political-economic emancipation and the self-sufficient *sitio* that *El Siglo* nationalists had forged in the 1860s became even stronger when the ranks of aspiring *sitieros* swelled with final abolition in 1886. Scott (1985: 244) notes that after emancipation, "[o]wners of plantations ... sought to block the development of possibilities that would allow former slaves to become self-sufficient." The acquisition of farmland was a common desire among Cuban ex-slaves working to define freedom after emancipation (Scott & Zeuske n.d.; Scott 2001). Those who remained landless agricultural workers often negotiated access to a garden plot as benefit of the job.

24. *Conucos*, however, cannot be understood solely as institutions of resistance, as they served planter interests as well. See Sartorius 1999.

25. Scott 1985; Pérez 1989; Ferrer 1999; García Martínez 2001; Zeuske 2001.

In 1899, the American Charles Pepper (quoted in Scott 1985:245) remarked,

The Cuban negro has a marked trait in the instinct of landownership. It is one of the standard complaints of the sugar planters that he clings to his cabin and his patch of ground to the detriment of successful cane-raising. He does not care to be swallowed up in the big plantation.

In the late nineteenth century, thousands of ex-slaves migrated to the eastern end of the island to settle the rugged land there that had not yet been used for monoculture. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the province of Oriente became the region most densely populated with small independent farmers, 41 percent of whom were Afro-Cuban (well above the national average of 10.8 percent). In Oriente, small farms under 33 acres accounted for 97 percent of all farms (versus 78 percent in the sugar area of Matanzas), and more significantly, accounted for roughly 66 percent of the land under cultivation (versus 32 percent in Matanzas) (Pérez 1989:81-2; also Ferrer 1999:17-21, 97-98). It is no coincidence that in the revolutionary period, Oriente took on a symbolic significance as the “most Cuban region of all of Cuba” (Pérez 1989:101). I argue that this was due to the double resistance of armed insurgency and subsistence agriculture led by Afro-Cubans in this region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They were the vanguard of *Cuba Pequeña*.

The other region closely linked to the War of Independence is the former Santa Clara province, which included the region of Cienfuegos, the focus of much recent scholarship. Although the valleys of this region were dominated by sugar agriculture, the edges of the plantations and the foothills served “as a refuge for small cultivators and others who wished to keep their distance from the world of sugar and slavery. Plantation owners came to see these hills as a source of danger – home to bandits, runaways and uncontrollable elements of various kinds” (Scott 2001:185).<sup>26</sup> These largely Afro-Cuban rural communities became rich sources of recruits for the revolutionary army. The overlap of soldier/*sitiero*/ex-slave is not a simple, predictable, nor universal one. However Orlando García Martínez (2001:172) makes a strong case that rural Afro-Cubans comprised the core of the Cienfuegos brigade and that in many of these local units, there was a “strong presence of ex-slaves and their descendants.”<sup>27</sup> Michael Zeuske (2001:194) says that, overall, Afro-Cubans comprised somewhere between 40 percent and 90 percent of the revolution-

26. The character and reputation of these settlements continued well into the postwar period (Scott 2001:208). Cf. Schwartz 1989.

27. García Martínez also makes a significant point regarding the relatively small number of officers of color and limited opportunities for advancement, particularly among illiterate peasants and ex-slaves. In some ways the Liberating Army created a new mixture of peoples and ranks and in other ways replicated old hierarchies.

ary army, and that the Cienfuegos region had a particularly high number of ex-slaves and first-generation *libertos*. Both ex-slave fathers and *liberto* sons wanted to wash away the lingering stigma of slavery and “become *Cubans*, according to José Martí’s criteria, through their participation in the Ejército Libertador” (Zeuske 2001:207).

Sugar planters and other elites in fact associated the “dangers” of black property-holding with banditry and revolution (Scott & Zeuske n.d.). Communities of *sitieros* such as San Antón, on the edges of Santa Rosalía plantation, became centers of intelligence, planning, recruitment, and deployment of rebel forces. Further, the roles of farmer and soldier could be filled simultaneously. Going to the *monte* required agricultural as well as martial skills since the guerrillas needed to clear land and grow crops to sustain their camps (Scott & Zeuske n.d.).

One could argue that the 1895-98 War of Independence, with devastating guerrilla attacks on fields and mills, was as much a war against sugar monoculture as a war against Spain.<sup>28</sup> The Spanish response reinforced the agricultural conflict behind the war by outlawing all subsistence agriculture and trade between country and city. They “reconcentrated” the rural population into temporary camps to enforce these bans (Pérez 1989:50, 54).

By the outbreak of the War of Independence, the figure of the *campesino* had become the underdog hero of the nation. José Martí (1946b:514) wrote in 1884,

Peasants make the best national dough [*masa*], the healthiest and wettest, because they tap directly into the runoffs and the rich soil of the land, on whose promise they live. Cities are the brain of nations, but the heart, where the blood pools and gets distributed, is in the country.<sup>29</sup>

In Martí’s writings on agriculture, he articulated the importance of national self-sufficiency as the only true source of “endless riches.” He expressed the revolutionary dream that each man would possess and cultivate a piece of ground and how “our Agricultural Gospel” consists in the “diversity and abundance of the small crops” (Martí 1946b:211, 476, 784). The *sitiero* figured prominently in Martí’s revolutionary romanticism.

The trend toward monoculture that colonial Cuba embarked upon in the mid-nineteenth century threatened “the elimination of the peasant as an independent farmer” (Pérez 1989:16). Although some reciprocal relations between small and large farms remained important to the Cuban economy, land seizures and buy-ups progressively pushed small farmers to smaller plots

28. It is worth noting that the two areas with the largest populations of black landowners, Oriente and Santa Clara, were important centers of insurgency (Scott 1985:247).

29. This passage is difficult to translate due to the double meaning of *masa* that Martí is playing with: *dough* and *mass* as in “the masses.”

and more marginal lands. For some investors, this strategy was “calculated to end the self-sufficiency of farmers and create a labor force disposed to work at low wages” (Pérez 1989:17).<sup>30</sup>

Agrarian reform and anti-imperialism were linked long before 1959. In 1896, the rebel army decreed that all of the lands of loyalists were to be seized and redistributed to independence soldiers as a reward for their service (Pérez 1989:49). Though this plan was never fully realized, it does reflect a land reform agenda held by the rank and file of the independence movement. After the war, veterans continued to press for land re-distribution and frequently used their backpay and pension (when they succeeded in getting it) to finance small rural land purchases (Scott & Zeuske n.d.). In 1912, Emilio Núñez (quoted in Pérez 1989:129), President of the Veterans Association, explicitly tied rural land reform to the well-being of the state,

we prefer that the lands of the State ... should be divided into small *fincas* [farms] and given to Cuban farmers, whether veterans or not, and thus increase our rural population, creating at the same time a *new foundation of riches for the country, the strong bulwark of the nation for the moral and economic defense of our independence* [emphasis added].

It is significant that Núñez’s remarks came at a time when Cubans were experiencing inflated food prices (20-70 percent on various staples from 1904 to 1912) due to monocultural pressures and increased dependency on imports, both precipitated by the American economic colonization that followed the war (Pérez 1989:139, 176-77).

By the early 1910s, modern agricultural enterprises were putting the same squeeze on small farmers in Oriente that other regions had felt under the Spanish in the mid-nineteenth century. For the Afro-Cubans in the east, the significance of this encroachment was particularly acute because they had carved their freedom out of small plots of land. An American traveler (quoted in Scott 1985:246) wrote in the 1890s that Cubans

seem to prefer the cultivation of small patches of ground for themselves, rather than working for wages ... the colored Cubans, at least, seem to consider that the course which they follow in this respect especially demonstrates their personal independence, which they have been anxious to establish since they have been freed from slavery.

Being pushed out of their lands with the second big boom in sugar capitalism, “[t]he loss of self-sufficiency portended the default of a promise” (Pérez 1989:140). Thus, Cuba’s “Race War” of 1912, centered in Oriente, can be interpreted as a defense of emancipation itself, which for these farmers meant the defense of the *sitiero* way of life (cf. Helg 1995).

30. In Jamaica, the ruling class also recognized subsistence farming as a hindrance to capitalist monoculture and attempted to prevent ex-slaves from obtaining land. See Holt 2000.

Although in the nineteenth century more and more land was being converted to monoculture, the population – both slave and free – was also growing and the need for foodstuffs grew proportionately. For a while, this helped ensure the survival of independent farmers at least within the marginal lands of the countryside. During peacetime, *sitieros* were important as producers, just as they were important as soldiers during wartime.

National statistics on food crops are difficult to come by for nineteenth-century Cuba. However, according to David Sartorius (1999:6), in the mid-nineteenth century, the Cienfuegos region, “cultivated a disproportionate amount of the island’s meat and vegetables” and most of this food production originated from the region’s 976 *sitios*. A 1853 reference in the Cienfuegos city records highlights the vital place of *viandas* to local subsistence, as well as the fact that *sitieros* were marketing their produce in town. Responding to a shortage of *viandas*, city officials lifted restrictions on the produce market and allowed *sitieros* to come into town to sell *viandas* direct to the public (Rousseau & Díaz de Villegas 1920:120). Although rice and corn were significant staples, by 1860 regional crop yields indicate that *viandas* had become the most important crop by volume (Rousseau & Díaz de Villegas 1920:25-26). Other statistics track the number of sugar plantations, cattle ranches, coffee farms, and *sitios* in the Cienfuegos region across the nineteenth century. In 1838, *sitios* represented 53 percent of the total number of *fincas* (or farms). In 1862, they reached 62 percent, at which level they remained stable in a survey of 1870. In 1919, however, this percentage had dropped to 39 percent due to the aggressive expansion of sugar (Rousseau & Díaz de Villegas 1920:28).

An agricultural survey of pre-Revolutionary Cuba in 1946 reveals both how monoculture had come to dominate the land base and how numerous small farmers and *sitieros* continued to scrape by in the margins of the latifundia (70 percent of agricultural concerns controlled only 11 percent of the land base). According to the census, 70 percent of Cuban farms had less than 62 acres (Forster & Handelman 1985:175; cf. Nelson 1950:49). By this time, peanuts had been introduced as a major crop, and maize production had significantly increased over nineteenth-century levels. The yields of *viandas* and bananas combined equaled that of maize (Nelson 1950:50). Although some of this corn was certainly used for livestock feed, the overall picture supports informal observations that Cubans consumed more corn during years of hardship, such as the period from the 1930s to 1950s, when the nutritional level of rural Cubans may have been well below that of the peacetime years of the nineteenth century.

One of the major goals of the 1959 Revolution was to improve the living conditions of Cuban peasants (Pérez 1989:161). If they had not already known about the privations of the rural poor, Castro’s revolutionaries experienced it first-hand as guerrillas in Cuba’s eastern mountain range in 1958

and 1959. The soldiers came to feel indebted to the *campesinos* who shared their harvests despite their own keen hunger. In his diary, Raúl Castro frequently noted the generosity of people in the countryside and how they essentially kept the forces alive (Núñez & Núñez 1998:285, 287, 294, 298). As early as January 4, 1958, long before the Revolution adopted the socialist mantle, Raúl promised in his diary that the new leadership would repay the rural people with a redistribution of land (Núñez & Núñez 1998:300).

This promise was borne out. In two stages, in 1959 and 1963, agrarian reform laws were passed that limited private ownership of agricultural land to a maximum of 67 hectares (5 *caballerías*). Sugar fields, pastureland, and farmland in excess of this amount was expropriated and either dedicated to state farms and cooperatives or redistributed to *sitieros* who held less than the 67-hectare minimum considered necessary to sustain a family. A study by Brian Pollitt compared the pre- and post-Revolutionary status of agricultural workers in Cuba. His findings underscore the fact that the immediate impact of Cuba's agrarian reform was not so much the collectivization of a landless proletariat (which Marxist rhetoric idealized), as an improvement in the ability of peasants to be individually self-sufficient for their food (Pollitt 1979; cf. Forster & Handelman 1985:187). In a survey of over 1,000 rural households in Cuba, Pollitt and his team found that approximately 70 percent of the population worked for wages in 1957, while about 30 percent were independent farmers and ranchers. A further finding was that this breakdown did not easily coincide with "landless proletariat" and "landed farmers" because 38 percent of those who worked for wages also reported having access to plots of land for subsistence cultivation. Pollitt calls this class the "semi-proletariats."<sup>31</sup> By these figures, over half (approximately 57 percent) of Cuba's rural population were at least partially supporting themselves as *sitieros*. In 1966, after the Agrarian Reforms, this number had grown to 74 percent (Pollitt 1979: Tables 3, 5, 7-9).<sup>32</sup>

This is a surprising result – the "privatization" of food production in the context of a socialist revolution. That the Cuban government facilitated this transition at the same time that it embarked upon bold experiments in modern agronomy on its state farms gives testimony to the fact that the Revolution, if it were to involve the peasantry, had to respect the latter's "long-standing desire to become private farmers" (Pollitt 1979:12). In 1950, Nelson (1950: 100) had anticipated the agrarian agenda of the Revolution by noting the deep dissatisfaction and economic hardships of the Cuban peasantry, as well as the "profound passion of peasants to possess the land on which they work."

31. This mixed strategy dates to the early postemancipation period (Scott & Zeuske n.d.).

32. Nelson (1950:16, 15-16) notes that sugar workers were usually provided with a plot of land.

Pollitt, as well, found in his 1966 surveys that Cuban rural workers expressed a high degree of "land-hunger." Over 90 percent of rural workers responded that they would like access to land-plots if they did not already have land, or larger plots if they did (Pollitt 1979:13). Nearly all respondents also made it clear that these plots were primarily for household food production rather than market (cf. Nelson 1950:137). Their desires may reflect a strategy of maximizing security in unstable political and economic times – a concern that may have been particularly heightened among Cuba's peasantry in 1959 due to a precipitous drop in food production on the island in the 1950s (Bergman 1985). Some authors have gone so far as to suggest that the Revolution itself was "caused" by hunger (Wilkie & Manuel Moreno-Ibáñez 1985:79). It was certainly a contributing factor. A 1956 rural survey of Cuba found that 91 percent of respondents were consuming insufficient amounts of calories and protein (Forster & Handelman 1985:176). Just prior to the Revolution, "the typical agricultural worker and his family ate less than comparable Cuban families twenty-two years earlier" (Forster & Handelman 1985:177). The sense of crisis and insecurity that the individual peasant or *sitiero* felt on the eve of the Revolution was shared by many who were concerned about the national economy that "there is the insecurity that comes from an economy geared to a single crop and a market dependent upon foreign consumption" (Nelson 1950: 103). In this way, the land reform platform of the peasantry intersected with the economic platform of the Revolution.

Detailed data collected by the National Agrarian Reform Institute (INRA) during the reform process provide a picture of *sitios* in the early 1960s. Thousands of smallholders were surveyed, with the names of family members, their ownership status, livestock and vehicles, acreage, and specific crops recorded. A sample of approximately fifty survey records selected for the Cienfuegos region (*barrios* of Soledad and Arimao) show that, as they had in the nineteenth century, *viandas* dominated, followed by corn, beans, fruit trees, and other vegetables such as tomatoes and squash.<sup>33</sup> Much of this produce was clearly intended to support the farmer's family, as it was sown beside small cash crops of sugar. Other farms produced relatively large amounts of *viandas*, such as *malanga* or yuca, for local markets, while a diverse garden plot was maintained for private consumption. Still others owned small orchards of mango, avocado, or banana trees and probably used their yield to acquire store-bought items. The variability and number of permutations in these farming strategies is striking. Clearly, each farmer used what they had inherited from previous generations in terms of land and stock and adapted it to suit current needs. Self-sufficiency seems to have been a high priority, or an economic necessity, as the smallest plots were the most variously planted, with no crop appearing to be planted with the intention of producing a surplus. Even the

33. Instituto Cubano de Cartografía y Castastro 1961-63.

relatively large *finca*s did not neglect the family garden and a small collection of chickens, pigs, and the occasional milk cow.

Significantly, this high value placed on self-sufficiency was exactly what the new Cuban state was stressing on a national level. Nelson (1950:105-6) had noted in 1950:

[f]eelings of national pride lead [Cuba] to want freedom from economic dependence upon other countries ... [Cubans' thoughts] have turned ... in the direction of a policy of diversification and self-sufficiency. They realize that the ups and downs of the United States economy, its booms and busts, spell only instability for Cuba and misery for its people, especially if they adhere to a policy of extreme reliance upon one crop. It is this experience which has led to demands of the peasants for agrarian reform, for driving out the foreigner, for distributing the land among smaller holders, and for a national policy of partial food autarchy.

By "autarchy" Nelson means the Greek *autarky*, or economic self-sufficiency, not the anglicized *autarchy* that usually refers to a form of despotism, though the slippage ironically underscores the choices that Cubans were faced with on the eve of the Revolution. It is also important to note that although the peasants agitating for these reforms were a racially mixed group, farmers of color, with the least secure access to provision plots, had the most to gain from reform. According to Nelson's 1946 census (1950:169, Table 22), whereas white farmers were relatively evenly distributed between owners, cash renters, share renters, and wage workers, the largest sector of mulatto farmers were share renters (38.3 percent) and the largest sector of rural negro residents were wageworkers (51.1 percent).

Pollitt suggests that on the individual level, the commitment to food self-sufficiency, even among income-earning families, was reinforced in the 1960s by the U.S. embargo and the rationing system of the Cuban government. These conditions produced, "a rationed 'basket' of foodstuffs containing exotic substitutes for familiar staples of the rural diet. Imports of rice, black beans, lard and *bacalao*, for example, were cut sharply" (Pollitt 1979: 14). Interestingly, Pollitt (1979:15) goes on to posit a cultural reason for the Cuban peasant's attachment to subsistence agriculture. A hunger for "traditional" Cuban foods lay behind land hunger.

A myriad of factors may be adduced to explain why an overwhelming majority of Cuba's agricultural wage-workers (and, it might be added, a good many non-agricultural urban workers) wanted land-plots in 1966. In this writer's judgement, the most important of them all, imparting real "sharpness" to "land-hunger," was the popular desire to maintain or increase pre-revolutionary consumption-levels of certain *traditionally preferred staples such as rice, beans and various roots and tubers* while increasing the consumption of items such as poultry, pork and beef that had

been relative luxuries for many prior to 1959. The Revolution provided employment enabling such workers to obtain a stable, year-round money-income. *Land-plots provided them with the means to ensure that the most elemental components of their real income – food – corresponded in some way to the patterns of consumption historically associated with such stable employment and income* [emphasis added].

Thus, although their standard of living may have been improving through increased wages and reduced housing costs as a result of the Revolution, Cubans' *perception* of well-being resided in the ability to indulge in a Cuban cuisine that had been defined a century earlier.

This cultural explanation helps resolve conflicting reports on the status of Cuba's food supply since the Revolution. Forster and Handelman (1985:174) note that many who left in the 1980s as exiles (most of whom were urban workers) complained of inadequate diets, yet foreign observers have generally praised the nutritional equalization that the Revolution accomplished. Although imports of soy, wheat, and vegetable oil may have improved the average Cuban diet in terms of protein and calories, for many Cubans these are not deemed adequate substitutes for culturally valued foods such as pork, black beans, and *viandas*.

A number of very complex state policy maneuvers and reversals vis-à-vis the small independent farmer in Cuba have occurred since the Revolution and the first Agrarian Reforms. The Cuban government's relationship with the smallholder has been ambivalent. While the Agrarian Reforms actually increased the number of private property owners, radical policy makers in the late 1960s wanted to work towards the eventual elimination of the private farmer. These offensives, however, met with serious resistance.

[T]he late 1960s marked a low point in relations between the revolutionary regime and the private farm sector. Although most peasants had benefited from rural health and educational programs or from the agrarian reforms, they still clung to their private plots and the right to sell their produce on the free market. Such "bourgeois values" were obviously anathema to the Guevarist policymakers of that period. (Forster & Handelman 1985:185)

Food shortages and the failed 1970 sugar harvest forced the government to reconsider its policies. Although still tightly regulated, today the private farmer is not only tolerated, but recognized as a necessary contributor to the Cuban domestic economy. Cuba now depends on private farm production for fruits, vegetables, tubers, and some grains. Smallholders with plots averaging 13.5 hectares control upwards of 40 percent of Cuba's cultivated land (Forster & Handelman 1985:188, n45).

Today a greater number of small farmers can subsist on their plots than before the Revolution, and most continue to make this their first planting prio-

rity. Due to the Agrarian Reform Movement, nearly all small farmers now legally possess their plots. The ratio of different crops has fluctuated with policy changes, but the basic inventory of *sitio* crops has not radically changed since the mid-nineteenth century (Benjamin *et al.* 1986). Market access has been the feature that has changed the most frequently in the last thirty years, with farmers at times banned from selling direct to the public, required to sell specific crops (or all their surplus crops) to the state at fixed prices, or encouraged to work together in cooperatives. However, the food crisis of the Special Period in the early 1990s precipitated a reopening of local food markets and a liberalization of direct-to-the-public sales by *sitieros*. This restored a major aspect of the earlier farm-to-market system, though it is restricted to the domestic peso market.

In my fieldwork in Cienfuegos in the summer of 1999, interviewees were (unusually) unanimous in asserting that the new market reforms have resulted in a greater variety and improved quality of produce available in the local market. Some items, such as certain varieties of peppers, tomatoes, and *boni-atos*, are being seen in the stalls for the first time in years. This is the kind of produce that state farms and cooperatives have not been able to produce efficiently on a large scale, but which are ideal for the small independent farmers, whose yields are higher due to intensive hand-cultivation. Since the 1960s, small farmers have grown most of the nation's *viandas* and vegetables (Forster & Handelman 1985:190). The great demand for these items attests to the conservation of Cuban culinary traditions. In the last thirty years, Cuban food habits have been greatly affected by the U.S. embargo, the introduction of eastern European goods, an interdiction on shellfish consumption, new health initiatives, manipulations of the black market, and agricultural experimentation by the Cuban government. These changes in diet, however, were viewed by most Cubans I spoke with as hardships and, if they are lucky, temporary hardships. This includes soy substitutes and fillers for meat, dairy, and grain products, as well as the scarcity of Cuban favorites, such as pork, lard, and fruit conserves. In urban areas in particular, periodic shortages in *viandas* have caused public dissatisfaction and at times appear to have forced the hand of the government in market reforms. When the more "traditional" foods are made available, they are quickly sold out. The recent restoration of direct market access for *sitieros* was necessitated by a steady demand for the mainstays of Cuban cuisine that cannot be procured on the *libreta* (which entitles a household to a basic ratio of rice, beans, oil, eggs, a little meat and dairy, and soap). The *non-libreta* items in highest demand are *viandas* and fruits.

The Revolutionary government has, despite its ambivalence toward private farms, supported Cuba's food self-sufficiency in basic ideological ways, particularly in its turn away from importation and toward native Cuban products. The late 1950s were imbued with a passion for all things Cuban. Louis Pérez (1999:484) notes, "Once more consumption became a way to affirm

nationality, but now the products were Cuban-made. Advertisers stressed the virtues of locally produced merchandise ... A billboard sign along the highway to Pinar del Río proclaimed: 'Chewing Gum, No! Malanga, Si!'" Historically, the discourse of revolution made *campesinos* into national heroes and Cuba's rural folk had, indeed, armed themselves in four struggles. *Sitieros* were a special class of *campesino* because they were the "fighters" (or *mambís*) among exploited agricultural workers. In peacetime as well as war, *sitieros* had opposed monocultural imperialism, consciously or unconsciously, by means of their daily life. Their insistence on self-sufficiency was tolerated by the Castro government because it came out of a *Cuba Pequeña* counter-tradition that the Revolution had embraced.

In the late twentieth century, subsistence agriculture in Cuba was protected from the pressures of capitalism that small farmers elsewhere in Latin America have experienced (Bergman 1985:128). Obviously, despite its agricultural "modernization" campaign, Cuba dares not follow the same cut-throat dedication to monoculture that capitalist sugar bosses had pursued. Socialist Cuba has been forced to accept the *sitieros*' dedication to private land ownership and to recognize their importance to the domestic food market.

"For generations an independent system of subsistence agriculture flourished on the edges of a capitalist economy. Sometimes it was a tense coexistence, sometimes a conflicting one" (Pérez 1989:189). With the 1956-59 Revolution, Castro and Guevara encountered a tradition of rebellion, a spirit of independence, and a threatened way of life in the heart of rural Cuba. Raúl Castro wrote in his wartime diary: "The peasants are fighting for their lands, that legally should not belong to anyone except those that work them" (Núñez & Núñez 1998:299). Reviving a suppressed counter-discourse of Cuban nationalism that elevated *Cuba Pequeña* over *Cuba Grande*, "the grievances of peasants became the grievances of all Cubans ... This provided the common ground for collective action" (Pérez 1989:195). The past did not predict the present, but it fed a set of ideas, sentiments, and frustrated desires that resonated with the needs of the day. Writing presciently in the 1940s, Nelson (1950:103-4) remarked,

Today Cuba is trying to find an alternative to the speculative economy based on sugar. It is looking with nostalgia on its past, when its peasantry possessed the land and was attached to it by a sense of property to it. There seems to be a feeling of guilt that the large sugar plantation was ever allowed to develop. The latter is regarded ... as a monster to be slain.

#### CONCLUSION: SITUATING ON A *SITIO*

In the summer of 1999, I made several visits to a *sitio* in the Cienfuegos region where I interviewed the family about their opinions and habits with

regard to food and farming. Ramona and Evelio are in their sixties and seventies and live on a *sitio* she inherited from her father. He was born to a slave mother and fought as a *mambí* before settling down to raise fruits and vegetables.

I learned from these visits that the repertoire I had seen in Cuban cookbooks was very much alive in oral tradition in the countryside, where Ramona shared with me her recipes for *potaje*, squash, and *viandas*. She and Evelio also value native plants and *viandas* for their medicinal qualities. In a walk around the *sitio*, Evelio noted among others the *sagü* plant, which he said fortifies children, the sick, and the old. He also mentioned that a banana *fufu* is good for children, especially when made from the *burro* variety (*Musa X paradisiaca* var.).

While they lament the inability to procure favorite imports such as peach jam and yellow cheese since the Revolution, Ramona and Evelio are grateful and proud that they can produce all they need because “the *libreta* is not enough to live on.” Ramona says the people in the country are better off because they have a greater variety of food and they could survive without the *libreta* if needed.<sup>34</sup> They produce everything from coffee and the sugar to sweeten it, to corn for the chickens, charcoal for the stove, and every type of Cuban *vianda*. A market truck comes around to purchase what small surplus they produce. Evelio says that *boniato*, yuca, and maize get good prices.

In our walks through the *sitio*, I counted at least forty-six varieties of cultivated, edible plants. Some were cultivated in larger quantities than others, but no cash crop predominated. Ramona and Evelio emphasize that this impressive diversity in the products of the earth is a measure of their good “luck” and quality of life. The *sitio* is a meaningful microcosm. Variety is a value that characterizes Cuban national cuisine as a whole. Ramona and Evelio share with other Cubans a standard that evaluates the satisfaction of their diet according to its variety, particularly of fruits and *viandas*. It is not something they take for granted, but they know that as *sitieros* they can satisfy this type of Cuban hunger. If they have a surplus and access to local urban markets, they can help satisfy it for others.

Just as important to Ramona and Evelio is the degree of self-sufficiency afforded by the *sitio*: a measure of Ramona and Evelio’s quality of life is their ability to be independent of others, including the socialist state. They do not barter with their neighbors, unlike city dwellers who are constantly trading unwanted *libreta* items and black market goods.<sup>35</sup> Ramona affirmed in strong terms that each *sitio* was “independent” now, as well as in the past. Independen-

34. City dwellers in Cienfuegos whom I interviewed concurred in this view.

35. Nelson (1950:64) also found little evidence of barter in his rural survey of the 1940s. Evelio trades a little with his neighbors for seed stock and starter plants, but not generally for food.

dence and self-sufficiency for the *sitiero* is not simply a matter of survival, but also of pride. This value of self-sufficiency may have its roots in the experience of slavery, where "freedom" meant cutting the ties of dependence as well as coercion. What is fascinating about this tradition is that what is true for the *sitiero* is also true for the Cuban nation. Throughout its struggles to gain independence from Spain, from U.S. economic imperialism, and from the whims of global markets in a complex political world, *Cuba Pequeña* has pursued the dream of self-sufficiency in its food supply. It has never actually achieved this goal but, like Ramona and Evelio who still collect their *libreta* entitlements and purchase store-bought extras when they can, Cuba has tried to valorize its ability to be independent of foreign imports *if* the need arises.

Although one of my aims here has been to trace continuities and a certain stability in Cuban national cuisine and its relationship to small independent farming, an important feature that has allowed this continuity is the adaptability of the Cuban diet, as well as the small farmer. After centuries of plant importation and experimentation, Cuban farmers have settled into a repertoire that has remained relatively stable since at least the middle of the nineteenth century – yams, potatoes, yuca, *malanga*, squash, tomatoes, bananas, corn, peanuts, and all the various fruit trees. But this repertoire is not entirely static nor is the *sitiero* a relic of the past. Evelio has an actively experimental attitude toward cultivation. He is constantly seeking new seed stocks and he clearly takes a good deal of pleasure in finding new plants and new uses. On the national scale, Cuba has prided itself on its agronomy programs and its experiments to advance both Cuba's self-sufficiency and its production of exports. Though they treasure the traditional meal of *viandas*, beans, rice, and pork, Cubans have not entirely rejected the state's effort to achieve nutritional goals cheaply with new foods. The wild success of pizza and hot dogs is just one example. Though these do not sound healthy by contemporary standards, one must remember that Cuban peasants at the time of the Revolution suffered malnutrition not from vitamin deficiencies, which their varied diet of fruits and vegetables largely supplied, but from protein and basic carbohydrates (Benjamin *et al.* 1986). Many Cubans have also come to recognize the ill effects of heavy lard consumption and appear content with its vegetable substitutes. Some are even beginning to avoid sugar, the hidden staple of the Cuban diet.

Cuban cooking was dramatically affected by the U.S. embargo. Prior to the Revolution, over 70 percent of Cuba's imported foodstuffs came from the United States. Cubans (Ramona and Evelio among them) had grown accustomed to canned sardines, peaches, processed cheese, and Campbell's tomato soup. But after the Revolution, they reverted to a more "native" diet once the embargo was enacted, a move which took on patriotic connotations through the rhetoric of the leadership (Benjamin *et al.* 1986:19; Pérez 1999:10, 72).

Thus, the adaptability of Cuban cooking has not so much spelled the demise of traditional foods as ensured their survival through the uncertain fluctuations of the Cuban economy.

These echoes in the themes of variety, self-sufficiency, and adaptability that reverberate between Ramona and Evelio's farm and the Cuban national experience are indicative of a deeper symbolic parallel between the *sitio* and the Cuban nation, a symbolic parallel that long predates Castro and Guevara's embrace of the Cuban peasantry. This iconic connection was forged through a build-up of discourses and experiences linking Cuban nationalism, cooking, and agrarian resistance. Cuba developed a cuisine – a system of food meaning and production – in the mid-nineteenth century that helped define “native Cuba.” These meanings and modes of production were in their way revolutionary. Today the Cuban nation represents itself as the triumph of *Cuba Pequeña*, and it valorizes that which the *sitiero* embodies – bountiful nature, a spirit of self-sufficiency, and the struggle for emancipation. *Viandas* at every Cuban table flow from the *sitio*. The *sitio*, and the nation, are imagined as Eden-like islands surrounded by profit-seeking plantations.

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RICHARD PRICE

MAROONS IN SURINAME AND GUYANE: HOW MANY  
AND WHERE

While conducting research with Sally Price for a book (R. & S. Price 2002) about Maroons in Guyane (French Guiana) – all of whom have recent or ancestral roots in Suriname – I have come to realize that the Maroon population figures routinely used in the scholarly and popular literature are considerably out of date, for both Suriname and Guyane, as well as for the Maroon diaspora in the Netherlands.<sup>1</sup> This brief essay is intended to provide new estimates, some of which have startling implications.

In the literature on Suriname, there has been a long-standing tradition of keeping population figures for the Saramaka and Ndyuka at rough parity, those for the Matawai, Paramaka, and Aluku at (a very much smaller) rough parity, and those for the Kwinti much smaller still. Without reviewing here the history of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century estimates (by soldiers, planters, colonial administrators, and others), I can report that by 1900, there was general agreement on the population sizes at that time: approximately 4,000 Ndyuka, 4,000 Saramaka, 600 Matawai, 400 Aluku, 400 Paramaka, and 200

1. I wish to thank the following friends and colleagues who generously shared their knowledge and experience by criticizing drafts of this paper and contributing key information and insights: Chris de Beet and Miriam Sterman (who provided Matawai numbers and geographical distributions), Ken Bilby (who provided comments on Aluku numbers and on intermarriage), Wim Hoogbergen (who provided general comments), Jean Hurault (who sent me his recent study of upriver Aluku demography), Fergus MacKay (who commented on the deteriorating health situation in the interior of Suriname and its effects on demography), Gert Oostindie (who provided general criticisms), André Pakosie and Thomas Polimé (who each provided data on Ndyuka numbers and distributions in Suriname and the Netherlands), and Bonno Thoden van Velzen (who provided detailed figures and distributions for Ndyukas in the Suriname interior, and made numerous helpful comments). The field research that undergirds many of the data presented here was carried out jointly with Sally Price, who also carefully criticized the text. The final synthesis and analysis is, of course, nobody's responsibility but my own.

Kwinti – a total of 9,600 Maroons. By the end of the 1960s, a combination of the first extensive anthropological fieldwork with these populations, the first (however flawed) Suriname government census of the interior, and other data produced a new consensus: Saramakas and Ndyukas were each said to number 15,000-20,000, Matawais, Alukus, and Paramakas each about 2,000, and the Kwintis less than 500 – a total of 36,500-46,500 Maroons (see R. Price 1976:3-4). Since that time, scholars have gradually adjusted these figures by modest increments (usually after corresponding with one another, which meant that the estimates were not independent). By the 1990s, the scholarly consensus was that Saramakas and Ndyukas each numbered 24,000, Matawais, Alukus, and Paramakas each 2,000-2,500, and the Kwintis 500 – a total of some 55,000 Maroons (see, for example, the summaries in Scholtens 1994:10-11 and in S. & R. Price 1999:19). My current research suggests that these figures now require significant modification, including a more-than-doubling of the total population of Maroons.<sup>2</sup>

The table summarizes my current understandings. The remainder of the article provides supporting evidence, analysis, and sources, as well as brief discussion of the implications of these upward revisions.

	Suriname "interior"	Paramaribo	F.G. interior	F.G. coast	Netherlands	Total
Ndyukas	24,000	8,000	3,000	11,000	4,500	50,500
Saramakas	25,000	7,000	–	14,500	4,000	50,500
Alukus	–	–	3,900	2,000	100	6,000
Paramakas	2,300	500	500	2,300	400	6,000
Matawais	1,000	2,900	–	–	100	4,000
Kwintis	170	400	–	–	30	600
Total	52,470	18,800	7,400	29,800	9,130	117,600

N.B.: For the Ndyuka, "Suriname 'interior'" includes both the Tapanahoni/Lawa and the Cottica regions, with the population divided almost exactly evenly between the two. For the Saramaka, "Suriname 'interior'" includes villages both above and below the lake. In addition to sites listed in the table, a growing number of Maroons – perhaps several hundred – now reside in the United States, principally in Los Angeles, New York, Miami, and Boston, and a small number of Alukus reside in metropolitan France.

2. I cannot deal adequately here with the growing incidence of intermarriage among groups, and its eventual consequences for identity and ethnicity. For purposes of this essay, I am considering only children with two Maroon parents to be Maroons and assuming that such children choose one or another primary Maroon identity (Aluku or Saramaka or Ndyuka, for example). As early as the 1970s, De Beet and Sterman remarked on the occurrence of intermarriage among Matawai migrants in Paramaribo, finding that a significant proportion married non-Matawais – most often Saramakas (1982:464-67). Bilby's survey of 547 Aluku marriages in the 1980s found that while only 4 percent involved non-

In Suriname, the 1960s and 1970s saw vigorous growth in the Maroon populations, as hospitals and clinics proliferated in the interior and infant mortality declined. During these years, rates of natural increase (natality minus mortality) were measured at 2 percent for the Matawai (De Beet & Sterman 1981:398), and there is reason to believe that even higher rates prevailed among the other groups.<sup>3</sup> By 1980, large numbers of Maroons – “almost half of the Matawai population” (De Beet & Sterman 1981:427) plus significant numbers of Saramakas, Ndyukas, and Paramakas – had settled in and around Paramaribo, and several thousand additional Maroons, including a large number of Western-educated Saramaka Christians from the village of Ganzee, had already moved to the Netherlands.

But it was the Suriname civil war (1986-92) and its aftermath that most directly affected Maroon demography during the second half of the twentieth century. Not only did the war displace at least 10,000 Maroons (mainly Cottica Ndyukas), but it closed clinics and hospitals throughout the interior and led to a still-unquantified but clearly significant rise in mortality at all ages. It also accelerated out-migration from Maroon villages all over the interior toward Paramaribo, the coast of Guyane, and the Netherlands. Leaving aside the devastating human and social costs of the war, and the growing impoverishment of Suriname Maroon populations in general, it is clear that since the 1980s, deteriorating social, economic, and medical conditions have led to a demographic stagnation among those Maroons who have remained in the interior of Suriname. Since the end of the war, mining and forestry projects have blighted the physical environment (encouraging, for example, mosquito development) and the social environment (bringing prostitution and AIDS). In the Suriname interior, the rate of malaria is now the highest in all of

Maroons, fully 25 percent involved non-Aluku (but still-Maroon) spouses – roughly, 16 percent Ndyukas, 4 percent Paramaka, 4 percent Saramaka, 1 percent Matawai, and a single union with a Kwinti (Bilby 1990:621). Today in Guyane (as in Paramaribo and the Netherlands) such intermarriage is increasing. For the first time, for example, a small number of Saramaka women are marrying Aluku or Ndyuka men (marriages between Saramaka men and other Maroon women have been common for decades).

3. During the 1960s and 1970s, Saramaka and Ndyuka societies were more economically stable than Matawai, and had considerably less out-migration. Our own field data on Saramaka reproductive histories from the period suggests a higher rate of increase than for the Matawai – closer, perhaps, to 3 percent. (As we will see below, rates higher than 4 percent are now common among Maroons living in Guyane.) In general, the major encouragements to Maroon demographic increase would seem to be economic stability or growth, access to health care facilities, and a controlled disease environment – the precise opposite of what has actually happened in the wake of the 1980s civil war and recent mining/forestry incursions, which have brought AIDS and rampant malaria. In retrospect, the 1960s and 1970s were, for the Ndyuka and Saramaka (and probably the Paramaka), a privileged moment of rapid demographic expansion.

South America and HIV infection is said to be in the upper 20 percent range.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, population growth among the 55 percent of Maroons who live outside the Suriname “interior” has, as we shall see, been soaring.

The Maroon population in the Netherlands, which had consisted largely of Western educated families, jumped as a result of the civil war, and many of those living there today are illegal immigrants (making population estimates especially difficult). Ndyukas and Saramakas clearly predominate, with the largest concentrations in Amsterdam Zuid-Oost, Tilburg, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Zeist, Den Haag, and Almere. I estimate conservatively that some 8 percent of all Maroons (more than 9,000 people) now live in the Netherlands; some of my correspondents (see note 1) would put the actual figures at closer to 13 percent (15,000 people).

Across the border in Guyane, the past two decades have witnessed a demographic explosion among Maroons. To a large extent, this has been masked from public view by the large number of other “problems” recently experienced by the inhabitants of this special corner of overseas France – rapid but highly artificial economic development, massive illegal immigration of Brazilians, Haitians, and others, and soaring crime rates. Though there is vague awareness of a recent increase in the Maroon presence, few Guyanais have any idea of its scale. Christiane Taubira-Delannon, *députée* from Guyane to the French National Assembly, recently expressed the official consensus: “The Maroon communities [in Guyane], divided among Bonis (Alukus), Ndyukas, Paramakas, and Saramakas, now number 7,000 people” (2000:41).<sup>5</sup>

Combining official 1999 census data with our field investigations of 2000, 2001, and 2002, I estimate that there are some 37,200 Maroons living in Guyane (with my low-end estimate at 33,000 and high-end at 42,000). That is, I believe that there are in Guyane today some 2,800 Paramakas, 5,900 Alukus, 14,000 Ndyukas, and 14,500 Saramakas – which means that Maroons now constitute well over 20 percent of the population of the *département* (a larger proportion even than Haitians or Brazilians). Because French law does not permit counting by “ethnic groups,” data on Maroons must be inferred indirectly from other statistics or estimated “on the ground” – both of which strategies I have followed. The fact that a very large proportion of Maroons in Guyane are illegals further complicates the task. I am convinced

4. Hoogbergen, Kruijt & Polimé 2001:120, personal communications from medical personnel in Guyane and Suriname, Mohamed Rakiab Khudabux 2001, Address by the Minister of Health of the Republic of Suriname, on the occasion of the Twenty-sixth Special Session of the [U.N.] General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, New York, June 25-27, 2001. See also Kambel & MacKay 1999, R. & S. Price 2001.

5. Similarly, a recent article in *Libération* estimated the number of Maroons in Guyane at 4,000 (Une histoire. Les noirs marrons: Sans papiers français, August 4, 1999).

that a large proportion of the Saramakas and Paramakas and a significant proportion of the Ndyukas residing in Guyane, particularly those living in clandestinity, were not counted by the 1999 French census (INSEE 2000c:20), which did count nearly 18,000 "Surinamiens" (non-French who were born in Suriname) – perhaps 16,000 of whom would be Maroons. If its count of the "French" population included the 6,000 Alukus and, say, 2,000 other Maroons (Ndyukas, Paramakas, and Saramakas) who were born or naturalized citizens, that would still leave about 10,000 Maroons not counted in the official tally.

The 1999 official census of Guyane gives natality and mortality rates commune by commune. The rate of natural increase during 1990-99 for the communes with the highest proportions of Maroons – Apatou (an Aluku-controlled commune), Grand-Santi (a largely Ndyuka commune), Maripasoula (which includes many Alukus), and Saint-Laurent (which is now majority Maroon) – are all on the order of 4.2 percent (INSEE 2000a:12-13), a remarkably robust growth rate.<sup>6</sup> For purposes of comparison, note that the (considerably lower) all-Guyane rate of natural increase – 2.7 percent – is considered to be "one of the highest in South America and the Caribbean" (INSEE 2000b:30).

Alukus, almost all of whom are French citizens by birthright and benefit from medical care, *allocations familiales*, retirement benefits, and other social services, are the most privileged Maroon group in Guyane. I estimate that they have grown from a population of 2,500 in 1980 to a population of some 6,000 in 2001 – in line with a natural increase of 4.2 percent.<sup>7</sup>

As a working hypothesis, I am assuming that since the Suriname civil war, approximately half of the Paramaka population has been living in Guyane while half remains in Suriname. Because of particularly heavy gold mining in Paramaka territory, that society is currently in considerable flux. (My estimate of 6,000 Paramakas may be on the high side, but not by more than 1,000 – if we increased the Guyane half of the 1980 population of 2,500 by an annual rate of 4.2 percent and held the Suriname half at a putative 1.5 percent annual increase, the current total figure would stand at some 5,000 people.) Those

6. The commune of Papaïchton, which encompasses all of the "traditional" Aluku villages, was measured by the census as having a natural increase rate of only 1.3 percent, far below the all-Guyane norm of 2.7 percent (INSEE 2000a:12). More careful analysis by Jean Hurault (1999:82), however, allows us to correct this figure to 3.5 percent – much closer to that of other heavily-Maroon communes in Guyane.

7. The 1999 census shows the commune of Apatou with a population of 3,637 (including 2,177 non-French – that is, Paramakas, Ndyukas, Haitians, and others), suggesting perhaps 1,000 Alukus; Papaïchton at 1,652 (with 145 non-French), suggesting as many as 1,500 Alukus; and Maripasoula 3,652 (with 804 non-French) suggesting another 1,500 Alukus – giving a total Aluku population in the interior of the country of some 4,000, with the other 2,000 dispersed among the coastal towns, particularly Saint-Laurent and Cayenne (INSEE 2000c:28).

Paramakas who live in Guyane remain largely in the communes of Apatou (which is directly across the Marowijne River from Paramaka territory) and, particularly, in Saint-Laurent. There has long been a Paramaka presence (which I estimate at 500) in and around Paramaribo, and, by all accounts, the several-hundred-strong community of Paramakas in the Netherlands continues to grow.

The task of estimating the Ndyuka and Saramaka populations in Guyane is more complex. The Ndyuka have three foci in Guyane. One is the heavily-Ndyuka commune of Grand-Santi (official population ca. 3,000), created in 1993 just across from the mouth of the Tapanahoni, which has a Ndyuka mayor and is a genuine beachhead for Tapanahoni Ndyukas, especially for getting French residence papers. Another is the community of Charvein in the commune of Mana, where some 1,200 Cottica Ndyukas, taken in by the mayor of Mana at the end of the civil war, continue to receive significant numbers of new clandestine refugees from Suriname almost on a weekly basis; today, Charvein numbers some 1,600 people, to whom must be added another 400 who live in Mana at CD8. Finally, in the commune of Saint-Laurent (official population ca. 20,000, though our observations on the ground suggest that the figure should be significantly higher), Ndyukas, most without French residence papers, are clearly the largest single population group today and number some 7,000. And there are another 2,000 or so Ndyukas divided between Kourou and Cayenne or scattered elsewhere in Guyane.

Saramakas, who have the longest tradition of residence in Guyane of any Maroons except Alukus, are the most invisible of the major groups today, living largely without French residence papers and doing their best to keep out of the way of authorities. Very few remain in the large communities that Saramaka men built a century ago on the Oyapok River (where they still have an official "captain") and the Approuague. But over the past few years, they have invaded the region of Cayenne in force – men, women, and children – and their families are growing rapidly; my estimates put their total numbers in and around the capital at 4,250. In the "Space City" of Kourou, where Saramakas have provided the major share of wage labor since its construction in the 1960s, the most recent census of Saramakas living in the "Village Saramaka," made in 1992, showed 2,500 – fully five times the count of a decade earlier (Péaud n.d.:31); I estimate their numbers in and around Kourou today at 4,000. Some 1,000 Saramakas live in settlements, often hidden from the road, strung out along the main highway between Iracoubo and Saint-Laurent. The very great majority do not have French residence papers, though many have lived in Guyane for twenty years or more. Some 500 Saramakas, most of whom arrived during the last ten to fifteen years, reside along the Route de Mana, where large numbers of the men sell woodcarvings to tourists. In and around the town of Saint-Laurent, there are another 4,000

Saramakas, the men working as restaurant cooks or in other black-market employment, doing odd jobs, or making and selling woodcarvings, the women cleaning homes or offices or taking care of their own burgeoning families. And there are another 750 or so Saramakas scattered through the other communes of Guyane, from Saint-Georges de l'Oyapok through Sinnamary and Mana to Maripasoula.

These data and analyses deserve recapitulation, as many of the conclusions run counter to the "common sense" that was forged in an earlier period. Only one-third of all Maroons still live in the Suriname interior (that is, either in "traditional" or in 1960s "transmigration" villages). More than a quarter live in and around Paramaribo or in the Cottica/Moengo coastal strip. At least 8 percent live in the Netherlands. And nearly a third live in Guyane. Now that Maroon women as well as men routinely migrate, work, and conduct their everyday lives in Guyane, with access to excellent healthcare and educational facilities (even for many of those without residence papers), birthrates among this extremely young population are skyrocketing. Indeed, if Suriname continues to stagnate economically and continues to neglect the social and economic needs of its Maroon populations, it may not be too many years before there are as many Maroons in Guyane as in Suriname.

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MICHAEL PLATZER & FLAVIO MIRELLA

UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL DRUG  
CONTROL PROGRAMME RESPONDS

We would like to reply to the article written by Axel Klein entitled, "Between the Death Penalty and Decriminalization: New Directions for Drug Control in the Commonwealth Caribbean" published in *NWIG* 75 (3&4) 2001. We have noted a number of factual inaccuracies as well as hostile comments which portray the United Nations International Drug Control Programme in a negative light. This reply is not intended to be a critique of the article, which we find unbalanced and polemical, but rather an alert to the tendentious statements about UNDCP, which we feel should be corrected.

We would like to start with the reference to the Barbados Plan of Action (p. 203) which would lead an ingenuous reader to believe that this Plan has been more detrimental than beneficial to the region. It should be noted that the Plan had received the endorsement of the regional heads of government from the outset and was not imposed on the region. The meeting was, in fact, requested and hosted by the prime minister of Barbados. These consultations represented the first time that the drug issue was discussed by all the regional and extra-regional stakeholders to agree upon a way forward in a coordinated and integrated manner. UNDCP and most of our local partners believe that the cooperative framework afforded by the Barbados Plan of Action has not only focused attention on a problem that had been assessed by the region itself as the single, most important threat to stability and security in the region since the 1980s, but has also provided substantial resources. Those concerned with drug demand reduction in the communities in particular see the Barbados Plan of Action as a valuable policy instrument.

We are uncertain what is meant by "as a result of such regional politicking, the most important multilateral organization in the drugs field has been the United Nations International Drug Control Program" (p. 202), but there are factual errors in each of the subsequent sentences. The United Nations Drug Control Programme dates back to 1948. The UN Fund for Drug Abuse Control established an office in Barbados in 1988. The UN General Assembly Special Session was held in 1998. In fact, the sequence is the reverse of what is

described. We started out as a small project office that only later developed selected policy expertise but never were “off-the-shelf instruments for policies” (p. 203) and blueprints simply applied to the Caribbean. The Barbados Plan of Action has 68 recommendations – not 87 (p. 203).

The libellous implication of cronyism and/or corruption on page 205, “the ECDCO Technical Advisor on drugs used his discretion to subcontract six out of ten budget line supported interventions to former colleagues at the UNDCP,” must be challenged. The author well knows that most of the projects were formulated by UNDCP in cooperation with the European Commission and that many other donors had channeled their funds through UNDCP – a respected international drug control agency.

The table on Caribbean adherence to UN Conventions on drugs (p. 205) does not reflect current reality and needs to be updated. Belize and St. Vincent acceded to the 1961 and 1971 Conventions in 2001.

The author portrays the Barbados Plan of Action as a European Union initiative although he acknowledges that it came as a proposal from the prime minister of Barbados, the Hon. Owen Arthur. The United States, Canada, and individual European countries were, in fact, active supporters of the Plan, as were the Caribbean countries themselves. From the beginning, UNDCP has sought to encourage regional participation and ownership. It is true that UNDCP pushed the setting up of National Drug Councils and the formulation of Masterplans, not just to create interlocutors, but for very good indigenous reasons. It is part of the UN mandate, and particularly stressed by the current secretary general, to build partnerships with regional organizations. We are indeed proud of our close relationship with CARICOM, as manifested in the recent High Level Meeting on Drugs and Crime, cosponsored by the two organizations in Port-of-Spain. To malign the “so-called Regional Coordination Mechanism” (p. 206) at the CARICOM office in Georgetown and to state that its “functions were on the one hand to give the drug control activities the appearance of a partnership, while allowing CARICOM to keep some tabs on the UNDCP” (p. 206) is unfair to the genuine efforts made by both organizations to cooperate more closely. It is indeed unfortunate that Klein gives the impression that UNDCP is operating covertly or against the interests of the region. UNDCP operates strictly within the regional framework and the mandate of the International Treaties and the UN General Assembly. We do not think the implementation of the 1988 Convention should be considered “draconian” (p. 207) – the UN Convention provides for a humane response to addiction, treatment, rehabilitation, and social re-integration.

We concur that UNDCP provided the region with much-needed legal assistance which includes, but is not limited to, providing model legislation (p. 207). However, this assistance has been supported through a wide range of financial resources being provided by several donors rather than just EU grants, as suggested. The reference to the two workshops for senior judges from across the

region leads one to believe that the project in question provided only this service. Klein neglects to mention that through this highly successful project, magistrates, police prosecutors, judges, and Supreme Court judges were being trained for the first time in asset forfeiture of drug proceeds. Not only were practical examples from other jurisdictions provided and useful connections established with experienced prosecutors and judges, but a process was started of sensitizing members of the judiciary who were not aware of the technicalities involved in prosecuting and sentencing for these kinds of offenses. As a direct result of the work of the project in question, a Regional Mutual Legal Assistance treaty has been drafted which has been endorsed by the CARICOM Legal Affairs Committee. The author further refers to Dancia Penn's document (p. 207) as a UWI publication found in the Cave Hill Campus when, in fact, this publication is not registered in either the law library or the UWI Cave Hill Campus library registry. The internal evaluation document in question was provided to the author while he was conducting a consultancy on behalf of the European Commission. UNDCP has never been approached to provide an authorization to quote from the document. Again, several donors contributed to this project, not just the EU, and there was a donor supervisory committee which approved all activities.

It is not factually correct to state "having introduced model legislation and trained the judges, the organization then checked on countries' compliance with its legal obligations. Officers from the Caribbean drug control Coordination Mechanisms, [...] visited each Caribbean states [sic] to report on drug issues. The reports were then published and distributed among the donor community" (p. 207-8). First of all, the joint CCM/RCM missions were undertaken not as a result of legislation being introduced in the countries but rather as a follow-up mechanism to gauge the level of progress being achieved in the countries and territories on the basis of objectives outlined in the Barbados Plan of Action. The checklist was elaborated with the CARICOM/RCM, and the country profiles were produced for all of the countries of the region as well as the donors being placed on the CCM website, and given to the respective countries to help analyze their situation and improve their drug control systems. Klein does not mention that this was a mutually reinforcing cooperative exercise between CCM and CARICOM, designed to gather information but, more importantly, to facilitate the coordination function of CARICOM with up-to-date information.

The name of the attorney general of Trinidad and Tobago is consistently misspelled in Klein's article. It is doubtful most law enforcement personnel, parliamentarians, media, or even civil society would agree with the author's assertion about the "widespread resentment in the region over the allocation of law enforcement resources" (p. 208) and "much dismay over misplaced priorities" (p. 209). The story of ganja being unavailable in Dominica, St. Vincent, Jamaica, and Barbados and smokers having to turn to crack appears to be ludicrous.

We believe the Study of the Justice System in the region was undertaken by the Inter-American Development Bank, not the Caribbean Development Bank (p. 210). Again, the description of the criminal justice system by the author is misleading. In fact, many countries that have signed the UN Convention are providing alternatives to imprisonment (through legislation or the magistrates' discretion) and, in reality, the usual practice for the possession of small amounts of illicit drugs is a monetary fine. The use of prisons was always high in the Caribbean, in comparison with other countries, even before the drug epidemic.

With regard to the demand reduction efforts of UNDCP (p. 215), Klein is again seriously off the mark. The priority assigned to demand reduction in 2000 was done at the suggestion of the CCM and other stakeholders. A regional demand reduction expert had been assigned to the office since 1988, and demand reduction projects have always been and still are the majority of UNDCP's projects. UNDCP pioneered the Integrated Demand Reduction projects in Jamaica, the Bahamas, Barbados, and Trinidad and Tobago. Klein forgets that demand reduction was considered very important by the UN Special Session and in subsequent resolutions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Moreover, the Demand Reduction Section (DRS) at UNDCP Headquarters supports all regional projects. An example of the assistance received from this section, of which the author may not be aware, is the help DRS provides from the project formulation stage right through to the evaluation stages of project design and implementation. An example of this is the addiction certificate program mentioned in the article. The project in question is also portrayed as having being "top-sliced" by UNDCP when in fact project support costs are mandated by intergovernmental bodies and considerable support services were required from the regional office. It should also be noted that the continuation of tertiary level drug specific education programs along the lines of the UWI certificate program have not only been prepared with UNDCP assistance, but actively promoted. However, the critical mass required to start implementation has not been found among the donors even though the region would like a fully developed and regionally adapted educational curriculum based on the UNDCP/UWI drug addictions program.

It should also be noted that the CARIAD program has received extensive support from UNDCP over the years. We are sure that Professor Beaubrun would be saddened to hear that Drugscope considers his institute "almost defunct" (p. 217), given that he has managed to run a summer program for over thirty years.

The author should also note that the Health and Family Life education programs and, more specifically, the drug education aspects provided through the formal education system, whereby a large number of teachers have been trained in the region, were developed through a multilateral initiative involving CARI-COM, UNICEF, PAHO, and UNDCP. A second phase of this project targets out-of-school and "high-risk" youth. It is not correct to say that drug workers

are largely reliant on “learning on the job” and that peer-based approaches have yet to be introduced. Those who have labored on the HFLE, CARIAD, and UWI addiction study courses would certainly disagree that “an overhaul of drug education content and delivery is urgently called for” (p. 218). Characterizing CARICOM governments’ efforts in the field of drug prevention as “ill-advised” but “concerted” (p. 219) – UNDCP may agree with the latter but cannot agree with the former. Marion House does not offer “well-structured residential treatment courses for dependent drug users” (p. 219), but Crossroads in Antigua does. There does exist a network of low-threshold centers which, of course, must be strengthened. With regards to Klein’s dismissal of the “unsatisfactory data gathering methods (p. 218),” there are in fact very valuable school surveys, rapid assessments, and now there is a Drug Information Network which needs to be expanded but not denigrated. The glass is more than half full, not empty.

In the section dedicated to IDER programs, the author gives the wrong impression that UNDCP’s mandate runs counter to the IDER approach. In fact, UNDCP favors finding solutions with community participation not only in the Caribbean region but in other countries where we implement our activities. There are large-scale community development programs in South America and Asia with infrastructure improvements and skills training components. UNDCP/IDER projects, moreover, are financed by other donors in the region besides the EU. Again, UNDCP acts as more than a “managing agent” (p. 220).

Axel Klein’s argument in favor of decriminalizing ganja is not convincing. There has been no credible evidence that relaxing drug laws reduces drug abuse. On the contrary, the progressive liberalization of drug laws in some countries over the last twenty years has been associated with a progressive increase in drug abuse. There is medical evidence and community experience in the Caribbean that ganja is harmful. The public in the Caribbean knows that the health and social consequences of ganja use are at least as serious as those of tobacco or alcohol. It would be a historical mistake to put ganja in the same category when policies aimed at fighting the abuse of those two substances are finally getting the attention that they deserve. We believe that Axel Klein is seriously out of step with thinking in the Caribbean.

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PROTECTING THE CARIBBEAN FROM ITSELF:  
UNDCP AND THE GANJA DEBATE

Drug policy in the Caribbean region provides a testing ground for one of the key themes in the social sciences over recent years, the relationship of knowledge and power. Acting as intermediary between northern donors and the microstates of the region, the organization – United Nations International Control Programme (UNDCP) – applies the models framed by northern expertise even when local experience suggests they are inappropriate. Instead of adapting, in the light of new evidence, the organization mobilizes its resources on stifling dissent.

What is at stake, then, is not the validity of a model or the efficacy of a program, but the prestige of an organization which has, for over a decade, been seeking to impress its credentials on policy-makers and the diplomatic community. In the process, it has lost touch with those vulnerable groups it came to protect. The chasm dividing the Caribbean drug scene from the UNDCP's bureaucracy is exemplified by the highhanded dismissal by Platzer and Mirella of the story recorded in different islands that crack appeared in times when there was a cannabis drought. The authors are telling us about a perceived injustice. The native herb – for ganja is not a drug – is being persecuted, while an evil and destructive chemical powder is being brought to market by conspiring outsiders.

What makes the complaint particularly bitter is that the drug control legislation introduced in Caribbean countries with UNDCP assistance has led to a dramatic increase in incarceration for drug-related offenses. At a meeting on drug demand reduction in Tortola in January 2002, the deputy representative of the Caribbean Regional Office even praised regional policy-makers, for “excelling at the punitive model.” Indeed, Platzer and Mirella do not dispute the extraordinarily high imprisonment rates in the Caribbean, with over a quarter of all cases attributable to drug offenses, the vast majority of these being cannabis possession or petty dealing.

The current policy, in other words, is having little impact on the cocaine flows through and to the region, which had alarmed politicians and gave justification for the opening of the UNDCP office in the first place. It is precisely for this rea-

son that the Jamaican government (not the author) initiated a nationwide consultation exercise to decide on the decriminalization of cannabis: the drug laws were causing greater harm than the drug of choice. This is a courageous step for any Caribbean government, and a debate that, in view of the threat of US decertification and sanctions, is far from free. Was there any support from the intergovernmental agency that “believe[s] in a cooperative framework?” Far from it – the UNDCP head of station slams it as a “historical mistake.” And on what grounds?

First, that it is “out of step with thinking in the Caribbean” – an interesting assertion by an expatriate claiming to know the region better than the people and governments of the region know themselves. And second, because of “medical evidence!”

This travesty of an argument brings us to one of the underlying problems with UNDCP identified in my article: it is short on the very thing it purported to bring to the region – specialized knowledge on drug issues, be this on the pharmacology of intoxicants, the psychology of addiction, teaching methods, or the sociology of the drugs scene. Alas, the expatriate staff was not recruited from the international drugs field, but the UN system, and unable to engage with demand side issues, unless this meant appropriating and taking credit for regional initiatives such as the Health and Family Life Education Programme or Integrated Demand Reduction. Program staff preferred to concentrate on “information gathering” – the number of camcorders received from donors – and participating in the law enforcement mechanisms.

On demand side and policy issues, the UNDCP role has consisted of recycling outdated models and stifling critical debate, exemplified by the response to my article. The veiled threat of libel in the fourth paragraph, however unwarranted, would suffice to put off any newspaper editor, while the trumpeted assistance to the University of the West Indies serves to discourage critique from that quarter too. With its own newsletter and website, the Caribbean office of the UNDCP has a monopoly on the drugs debate, with no room for and no experience of criticism.

In view of the vehement response to my article, with its spurious allegations of tendentiousness, hostility, and lack of balance built upon misspelling of names and outdated data, we believe that for the UNDCP-Barbados, this exercise in accountability is part of a much-needed learning process.

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SLAVERY, ANTISLAVERY, FREEDOM

*Empire and Antislavery: Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico, 1833-1874.* CHRISTOPHER SCHMIDT-NOWARA. Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1999. xv + 239 pp. (Cloth US\$ 50.00, Paper US\$ 22.95)

*Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies.* FREDERICK COOPER, THOMAS C. HOLT & REBECCA J. SCOTT. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000. xiii + 198 pp. (Cloth US\$ 34.95, Paper US\$ 15.95)

*From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery.* SEYMOUR DRESCHER. New York: New York University Press, 1999. xxv + 454 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00)

*Terms of Labor: Slavery, Serfdom, and Free Labor.* STANLEY L. ENGERMAN (ed.). Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1999. vi + 350 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

These four books explore antislavery movements in the Atlantic world, and consider some of the consequences of abolition in postemancipation societies. They are immensely rich studies which engage one of the liveliest areas of enquiry in modern historiography – the transition from slavery to freedom in New World societies – and which represent U.S. historical scholarship at its finest. Each falls into a different category of academic publication.

Christopher Schmidt-Nowara's book is a straightforward single-authored monograph, a revised doctoral dissertation which examines Spanish antislavery in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Moving seamlessly between Madrid, Havana, and San Juan, it argues that abolition in Puerto Rico and Cuba can only be understood in the context of shifts in Spain's cul-

tural and political life between the 1830s and 1870s, and that the key anti-slavery organization – the Abolitionist Society founded in Madrid in 1865 – was essentially a “hybrid,” neither metropolitan nor colonial but the product of a complex, dialectical interaction between individuals and groups in the Peninsula and in the Antilles.

The book by Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca Scott consists of a jointly authored introduction plus three single-authored essays. The shortest, by Holt, deals with postemancipation Jamaica and recycles some of the ideas and arguments of his important 1992 book, *The Problem of Freedom*. Scott’s essay compares mobilization by ex-slave sugar workers (and others) in postemancipation Cuba and Louisiana and probes the very different constructions of race underway in the two societies in the 1880s and 1890s. The last piece, by Cooper, takes us across the Atlantic to colonial Africa, and interrogates the efforts of British and French administrators to end what they considered to be “slavery” while condoning, or actually creating, other kinds of coerced labor in the territories they ruled.

Seymour Drescher’s book collects together fourteen of his articles, all previously published between 1976 and 1999, some making their third or even fourth appearance here, and one being published simultaneously in the Engerman volume. Unquestionably one of the leading contributors to the historiography of antislavery over the last twenty-five years, Drescher’s collection illustrates the remarkable breadth and scope of his scholarship and the range of his interests. Of course, a collection of much-published essays inevitably lacks the freshness of the other studies under review, but that is compensated for by the usefulness of having Drescher’s key articles together in one work.

Finally, Stanley Engerman (who contributed a Foreword to Drescher’s collection) has edited a volume of nine essays plus his own introduction in the Stanford University Press series, “The Making of Modern Freedom.” The contributors consider the ideology of free labor in the West, especially in the United States, from the late eighteenth century to the early twentieth, probing its legal, political, and social dimensions, its different meanings to white workers, freedmen and freedwomen, lawyers and courts, trade unions and employers. This impressive collection is primarily a contribution to U.S. historiography, though there is an essay on Russian emancipation (by Peter Kolchin) and a general “Atlantic” piece by David Eltis, as well as Drescher’s article on British Caribbean abolition.

Antislavery mobilizations, in the century between the Mansfield ruling (1772) and Brazilian abolition (1888), are the major theme of the books by Drescher and Schmidt-Nowara. Both centrally engage the historiography of abolitionism; both implicitly or explicitly challenge economics-driven explanations for antislavery and advance the central role of human agency, whether individuals or organized groups. It is, of course, Drescher who has been the

leading proponent of this argument over the last twenty-five years, and his collection of articles confirms, and celebrates, his achievement in leading a transformation in the historiography of slavery and abolition. Four of the pieces in the collection under review (Chapters 1, 4, 12, and 13) develop the arguments in his classic 1977 work, *Econocide*, and subsequent articles over the following two decades. Unquestionably, Drescher has "won" his prolonged debate with the Williams school of historians of abolition; *Econocide's* basic argument – that abolition of the British slave trade preceded by several decades any general decline in the British West Indian economy – is now widely accepted. So too is his shifting of the historiographical focus from economics to political and ideological mobilizations of antislavery.

In this respect, one of Drescher's most important contributions has been his comparative work on antislavery mobilization in the Atlantic world, represented in seven of the essays in the collection under review. The remarkable breadth of his scholarly interests and his command of an extraordinarily wide range of sources are convincingly demonstrated in these studies of abolitionism in Britain and the British Caribbean, France, Brazil, and the Netherlands. In his classic 1980 article (Chapter 2), Drescher proposed his influential models of "Anglo-American" versus "Continental" abolitionism. "Anglo-American abolitionism" was broadly based and popular in character; its leaders mobilized public pressure on legislators through mass meetings, petitions, propaganda; it tended to be loosely organized, decentralized, fairly inclusive (women, workers, blacks), and intricately linked to religious groupings. "Continental abolitionism" tended to be confined to a small elite, with little mass involvement, few religious links, and little or no influence outside the capital city. Its leaders generally lobbied quietly behind the scenes and it was often short lived, responding to external pressures rather than being firmly rooted in communities or classes. Drescher deploys these ideas fruitfully to illuminate his explorations of British, French, Dutch, and Brazilian antislavery, always eschewing any mechanistic application of his model and showing sensitivity to the complexities on the ground.

Drescher's comparative explorations are excellently reinforced by Schmidt-Nowara's study of Spanish abolitionism. Schmidt-Nowara seeks to probe the development of antislavery in Spain, Cuba, and Puerto Rico around three pivotal "moments." First, the revolutions in the metropole in the 1830s produced a so-called "revolutionary" settlement which allowed the continuation of the slave trade (to Cuba), the preservation of slavery in both colonies, and the denial of political rights to colonial subjects. Second, the era of Liberal political ascendancy in Madrid (1854-68) opened up new spaces for associational life, for organization and mobilization, and for transatlantic alliances of reformers, making possible the establishment of the Abolitionist Society in the capital (1865). Finally, the "September Revolution" era (1868-74), combined with the insurrection in Cuba (1868), allowed the Society to

mount a serious attack on colonial slavery which effected abolition in Puerto Rico (1873). In his well-researched and convincingly argued study, Schmidt-Nowara insists that Madrid was a crucial site of antislavery mobilization in the 1860s and early 1870s, as much for Antilleans as for Spaniards, and that the Society was essentially a "hybrid," transatlantic body, led by Puerto Ricans as well as Spaniards, the product of complex interactions between reformers on both sides of the ocean. Neither "metropolitan" nor "colonial" actors or events should be given primacy in explaining Spanish abolitionism, Schmidt-Nowara argues; he blurs the distinction and forces us to concentrate on the dialectical relationship between agents who moved easily between the Peninsula and the Antilles and events feeding on each other like the revolution "at home" in September 1868 and the Cuban insurrection which began the following month.

Engaging directly with Drescher's models of Anglo-American and Continental antislavery, Schmidt-Nowara writes that the Spanish Abolitionist Society fits comfortably into the second in its early years (1865-68): it was neither popular nor broadly based, it consisted of a small elite working in cooperation with the state and even with slave-owners, and it was highly circumscribed because of the state of metropolitan politics in this period. But after the revolutions of 1868 in Spain and Cuba, the Society did engage in extra-parliamentary mobilization and it did challenge directly the pro-slavery forces at home and in the colonies. Antislavery was transformed from an elite concern to a popular cause in many Spanish cities in the years between 1868 and 1874, with large meetings, many petitions, mass marches, and demonstrations. Thus, as in the case of Brazilian abolitionism (the subject of Chapter 5 in Drescher's volume), Spanish antislavery moved from the "Continental" variant in 1865-68 to the "Anglo-American" in 1868-74, or rather, it combined elements of both models.

While antislavery mobilizations in Europe and in the New World are the focus of the books by Drescher and Schmidt-Nowara, the theory and practice of free labor and, to a lesser extent, the struggles of former slaves are the central concerns of the contributors to the other two volumes under review. The essays in the collection edited by Engerman range widely across the contested meanings of free labor, mainly in the United States. In a brilliant essay, David Eltis argues that the rise of possessive individualism made possible a central paradox of modern history: the development of "the most extreme forms of both freedom and unfreedom" in the West since about 1500. Just as the ideology and practice of free labor triumphed in Western Europe (and nowhere else), Western Europeans established chattel slavery in the New World. "Freedom" meant not only full control of one's own body and labor for European men but also the right, as a free individual, to own and exploit the bodies and labor of others. Free labor ideology and Western systems of slavery had the same roots: a concept of unrestricted freedom of action by the individual (male) subject, who

was free to migrate to the Americas, establish plantations, import Africans, and own and use their labor. Thus the extremes of slavery and freedom were integrally linked in Western ideology, until massive shifts occurred which made nineteenth-century Europeans think that their concept of freedom was incompatible with the enslavement of others.

Other essays in Engerman's volume explore the contested meanings of free labor in the nineteenth-century United States. Leon Fink analyzes changing beliefs about who was "free" in the context of a rapidly industrializing economy and the spread of wage dependency and consumerism, while Robert Steinfield offers a detailed discussion of court rulings on "involuntary servitude" and what it might mean in law. He emphasizes that the line between "free" and "coerced" labor is always drawn on the basis of normative and political values and, therefore, can never be established finally or irrevocably. In an interesting essay, David Roediger explores the use of slavery as a master metaphor in nineteenth-century U.S. protest movements (wage slavery, sex slavery, political slavery), using Frederick Douglass as a sort of case study. David Brody shows how the ideology of free labor was used, by U.S. courts, to repress and circumscribe trade unionism until the 1930s. As interpreted and exploited by the judges who made U.S. labor law, the concept of an individual's right to sell his labor and enter into contracts free from interference or regulation became an enormous burden on the country's unions until the New Deal era. These (and other) essays demonstrate convincingly just how tricky a concept "free labor" was (and is) in the modern world.

That there was never, anywhere, a simple dichotomy between "free" and "coerced" labor is the main theme of Cooper's fascinating essay on imperialism and free labor ideology in colonial Africa. At different times in their colonies, the British and French abolished formal, or legalistically defined, slavery; but of course many other relations of subordination and dependence, not defined as "slavery," continued. Most Africans lived their lives in a complex web of power and dependence, but did this amount to "conditions analogous to slavery," the phrase used by the League of Nations in 1926? And the colonizers introduced new forms of coerced labor for their own purposes. Quite apart from the notorious practices in Leopold's Congo, the British and French employed coerced labor for the state (*corvées*) and forced military conscription and government-sanctioned forced labor recruitment for private enterprises, which continued in French Africa until 1946. Cooper's excellent essay ends with a detailed discussion of the French debates in the 1940s which led up to the decision to abolish coerced labor in the African colonies and to extend "citizenship" to all in the newly named "French Union." Could or should Africans become disciplined wage laborers responsive to market forces so that coercion might be safely dispensed with? As Holt shows us in his piece on Jamaica, the identical question was debated by British policymakers one hundred years before.

While Cooper and Holt focus mainly on the ideology, discourse, and practice of British and French administrators, Scott zeroes in on the freed people themselves, analyzing the struggles of “free” sugar workers in Louisiana and Cuba in the 1880s and 1890s. In a superb piece of comparative history, she probes the tactics, alliances, and fates of plantation workers (most but not all black ex-slaves) in the sugar counties of Louisiana, using the bitter strike and repression of 1887 as her pivotal “moment.” She shows how this organized interracial strike of sugar workers challenged the efforts of planters and white supremacists to define a single black/white polarity in Louisiana society. They responded by reconfiguring the strike as a racial conflict, as a movement by “negro laborers” which had to be crushed. The brutal repression was all too successful: labor unions didn’t organize again in the cane fields of southern Louisiana until the 1950s, just as the even more brutal repression of the Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica (1865) virtually ended black politics there for two generations. In Cuba, war and revolution in 1868-78 and again in 1895-98 provided multiple opportunities for contact and collaboration between sugar workers who were white, black, mixed-race, and Chinese. Using Santa Clara in Las Villas as a case study, Scott shows how the renewal of war in 1895-98 galvanized relations on the sugar estates, where ex-slaves, white immigrants from Spain and the Canary Islands, “white” Cubans, Chinese contract laborers, and others constituted a highly diverse labor force. Their struggles during and after the 1890s are studied by Scott in the micro context of a plantation (Soledad) whose extensive papers have survived, and she also draws on oral testimonies of the descendants of Soledad workers who were active in the struggles of the period. This is a richly detailed and carefully argued essay by the author of the brilliant 1985 book, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*.

It is impossible, in a relatively short essay, to do justice to the wide range of themes addressed by these four books. One theme that might have been more fully integrated into the discussions of the transitions from slavery to free labor is the gender dimension of these transitions. Holt is careful to note that the emancipation blueprint for Jamaica (and the whole British Caribbean) constructed the “wage worker” as male. Freedmen were promised authority over their homes, wives, and children, in exchange for steady wage work for (white) employers. Women would be protected from the abuses and violations of slavery but would become dependent, unpaid housewives. This British gender blueprint was generally replicated by Spanish abolitionists in the 1860s, Schmidt-Nowara tells us. Freedmen would work in the fields, women would stay at home – the same ideal that was cherished by the Madrid liberals for working-class families in Spain.

But the only sustained discussion of the gender dimension in the transitions to free labor in the four works under review is the interesting essay by Amy Dru Stanley in the volume edited by Engerman. Stanley shows that con-

trol of the unpaid work of female dependents was seen as “a crucial measure of freedom for men who owned nothing else but their own labor” in both northern and southern states of the United States (p. 188). As in Jamaica, U.S. freedmen were promised control over their wives’ labor and an inviolate home. The essence of freedom was wage labor for men, unpaid dependent housework for women. This was incompatible with the ex-masters’ desire to force women to enter into labor contracts in exchange for family subsistence – as in the British Caribbean after 1838. Generally women did withdraw from wage work on plantations throughout the South, and Stanley concludes that – though their views were rarely recorded – they probably “shared their husbands’ aspirations” to have sole control over their own labor. In the North, too, the right to a wife’s dependent labor at home was seen as essential to a worker’s freedom; the ideal of a “family wage” for the male breadwinner captured this belief. Stanley’s essay apart, however, these books suggest that the “mainstreaming” of gender analysis into historical studies of the shift from slavery to free labor in the Americas has some way to go.

One final point: Three of the four books under review use for their cover art images of African freedmen (a pair of hands, a face, a life-like statue). Yet, it seems to me, the lives and struggles of the enslaved and the freed are not center-stage in their pages. Perhaps the most striking exception is provided by Scott’s essay, in which we are introduced to the struggles of Louisiana and Cuban freed people on the ground, as it were. Elsewhere they appear here and there and are never absent, but neither are they the major agents. I make this point not as a criticism but as an observation. These fine books are primarily studies of (white) American and European ideology, discourse, and action rather than of the lived experiences of the enslaved and the emancipated.

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NATIONAL POLITICS AND ETHNIC IDENTITY  
IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

*The Struggle of Democratic Politics in the Dominican Republic.* JONATHAN HARTLYN. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998. xxi + 371 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95, Paper US\$ 17.95)

*Holocaust in the Caribbean: The Slaughter of 25,000 Haitians by Trujillo in One Week.* MIGUEL AQUINO. Waterbury CT: Emancipation Press, 1997. xxii + 184 pp. (Paper n.p.)

*Race and Politics in the Dominican Republic.* ERNESTO SAGÁS. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000. xii +161 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

*Azúcar, Árabes, cocolos y haitianos.* ORLANDO INOA. Santo Domingo: Ed. Cole and FLACSO, 1999. 219 pp. (Paper n.p.)

Over the last few years there has been an increase in the publication of books about the Dominican Republic and Dominicans in the United States. This can be partly attributed to the increase of Dominican communities.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, Dominican and Dominican-American writers who underscore the trials and tribulations of the immigrant experience are becoming more visible in the mainstream print.<sup>2</sup>

1. The 2000 U.S. Census reports that the Dominican population in the United States is 764,945, or 2.7 percent of the overall population.

2. For an excellent introduction to the origins of Dominican migration and the long neglected contributions of these immigrants and their children in American society, see Torres-Saillant & Hernández 1998.

For scholars trying to understand the Dominican Republic at the beginning of the twenty-first century, certain recurring themes within Dominican historiography – from making sense of Trujillo and his legacy to the evasive and historical role of democracy in the Dominican Republic – continue to pose challenging questions, some of which are tackled in the books under review here.

In *The Struggle for Democratic Politics in the Dominican Republic*, Jonathan Hartlyn asks why democracy failed to flourish after Trujillo's assassination in 1961. And why did a democratic transition finally take place between 1978 and 1986, only to be undermined between 1986 and 1996? For Hartlyn, neither the history of U.S. interventions nor domestic actors such as caudillos alone can adequately explain the failure of democracy to take hold in the Dominican Republic. Rather he proposes that one must look at

the interaction of forces and individuals, mediated by "institutions," and the failure or limited success in establishing new institutions and patterns of behaviors at critical junctures that have marked either the reinforcement of authoritarian and neopatrimonial patterns or the limited successes of democracy in the country. (p. 5)

Hartlyn utilizes the model of neopatrimonialism to explain why Dominican democracy has been inconsistent. For him, neopatrimonialism resembles somewhat caudillismo in that leaders seek to consolidate power while undermining institutional authority and the power of those around them by cultivating loyalty through a system of quid pro quo relationships. Neopatrimonialism is seen as an inevitable "blurring of public and private interests and purposes within the administration" (p. 14). Trujillo's regime can be considered patrimonial and/or sultanistic. Ask older Dominicans who experienced his dictatorship and they will tell you that Trujillo ruled the country as a personal fiefdom, at once torturing dissenters and cultivating popular support by baptizing thousands of godchildren.

Trujillo's assassination in 1961 allowed for the possibility of a democratic transition, but the shift from neopatrimonialism to democracy is often difficult, and in this case the refusal of Trujillo family members to leave power complicated matters. Fearing another Communist Cuba, the United States worked diplomatically in the democratic transition that culminated in the 1962 presidential election of Juan Bosch. But although the United States played an important role, Dominicans themselves directly influenced the fate of democracy as Bosch was overthrown by a military coup after only seven months in office. Hartlyn argues that the overthrow was due to conservative business sectors, which felt threatened by Bosch's new constitution, legislative initiatives, and liberal reforms that limited their privileges. Discontent within the army, which was swayed by propaganda depicting Bosch as a Communist, led to his overthrow. Hartlyn also attributes the failure for a complete democratic transition to

Bosch's own tragic inability to rise to the occasion and be a true leader. He suggests that Bosch's presidency could have been extended if only he had agreed to more concessions. But to do this, Bosch, an avowed leftist, would have had to compromise his beliefs – something he did not do until the 1990s.

The April 1965 civil war, which represented the opportunity for Dominicans to reinstate Bosch as president, was interrupted by U.S. military intervention. Without U.S. intervention there might have been more bloodshed, but here as in other U.S. military interventions, dependency theorists are correct when they assert that democracy is rarely imposed from the outside.

In the 1966 presidential elections, the United States supported its preferred candidate, Joaquín Balaguer. It would have been more correct for the United States to support Bosch's return to power. But as Hartlyn suggests, this would surely have provoked another military coup. During Balaguer's presidency – *los doce años* ("the twelve years") – democracy was unable to take root because of the semi-authoritarian climate in which political assassinations and disappearances were common.

Hartlyn writes that Balaguer could have ruled in a more sultanistic manner like his mentor Trujillo, but that the country in 1966 was very different from what it had been in 1961. Balaguer confronted opposition from political parties, dissident groups, and the army, which (unlike Trujillo) he did not control. Yet Balaguer was able to forge alliances and managed to maintain power until 1978. During the 1970s, political parties such as the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD) led by José Francisco Peña Gómez forged alliances with anti-Balaguer political parties such as the Socialist International, and benefitted from U.S. emphasis on human rights to initiate a peaceful democratic transition in 1978.

The diversification of the PRD partly explains the window of democratic opportunity that ushered in the presidency of Antonio Guzmán (1978-82) and his successor Salvador Jorge Blanco (1982-86). Nevertheless, the PRD did not eliminate neopatrimonialism. Clientilistic policies such as the granting of *exoneraciones* (tax exemptions on foreign vehicles) and internal strife within the PRD along with violent nationwide protests sparked by the signing of IMF loans in 1984 kept patrimonialism alive and democracy weak. Despite these neocolonial and punitive economic measures, Hartlyn finally concludes that ultimately, "it is Jorge Blanco and the PRD who must bear responsibility for not transforming the style of politics in the country" (p. 187).

Neopatrimonial politics continued with Balaguer's return to power in 1986. Under Balaguer, private and public roles of leadership were fused as he traveled the nation in helicopter inaugurating hundreds of new government projects and using them to initiate or strengthen client relationships. An example of Balaguer's autonomous presidential power was the special account used to deposit the checks owed to the Dominican state by the multinational

Falconbridge company. According to Hartlyn, Balaguer had complete control over this account without congressional authority.

By 1994 Balaguer was forced to step down and new elections were set for 1996. New electoral procedures mandated that a presidential candidate needed to win over half of the vote to be elected. Peña Gómez's failure to achieve 50 percent of the vote forced a run-off election and Balaguer convinced his party to vote en masse for Bosch's Partido de la Liberación (PLD), headed by an unknown candidate and ultimate winner, Leonel Fernandez. The 1996 presidential elections showed how difficult it is to separate democracy from neopatrimonialism in Dominican politics. Peña Gómez lost the presidential elections in spite of American support because the anti-Haitian/black Balaguer was able to manipulate political institutions such as his party, the Partido Reformista Social Cristiano (PRSC). These elections also revealed the weakness of the Junta Central Electoral (electoral college) as the names of many Dominican voters who showed up to vote did not appear on the election registry list. As Hartlyn indicates, democracy has to exist "uneasily" in the Dominican Republic. However, 1994 represented a positive turning point for Dominican democracy because among other reforms to revamp the electoral process, a prohibition on presidential reelection was established. This new reform meant that Fernandez could not run in 2000, thereby paving the way for the election of the current president, Hipólito Mejía. In short, Hartlyn provides an informative historical review of the political process that occurred in the Dominican Republic between 1961 and 1996. He helps readers understand in a theoretical and comparative way why Dominican democracy has had to struggle just to stay afloat. Rather than solely blaming American foreign policy for the fragility of Dominican democracy and thus shifting the focus of his study, Hartlyn underscores a markedly Dominican tone by illuminating the significant and interrelated roles played by Dominican individuals and institutions.

Miguel Aquino's first encounter with Trujillo was as a ten-year-old boy, when his mother was a teacher for Trujillo's grandson. He remembers meeting the dictator when he visited his ranch in San Cristobal: "So this is your teacher's son" (p. xix). Aquino's contact with Trujillo and his family lasted only a year and a half. Nevertheless, his perspective as a Dominican who came of age at the end of the Trujillo era provides a valuable and unique source in understanding Dominican history.

Aquino begins with a general history of the island but in telling an apparently anti-Trujillo story, he is trapped in the same anti-Haitian myth perpetuated by Trujillo and his intellectuals. Describing the atrocities committed by the Haitian forces in the early 1800s during their invasion of the eastern part of the island, he mentions how the revolution provoked a mass emigration from Santo Domingo. Yet in fact, most people remained in the Santo Domingo colony and only some wealthy families fled. Moreover, Aquino

fails to balance his account by documenting the historical evidence of collaboration between Haitians and Dominicans that occurred then and now throughout the border region. At times, he describes the Trujillo dictatorship in absolute terms and suggests that the Dominican experience confronting dictatorship and violence is unique, yet survivors of the Chilean torture chamber of Villa Grimaldi or other centers of oppression in authoritarian dictatorships in Paraguay, Brazil, Haiti, and Argentina have competing and equally justified claims to being part of the most repressive regimes in the Americas.

Many historians will find it frustrating that Aquino omits all references. This is particularly problematic in his discussion of the 1937 Haitian Massacre, where he could have consulted Vega's two-volume work *Trujillo y Haiti*. Despite this weakness Aquino's interviews with Dominicans who lost their loved ones, witnessed the massacre, or were ordered to assist in the military operations are important if we want to reconstruct and remember this tragic event. These interviews corroborate oral histories conducted by other scholars such as Lauren Derby, Richard Turits, and myself. Aquino ends his book with a brief account of Trujillo's assassination and includes poignant photographs of anti-Trujillo conspirators and the bullet-ridden 1957 Chevrolet Belair which Trujillo rode on the night of his assassination.

For a good introductory discussion of how and why Trujillo was able to portray Haitians as a threat to Dominican sovereignty, Ernesto Sagás's *Race and Politics in the Dominican Republic* is an excellent and concise study of the virulent anti-Haitian prejudice and racism that exist today in Dominican society. Sagás defines anti-Haitianism

as a set of socially reproduced anti-Haitian prejudices, myths, stereotypes prevalent in the cultural makeup of the Dominican Republic. These are based on presumed racial, social, economic, and national-cultural differences between the two peoples; differences stressed by generations of Dominican ideologues. (p. 4)

Dominican anti-Haitianism has its origins in the colonial period. Spanish colonists considered themselves superior to the French who were expanding eastward into Spanish territory and to the black African slaves, who were the linchpin of the immense sugar economy that sustained Saint-Domingue society. This contempt toward French Saint-Domingue was accompanied by fear, particularly after a Haitian Revolution that created panic and propelled the emigration of a significant number of Santo Domingo's wealthy families.

The 1822-44 Haitian-led unification of the island sparked a nationalist Dominican movement, which resulted in the 1844 declaration of independence from Haiti. Since 1844, Dominican nationalism and patriotism have been diametrically opposed to Haiti and its rejection of the latter has become one of the central underpinnings of what it means to be Dominican. Dominican patriotism is intimately connected with anti-Haitianism. Sagás, however, is perplexed by

the internalization of anti-Haitian/black attitudes by the black and mulatto Dominican majority. Indeed many black Dominicans do not view themselves as black because this is considered synonymous with being Haitian. In what I think is an essentialization of race, Sagás writes, "racial conflict is not very difficult to ascertain when the groups under study are racially different" (p. 12). Given that race is a social construction, how can categories of black and white be starkly different from those of "black Haitian" and "black/mulatto Dominican"? Historical internecine ethnic struggles between Hutus and Tutsis, or between Serbs and Albanians are examples of the way in which racial differences can be drawn in spite of enormous similarities.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, Sagás does a wonderful job tracing the origins of anti-Haitianism while also highlighting the important anti-Haitian ideologues such as Manuel A. Peña Batlle and Joaquín Balaguer, two major figures recruited by Trujillo to aid in crystallizing a traditional but diffuse anti-Haitianism into official state policy. The new state-sponsored ideology emerged after the 1937 Haitian Massacre as a way to justify the genocidal killings and the differences between Haitians and Dominicans. As part of a new national identity called *hispanidad*, the state portrayed Dominicans as being white, Catholic, and Spanish in contrast to Haitians who were black, pagan, and African. Anti-Haitianism outlived Trujillo's dictatorship and is far from dead. Sagás's survey of young and old elites and working-class Dominicans reveals a disturbing portrait of virulent contemporary racism, particularly among the older generations and poorer Dominicans. Dominican respondents called Haitians "dumb and stupid because they are Negroes" and remarked, for example, that "Haitians stink; no amount of perfume will do." Haitians, who constitute the majority of cane cutters in the Dominican Republic, are still exploited and subjected to periodic, violent, and demeaning deportations by the Dominican military.

The 1994 and 1996 presidential elections constituted a clear example of racism against the now deceased presidential candidate José Francisco Peña Gómez. Throughout the 1990s, Peña Gómez endured systematic racist attacks from his political opponents during several campaigns to win the presidency. Yet Sagás reminds us that despite being humiliated and villified due to his Haitian origins and dark-skinned complexion, he still received more than a million votes in each election. Today, the challenge for the Dominican nation is to create a policy that treats Haitian immigrants humanely and recognizes the children of these immigrants, who are born in Dominican territory, as Dominican citizens. Another imperative is the elimination of the anti-Haitian

3. Racial difference is drawn on many different levels, utilizing a variety of markers that have little to do with "true" biological differences. Lauren Derby (1994:521) has noted that although Dominicans (many of them black themselves) have identified Haitians with darker skin color, this signifier, throughout the Dominican borderlands, "is rarely a primary motif of difference. A more common biological trait noted is that Haitians have small ears."

discourse that remains evident in the racist political Dominican cartoons provided by Sagás.

*Azúcar, Árabes, cocos y haitianos* examines the presence of immigrant Arabs, Haitians, and West Indians in the Dominican Republic and their important relationship to the emergence of the modern Dominican sugar industry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. San Pedro de Macorís, today known as the cradle of Dominican baseball shortstops, is still the center of sugar production, and it was there that these three understudied immigrant groups intersected as merchants and laborers. The Dominican modern sugar industry was established in 1872. Inoa describes how sugar mill owners served as catalysts in adopting new technology (i.e. the railroad) to more efficiently transport sugar to the ports, and provides a fascinating glimpse into the economic life of the sugarmill and its workers. As in Cuba, workers were paid in *fichas* (tokens) or *vales* (company vouchers) which were exclusively honored in the sugarmills' company stores. Needless to say, the token and voucher system was exploitative and forced workers to remain within the company's confines. Along with the rise of the sugar mills came banditry. Inoa points out that, contrary to popular belief, *gavilleros* (bandits) did not emerge during the U.S. occupation. Rather, they originally existed as a protection racket, extorting money from sugarmill owners in exchange for "security." Thus, according to Inoa, the protracted guerrilla war (1917-22) between the *gavilleros* and the U.S. Marines began less as an anti-imperialist struggle than as a response to a perceived economic threat to the *gavilleros'* regional power.

Newly arrived immigrants from Syria and Lebanon set up shop as salesmen and traveled throughout the country especially in the sugarmill centers selling shoes, combs, blankets, and mirrors. I was surprised to learn of the virulent anti-Arab sentiment that existed in the Dominican Republic and Haiti at the turn of the century. Inoa writes that in Haiti the government went so far as to pass an anti-Arab law in 1904 limiting both the number of Syrian immigrants entering the country and the opportunities of those who conducted business there.

The increasing economic prosperity of these white and mulatto Arab immigrants allowed them to take advantage of class and race to incorporate themselves gradually into Dominican society. *Cocolos* – Afro-Caribbean migrants recruited from St. Kitts, Nevis, Monserrat, Dominica, Antigua, Anguilla, and St. Martin to cut sugarcane in San Pedro de Macorís – were also subjected to government hostility. Originally recruited by Dominican sugarmill owners because of a labor shortage in the late nineteenth century, *cocolos* earned the wrath of the mulatto elite because they were instrumental in organizing strikes in the sugarmills. The 1920s saw a drop in world sugar prices and an increased reliance on cheap Haitian labor, which gradually diminished *cocolo* migration to the Dominican Republic.

In contrast to these groups, Haitians and their descendants have always been seen by elites as a cultural threat to the Dominican nation. Readers will perhaps take issue with Inoa's endorsement of Harry Hoetink's view that anti-Haitianism is not synonymous with racism in Dominican society. Dominican racism can be viewed as non-existent when compared with apartheid South Africa, but the historic rhetoric to limit anti-black immigration, the 1937 Massacre (in which black Dominicans were also killed), the present and arbitrary deportations of Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent, and the negative image of Haitians in Dominican society all reveal how anti-Haitianism creates a racist environment for black Haitians, and black Dominicans as well. As more stories by and about Dominicans of Haitian descent emerge, their experiences as the targets of deportations and racial epithets will become clear.<sup>4</sup>

Inoa's book ends with a brief treatment of the 1937 massacre and the subsequent state project to Dominicanize the borderlands. Where Aquino utilized some oral histories but lacked rigorous empiricism, Inoa is meticulous in his archival research but lacks an oral history component. Without detracting from Inoa's excellent work, I would argue that oral histories are an important source of knowledge if we want to understand this genocidal killing. Nevertheless, I believe that Inoa's book, like Garcia's *Holocaust in the Caribbean*, needs to be translated into English so that people in the United States can have access to Latin American documentation while being exposed to intellectual currents produced by the region's scholars. Likewise, we need more Spanish translations of English-language books on Latin America and the Caribbean so that more people throughout the Americas, particularly historians, will benefit from a vibrant discourse that must become borderless.

The four books under review here try to uncover the hidden or complex histories of the Dominican Republic. It is clear that today achieving democracy and eradicating anti-Haitianism pose major challenges to the social fabric of Dominican society. These authors have shown effectively how the Dominican political process evolved unevenly following Trujillo's assassination and how migration, race, and nation have historically come to serve as markers for an elite vision of Dominican national identity.

4. One black Dominican who was almost deported said, "They almost took me in the October raid. Because I am very black they [the Dominican army] swore that I was Haitian. Can you believe it? I don't even know how to speak the language! What would have happened to me?! It's incredible. Here in this part of the country [Santiago] the racial abuse is terrible and the people are racist. I feel it. I receive a lot of violence. And I'm Dominican" (Calderón 1999:22).

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RICHARD & SALLY PRICE

THE CARIBBEANIST HALL OF SHAME, 2001

*NWIG* reviewers contributed essays on more than sixty books for the issues published in 2001, and we are grateful to these generous scholars for having shared their views.

With the usual regret and remorse, however, we must announce this year's delinquent reviewers, who have (for whatever diverse reasons, and despite our gentle reminders) deprived *NWIG* readers of the opportunity to learn about what's new and interesting in Caribbean studies, and have deprived the books' authors of the opportunity to get a hearing in this forum. As has become our custom, we identify delinquent reviewers by their first and last initials, and give publication information on each book in question.

*Afro-Cuban Voices: On Race and Identity in Contemporary Cuba* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000, cloth US\$ 24.95), edited by Pedro Pérez Sarduy & Jean Stubbs (R-h B-r)

*Caribbean Portraits: Essays on Gender Ideologies and Identities* (Kingston: Ian Randle, in association with The Centre for Gender and Development Studies UWI, 1998, paper US\$ 25.00), edited by Christine Barrow (C-e J-n)

*Centering Woman: Gender Discourses in Caribbean Slave Society* (Kingston: Ian Randle; Princeton NJ: Markus Wiener; Oxford: James Currey, 1999, paper US\$ 19.95), by Hilary McD. Beckles, and *Women in Caribbean History: The British-Colonised Territories* (Kingston: Ian Randle; Oxford: James Currey; Princeton NJ: Markus Wiener, 1999, paper US\$ 15.00), edited by Verene A. Shepherd (C-e R. S-n)

*Creole Genesis and the Acquisition of Grammar: The Case of Haitian Creole* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998, cloth US\$ 74.95), by Claire Lefebvre (G-y C-n)

*Crosscurrents: West Indian Immigrants and Race* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, paper US\$ 21.95), by Milton Vickerman (I-a W-s-O-s)

*Renouveau missionnaire et société esclavagiste: La Martinique: 1815-1848* (Paris: Editions Publisud, 1997, paper 288 FF), by Philippe Delisle (D-e T-h)

*Silver, Trade, and War: Spain and America in the Making of Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, cloth US\$ 49.95), by Stanley J. Stein & Barbara H. Stein (F-o A. S-o)

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