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GRAHAM GREENE AND CUBA: OUR MAN IN HAVANA?

Graham Greene's novel *Our Man in Havana* was published on October 6, 1958. Seven days later Greene arrived in Havana with Carol Reed to arrange for the filming of the script of the novel, on which they had both been working. Meanwhile, after his defeat of the summer offensive mounted by the Cuban dictator, Fulgencio Batista, in the mountains of eastern Cuba, just south of Bayamo, Fidel Castro had recently taken the military initiative: the day after Greene and Reed's arrival on the island, Che Guevara reached Las Villas, moving westwards towards Havana. Six weeks later, on January 1, 1959, after Batista had fled the island, Castro and his Cuban Revolution took power. In April 1959 Greene and Reed were back in Havana with a film crew to film *Our Man in Havana*. The film was released in January 1960. A note at the beginning of the film says that it is "set before the recent revolution." In terms of timing, *Our Man in Havana* could therefore hardly be more closely associated with the triumph of the Cuban Revolution. But is that association merely accidental, or does it involve any deeper implications? On the fiftieth anniversary of novel, film, and Revolution, that seems a question worth investigating, not with a view to turning *Our Man in Havana* into a serious political novel, but rather to exploring the complexities of the genre of comedy thriller and to bringing back into view some of the local contexts which might be less visible now than they were when the novel was published and the film released.

At the time of his death in 1991 Graham Greene was probably the best-known British novelist, one of the few who had managed to combine critical and popular success over a long career. In 1958 he was at the height of his powers. Early work had included novels such as *Brighton Rock* (1938) and *The Power and the Glory* (1940). After the war he had published *The End of the Affair* (1951) and *The Quiet American* (1955). After *Our Man in Havana* was to come *The Comedians* (1966) and *The Honorary Consul* (1973). Some of these novels had domestic settings and focused on personal relationships or matters of religion, but many were set abroad and engaged

seriously with the politics of decolonization: *The Quiet American* is set in Vietnam, *The Comedians* deals with Haiti in the 1960s under the notoriously brutal regime of François Duvalier. Greene was a steadfast supporter of radical and anticolonial movements: through a personal friendship with Omar Torrijos, the president of Panama, he became closely involved in the return of the Panama Canal to Panama, a process begun in 1977 though not completed until 1999. He was also solidly – if not uncritically – supportive of the Cuban Revolution, as is seen in the two essays he wrote in 1963 and 1966 for the archconservative British newspaper, *The Daily Telegraph*, and in his admiring 1966 portrait of Fidel Castro.<sup>1</sup>

At first glance, however, *Our Man in Havana* might not look as if it has much in the way of political implications. In generic terms it appears like a parody of a spy novel. The true popularity of spy fiction followed *Our Man in Havana* with the novels of John Le Carré and Len Deighton, and the films that were made from them, starting in the 1960s, though the one immediate candidate for parody in 1958 was Ian Fleming, whose deeply racist *Dr No* had been published in 1957 – set in the Caribbean and concerning attacks on U.S. missiles. Greene himself categorized *Our Man in Havana* as merely one of his “entertainments.” Asked once whether he wished he had written a book like *The Quiet American* “which would have carried more weight” than an “entertainment,” Greene replied: “Not in the least. I think that *Our Man in Havana* is a good comic novel. The object was not to talk about Cuba but to make fun of the Secret Service. Havana was merely the background, an accident – it had nothing to do with my sympathy for Fidel.”<sup>2</sup> The film version of *Our Man in Havana* seems to go further in this direction by removing almost all the brief references in the novel to rebel activity and by highlighting the already rich comedic possibilities inherent in the idea of the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) through the acting talents of Alec Guinness, Noel Coward, and Ralph Richardson.

In a note at the beginning of the novel Greene goes out of his way to play down the local context. He calls the book a “fairy-story,” specifically denying that the characters of the Havana police chief Captain Segura, the

1. See “Return to Cuba” (1963) and “Shadow and Sunlight in Cuba” (1966), both in Greene 1990:213-20 and 245-52; and “The Marxist Heretic” (1966) in Greene 1969:405-13.

2. Allain (1983:59). Greene’s own judgment has generally been accepted by critics, although Judith Adamson notes that while “Greene says his novel is only a light-hearted comedy, ... it has a dark and philosophical background which lends it substance and contains many of his recurring themes” (1990:141). It is also true that, writing in defense of Sidney Gilliat’s libretto for Malcolm Williamson’s opera of *Our Man in Havana*, Greene stated: “I admired the great skill with which the libretto had compressed the action and yet brought out every political point” (Letter to *The Times*, July 4, 1963, in Greene 1995:573). Cf. Williamson 1963.

British ambassador, and the chief of the Secret Service have any connection at all with living people, and removing the novel from its time of publication by saying that it is “set at some indeterminate date in the future.” Not that indeterminate, it turns out; which offers a first clue as to the novel’s political undercurrents. When the protagonist Jim Wormold is arrested in Santiago during his annual sales trip to eastern Cuba, he tells a policeman that he is forty-five years old, and he later tells his new assistant Beatrice that he was born on December 6, 1914. That means that the novel is set just a year after it was published, between December 6, 1959 and the December 5, 1960. The dates themselves are not important, since Greene could not have known that the Revolution would triumph so soon after the publication of his novel – though the novel does have the current Cuban president’s regime “creaking dangerously towards its end” (Greene 1958:24). The point is that Greene undermines his own supposed indeterminacy. In addition, the fact that the three characters he names are definitely *based* on living people hints at Greene’s characteristically playful obliquity, just as it begins to suggest the rather specific political connotations of both novel and film. Overtaken by events, the film could hardly follow the novel in claiming that it was set at some indeterminate future date: that note at the beginning saying that it is “set before the recent revolution” would place it in the last three months of 1958, in other words the last three months of the Batista dictatorship.

In *Our Man in Havana*, Jim Wormold is a Phastkleaders vacuum-cleaner salesman living in Havana with his beautiful seventeen-year-old daughter, Milly – whose real name, Seraphina, Greene may well have taken from the Cuban beauty in the Conrad/Ford novel, *Romance*.<sup>3</sup> Wormold is recruited in rather slapdash fashion into the British Secret Service, the induction taking place in the room of his contact, Henry Hawthorne, in the Sevilla-Biltmore Hotel. Completely uninterested in politics or spying, Wormold spots the opportunity to make enough money to ease the financial problems largely caused by his indulgence towards his daughter. Fictitious agents, their names chosen at random from a list of Country Club members, are recruited and expenses claimed for them, and increasingly fantastic stories woven to provide a patina of plausibility.

Twenty years later, Greene explained the background to the writing of the book (Greene 1980:238-51). He himself had worked for the British Secret Service in Freetown in the 1940s. Returning to London he had been appointed to the subsection dealing with counter-espionage in the Iberian peninsula, where he had learned about agents in Portugal sending back to Germany completely fictitious reports which garnered them expenses and

3. Greene was a great admirer of Ford and editor of the *Bodley Head Ford Madox Ford*. He called *Romance* “that underrated novel” (Greene 1969:163).

bonuses to add to their basic salary. Asked for a film script in 1946 Greene had written an outline for a story set in Estonia just before the beginning of the Second World War which made gentle fun of the Secret Service. The film was never made, and the idea changed course when Greene realized that Havana – which he had visited several times in the early 1950s – would be a much better setting, the absurdities of the cold war being more appropriate for a comedy than the dark European shadows of 1938.<sup>4</sup>

Most of the novel takes place on the edge of Old Havana, controlled by the malicious police chief, Captain Segura, who has his eye on Wormold's daughter, Milly: most scenes are set in Wormold's shop on Calle Lamparilla, in his apartment above the shop, or in local bars. However, every year Wormold would make a trip to the eastern province of Oriente, as far as Santiago, to visit the company's retailers. On this occasion he reckons that he might as well let MI6 finance the trip and so cables his contact: "On pretext of visiting sub-agents for vacuums propose to investigate possibilities for recruitment port of Matanzas, industrial centre Santa Clara, naval headquarters Cienfuegos and dissident centre Santiago, calculate expenses of journey fifty dollars a day" (Greene 1958:74).

Wormold's experiences on his eastern journey shock him into action, precipitating the book's major plot development. "What was the good of playing a game with half a heart?" he says to himself: "At least let him give them something they would enjoy for their money" (Greene 1958:89). So he concocts an elaborate report about big military installations under construction in the mountains of Oriente, too extensive to be aimed at small rebel bands. Stories of widespread forest clearance under cover of forest fires and of peasants being impressed to carry loads of stone provide supporting context. To round things off, he is inspired by the name of Phastkleaners' latest model, the Atomic Pile, to sketch its innards, claiming that one of his agents had made the drawings of strange machinery being transported into the forest near the military H.Q. at Bayamo, on the other side of the Sierra Maestra from Santiago. In London nobody except Hawthorne, who alone knows that Wormold sells vacuum cleaners, doubts the report or the sketches. To help Wormold, who is by now their most valued agent in the Caribbean, the Secret Service sends him a secretary, Beatrice Severn, and a communications officer.

At this point, however, Wormold's web begins to unravel. The "agents" he has invented start getting killed in mysterious circumstances and his old friend, Dr. Hasselbacher, also involved in the murky world of espionage, is gunned

4. "One could hardly sympathise with the main character if he was to be involved with the Hitler war. I already knew Cuba and my sympathies were with the Fidelistas in the mountains" (Letter to Ian Thomson, August 18, 1988, in Greene 2007:403). When *Our Man in Havana* was published, MI5 rang up the head of MI6 (according to Greene) to suggest that he should be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act: "The head of MI6 laughed" (Letter to Marie-Françoise Allain, January 1, 1990, in Greene 2007:413).

down in one of the bars where they used to drink together. Hasselbacher had been blackmailed into spying on Wormold, then honorably changed his mind because of his friendship with Wormold, so the enemy agent Carter kills him. Captain Segura says: "Of course we shall say it was the rebels from Oriente. It will be useful in influencing foreign opinion. Perhaps it was the rebels" (Greene 1958:228). Then London discovers that the other side (it is again characteristic of Greene that he never makes clear who they are) wants to kill Wormold during a trade association meeting in Havana. Wormold is summoned to Jamaica to hear the news from Hawthorne. The enemy agent, Carter, masquerading as a salesman for the rival firm, Nucleaners, attempts to poison Wormold but is foiled when Wormold recognizes the stutter he has heard on tape in Segura's office and deliberately spills the poisoned whisky. Then, after getting Segura drunk in a game of draughts, Wormold takes Segura's gun and kills Carter. Wormold's deception is finally uncovered, but rather than admit that they were all taken in by his invented sketch, the Secret Service big wigs offer Wormold a job in London and recommend an OBE. Milly graciously allows her father and Beatrice to get married.

Greene had long been interested in film, having been *The Spectator's* film critic during the 1930s. Like most novelists, he had not been very happy with other people's film versions of his novels and so after the Second World War he had jumped at the opportunity to work closely with the director Carol Reed, first in developing for the screen his short story, *The Fallen Idol* (1948), then writing a screenplay which became *The Third Man* (1949), a dark political thriller starring Orson Welles, which had a huge impact in 1949 and was voted in a British Film Institute poll at the end of the century as the greatest British film ever made. *Our Man in Havana* was Reed and Greene's third and final film together.<sup>5</sup>

Greene and Reed spent the best part of three months together working on the script, though strictly speaking this was an adaptation since the novel had already been completed (Ginna 1959:31). It was Batista's government that had given permission for *Our Man in Havana* to be filmed in Cuba but the new Revolutionary government confirmed the arrangement, ensuring an authentic atmosphere. Indeed, according to a contemporary *Time* article, the new Cuban Interior Ministry was hurt that Reed even thought he needed to ask for permission.<sup>6</sup> *Our Man in Havana* was filmed using a Cuban sub-director, Cuban stand-by technicians, and a lot of Cuban extras. It might be assumed that Reed would have had considerable control over the British casting – Guinness, Coward, Richardson – but perhaps less so over the U.S.

5. Dir. Carol Reed, 1959. See Adamson 1984. A good analysis of the film is in Evans 2005:105-17.

6. "His Men in Havana," *Time*, April 27, 1959.

casting, necessary for the financing of the film (jointly made with Columbia Pictures). Reed and Greene had displayed considerable independence in making *The Third Man*, protected by their producer Alexander Korda, which ensured they kept complete control over the script despite David O. Selznick's best efforts to change it, but Korda had died in 1956, probably leaving Reed rather more exposed. In fact, Columbia seems to have left the script of *Our Man in Havana* to Greene and Reed – indeed in places the screenplay incorporates actual pages from the novel pasted onto type sheets (Adamson 1984:94), but the actors were another matter and the “entertainment” element of the film was certainly strengthened by the inclusion of the popular U.S. figures Burl Ives and Ernie Kovacs, as well as the Irish American actress, Maureen O'Hara, and the young starlet, Jo Morrow. Burl Ives had just starred in the film of Tennessee Williams's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and had won an Academy Award for his part in William Wyler's *The Big Country*. He had also testified for Joseph McCarthy's House Committee on Un-American Activities, naming several of his fellow singers and actors as possible Communists, which gives an interesting edge to his role in this film as Dr. Hasselbacher, Wormold's friend, who first betrays him and then is killed for trying to warn him of the betrayal. Jo Morrow, nineteen when she played Milly, “just couldn't act,” according to Greene, which seems fair comment.<sup>7</sup> She was also far too old for the part and turns a spoiled adolescent into a flirtatious and manipulative young woman. Kovacs was best known as a TV comedian, which would inevitably color perception of his role as Havana's police chief, though he surprised critics with the assurance of his performance.

Greene reports that Cuba's Revolutionary government did not really approve of the novel (Greene 1980:249). For them, it minimized the brutality of Batista's dictatorship, particularly in what they saw as the softening of the character of the infamous police captain, Esteban Ventura Novo, into the cynical but not absolutely unsympathetic Captain Segura. Ventura Novo (1913-2001) had been responsible for much of the torture and murder in Havana that marked Batista's repression in the years 1956 to 1958. Greene tells the story of how Ventura was going to be left behind by Batista but forced his way onto the departing dictator's plane at gunpoint. He eventually settled in Miami, as in the novel Segura suggests he himself would do if the regime fell – another indication of Greene's prescience.<sup>8</sup>

7. Graham Greene in an interview with Judith Adamson, June 21, 1982, in Adamson 1984:98.

8. Greene 1980:249-50. On Ventura Novo's death the exiled Cuban journalist and historian, Octavio R. Costa, opined that Ventura was an effective enforcer against civil uprisings: “He did his job, and he did it in a way that responded to the circumstances of that era,” *Miami Herald*, May 23, 2001.

In April 1959 a member of the Film Division of the Cuban Ministry of the Interior, Clara Martínez, was assigned to the production team to represent the interests of the new Cuban government.<sup>9</sup> On their behalf she requested a number of changes in two main areas. She wanted the character of Captain Segura to become more villainous, in order to correspond more closely to his model, and in the various nightclub scenes she wanted the strippers to take off fewer clothes than Reed and Greene wanted them to take off, which was already considerably fewer than they would have taken off before the Revolution, which was all of them. (After the Revolution, the only prerevolutionary cabaret left untouched was the Tropicana – where the characters go in the novel and the film for Milly's seventeenth birthday party – which had a chorus line but no strippers.) So in one respect the new Revolutionary government wanted more realism, in another respect less realism.

Ironically, Greene's own early visits to Havana had been for exactly those aspects of the city that motivated Revolutionary distaste: the brothels, the high living, the drugs, the gambling, and the obscene cabarets. After his first visit, in 1954, Greene wrote: "Havana has been a fascinating city, quite the most vicious I have ever been in."<sup>10</sup> Under Batista's dictatorship the Mafia controlled Havana's huge gambling industry.<sup>11</sup> The Mafia's role in Havana had originally been developed by Charlie "Lucky" Luciano (born Salvatore Lucania), who had been serving thirty to fifty in a U.S. penitentiary in 1943 when he appealed for a reduction of sentence in return for services rendered to the nation. Luciano had cooperated with the U.S. authorities to catch German spies on the east coast dockyards, which he still controlled from prison. He may also have eased the path to the U.S. invasion of Sicily. One of his deputies in New York, Vito Genovese, one of the major drug traffickers of his day, certainly ended up as official interpreter and advisor to the U.S. military governor in Naples. The U.S. army originally worked with the Mafia in Sicily because the Mafia hated Mussolini who had cracked down on their activities. But after the War, the Mafia turned out also to be impeccably anticommunist, so the relationship with the U.S. intelligence services continued.<sup>12</sup> It was eventually a Mafia boss in Havana, Santo Trafficante, Jr., who was involved in a CIA plot to assassinate Fidel Castro in 1960.<sup>13</sup>

9. See "His Men in Havana," *Time*, April 27, 1959; and Ginna 1959. According to "His Men in Havana," the Cuban Interior Minister, Luis Orlando Rodríguez, had a copy of the script translated into Spanish and then suggested changes to Reed and Greene.

10. Letter to Natasha and Peter Brook, September 6, 1954, in Greene 2007:211; and see Adamson 1984:93-94.

11. See in general Enrique Cirules's two books, 2004 and 2006; Lacey 1991, chapters 13 and 14; Schwartz 1997, chapters 9 to 12; and English 2008.

12. See Robb 1999:32-33.

13. See "Santo Trafficante, Reputed Mafia Chief, Dies at 72," *New York Times*, March 19, 1987.

Luciano had been released in 1946 but he was not allowed to stay in the United States. Havana was as close as he could get, but the U.S. authorities lent on Batista to get him back to Italy, possibly with the connivance of his friend Meyer Lansky, who was the person who eventually lost most financially through the success of the Cuban Revolution. Lansky is a very interesting if still rather shadowy figure, the most important Mafia boss without an Italian background. He had had contacts in Havana since the 1920s, when Cuba became a conduit for bootlegging during Prohibition, and had spent the winter months of 1939 and 1940 there; but he moved into the city in a serious way only in 1952 when Batista called on his services to develop Havana into a major gambling center. Lansky appears in fictionalized form in a number of films and in Mayra Montero's fine novel about this period, *Son de almendra*.<sup>14</sup>

In late 1957 – at exactly the moment when Greene started to write *Our Man in Havana* – there was a major fight in the Mafia over the distribution of the massive profits emanating from Cuba. Since Lansky did not have to worry about government interference, with Batista being paid a handsome cut, he and his associates had free rein to establish a string of casinos which produced cast-iron profits. In early 1957 the U.S. family headed by Alberto Anastasia complained about the small size of their share of this sumptuous cake. With Anastasia's truculence perceived as threatening, Lansky had him assassinated in classic style in a barber's chair in midtown Manhattan.<sup>15</sup> To deal with the resulting crisis, the families convoked an urgent peace conference on November 14, 1957 at Joseph Barbara's house near Apalachin in New York state, attended by sixty Mafia bosses from all over the country. It was probably the biggest meeting of the Mafia ever to take place and it was a complete disaster because the FBI raided it – often regarded as their biggest ever victory against organized crime (Sondern 1959:3-17). And, of course, the meeting was pointless because the prize of Havana, over which they were squabbling, was about to be taken away from them all.

The Mafia-run Cuban leisure industry plays a significant part in *Our Man in Havana*. When in Havana Greene himself used to stay at the Sevilla-Biltmore Hotel, close to the Presidential Palace, run by Amletto Battisti and famous for the easy availability of cocaine and female company. That is also where Hawthorne stays in the novel, although in the film he stays at the Capri, a new hotel owned by mobster Santo Trafficante, Jr., which opened in November 1957, featuring a luxurious casino overseen by Mafia asset and

14. Lansky has been played by Lee Strasberg (as Hyman Roth) in *The Godfather Part II* (dir. Francis Ford Coppola, 1974); Mark Rydell in *Havana* (dir. Sydney Pollack, 1990); Ben Kingsley in *Bugsy* (dir. Barry Levinson, 1991), Richard Dreyfuss in *Lansky* (dir. David Mamet, 1999); and Dustin Hoffman in *The Lost City* (dir. Andy Garcia, 2005). Mayra Montero, *Son de almendra* (2005), translated 2008.

15. Anastasia's murder was not officially solved, so its connection with Lansky and Havana remains speculative: English (2008:224-34) furnishes a strong case for the connection.

ex-film star, George Raft. All the film principals on *Our Man in Havana* also stayed at the Capri, and it is the Capri's rooftop swimming pool which features in the film's opening shots (Figure 1).<sup>16</sup>



Figure 1. The opening scene, shot on the rooftop of Hotel Capri

Greene's choice of Cuba as the setting for his novel was presumably influenced by the island's recent irruption onto the world stage. In December 1956, eighty-two rebels had landed on Cuban's southeastern coast. After a few days only around a quarter were left. These survivors slowly gained a foothold in the mountains of the Sierra Maestra and started to win some small military successes, but they were under severe pressure because a peasant traitor was giving directions to Cuban fighter planes that were strafing the rebel camps. It was at this difficult moment that Fidel Castro decided to organize a visit from a foreign press correspondent, calculating that clear news of his survival in the mountains would put Batista on the back foot both in Cuba and internationally. The man chosen for the interview was Herbert Matthews, foreign editor for the *New York Times*.

Supposedly on holiday, Matthews and his wife drove undercover, with Cuban minders, from Havana into the foothills of the Sierra Maestra, and Matthews walked into the mountains to meet Castro. Castro gave the journalist the story of the landing, an analysis of the military situation, and an explanation of the ideals of the Revolution. Matthews and his wife then trav-

16. Lansky started at the Montmartre Club, a place for high rollers, and in 1955 he got the contract to run the new casino at the Hotel Nacional; but his big project was the Hotel Riviera, which opened on December 10, 1957.

eled on to Santiago, from where they flew back to Havana. After a brief visit to their old friend Ernest Hemingway, the couple returned to New York with Matthews's notes hidden in his wife's girdle. Confident that no one else had the story, the *New York Times* waited until the next Sunday, February 24, 1957, to print the first part of Matthews's scoop, while running trailers during the week about revolution in Cuba to raise interest and expectation. When Matthews had returned from Cuba, one trailer said, "with a story that's sure to startle the world" (quoted in DePalma 2006:98). Then on the Sunday, under the headline "Cuban Rebel Is Visited in Hideout," and subhead "Castro Is Still Alive and Still Fighting in Mountains," and alongside a large photograph of Castro holding a rifle with a telescopic sight, Matthews's historic report opened like this: "Fidel Castro, the rebel leader of Cuba's youth, is alive and fighting hard and successfully in the rugged, almost impenetrable fastnesses of the Sierra Maestra, at the southern tip of the island."<sup>17</sup> It was one of the biggest journalistic scoops of all time. The Cuban government responded by calling Matthews's story a "chapter in a fantastic novel." It noted that there was no photograph of Matthews with Castro; asserted that, whether Castro was dead or alive, he certainly had no supporting forces; and claimed that the interview could not have taken place because the Sierra Maestra was enclosed by a ring of steel. The following day the *New York Times* published a photograph of Matthews sitting next to Castro, both smoking cigars. The Cuban government declared it a fake, making Batista look even more foolish (Matthews 1961:45-50).

One aspect of Matthews's scoop is particularly relevant to *Our Man in Havana*. The main reason that Castro's survival had not been reported is that most of the international journalists and diplomats were in Havana, 600 miles west of the Sierra Maestra. To get the story, Matthews had to be prepared for a long journey east to the province of Oriente, which had always been the center of revolutionary activity in Cuba. When he started to work on his novel in November 1957, just nine months after Matthews's journalistic scoop, Greene decided that he needed to find something out about the rest of the country and so he followed Matthews's footsteps: "I set about curing a little of my ignorance. I made Cuban friends, I took a car and travelled with a driver around the country" (Greene 1980:241). He was unable to get to Santiago by car, but not for the mechanical reasons which give Wormold a similar problem in the novel: "There were military roadblocks all round the capital of Oriente and every foreigner arriving by private car was suspect." So Greene flew in by plane: "An unofficial curfew began at nine p.m. dangerous to ignore, there were arbitrary arrests, and often when day broke a man's body would be found hanging from a lamp-post" (Greene 1980:243). There were no tourists and a general atmosphere of suspicion pervaded the city. Between Matthews's visit to Santiago in February and Greene's in November, the city had indeed

17. *New York Times*, February 24, 1957, 1 and 34.

been in turmoil. On July 30, the leader of the rebels in Oriente, Frank País, had been murdered on the street in a police ambush. By chance, the new U.S. ambassador, Earl E.T. Smith (a businessman and Republican Party fundraiser without diplomatic experience), arrived in Santiago two days later. Herbert Matthews had told Smith “that Havana was not Cuba and that the atmosphere in the rest of the country was very different, and I suggested that he travel around and see things for himself” (Matthews 1961:71). Smith arrived to find a large group of women demonstrating against Batista and being beaten up by the police. Asked for an immediate public comment Smith said “Any sort of excessive police action is abhorrent to me.” Opposition forces were heartened to hear a U.S. ambassador seeming to protest on their behalf while Batista was outraged and threatened to make Smith *persona non grata*. Smith himself was highly annoyed that he had been encouraged to go to Santiago where he was clearly out of his depth. He did not make the same mistake again and soon repaired his bridges with Batista.<sup>18</sup> While Greene was there, three sisters, aged between eight and ten, were seized from their home in the middle of the night by soldiers to be used as hostages against their father, who had joined Castro in the Sierra. The following day a mass demonstration by children forced the release of the girls.

Just before leaving Havana for Santiago, Greene had been to a party where he met a *fidelist*a courier who was going to be traveling on the same plane as him. She asked him to take sweaters and socks needed by the men in the mountains in his suitcase because it was easier for a foreigner to explain winter clothes. In Santiago Greene experienced what he calls a comedy of errors as absurd as anything described in *Our Man in Havana*. He was accompanied to Santiago by the correspondent of *Time* magazine, hoping for a story. Greene thought he ought to warn the courier about the correspondent, and his host from the previous evening told him to await her phone call in his hotel, the Casa Granda in Plaza de Céspedes. Inevitably the *Time* correspondent showed up the next morning just as the phone call was expected, accompanied by a man claiming to be Castro’s public relations man in Santiago – though Greene thought him too old and too smartly dressed. Managing with some difficulty to get his visitors to leave, Greene took the call and was asked to go to a house in Calle San Francisco. Afraid even to consult the desk clerk, Greene took a taxi, did a tour of the sights, and then asked the taxi driver to take him to the old church of San Francisco, assuming that if such a church existed it would be in Calle San Francisco. Clearly all that work for the Secret Service

18. See Earl Smith’s own self-serving, defensive, and hysterically anti-Castro account (1991). Greene recalled this incident in *Ways of Escape* (1980:243-44), noting that Smith had been rebuked by John Foster Dulles: “In the eyes of the United States Government terror was not terror unless it came from the left.” Wayne Smith, a junior officer in the Embassy from 1957, saw Earl Smith and Gardner (his predecessor) as “entirely out of their depth” (1987:18).

had not gone to waste.<sup>19</sup> Telling the taxi driver he wanted to pray and would then walk back to the hotel, Greene set off up Calle San Francisco only to be approached by a car carrying the *Time* correspondent and Mr. X, who was indeed who he claimed to be and had now been told about the rendezvous. All three arrived together at the house of assignation, where they met the courier and her mother, a priest, and a young couple who turned out to be Haydée Santamaría and her husband Armando Hart who had just made a dramatic escape from the law courts in Havana where he was being taken under military escort for trial, and who was now in the process of having his hair dyed as part of a new disguise. Greene recalls that Santamaría had been taken by the police to see the blinded and castrated corpse of her former fiancé (Boris Luís Santa Coloma) after his torture and murder for taking part in the attack on the Moncada barracks in 1953. (Her brother Abel had been tortured and murdered at the same time.) Greene notes quietly: “I remembered that story when the wife of the Spanish Ambassador spoke to me of Batista’s social charm.”<sup>20</sup>

It quickly turned out that the reason the Cubans wanted to talk to Greene was to ask him to intercede with the British government, which was preparing to sell planes to Batista – which would obviously be used against the rebels. Greene subsequently got a friendly Labour MP, Hugh Delargy, to ask a question in the House of Commons, to which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Ian Harvey, replied that no arms had been sold to Batista – though, as it happened, negotiations were already taking place to do so.<sup>21</sup> Earlier, Cuba had been almost entirely dependent on the United States for arms, but the latter started to get queasy during 1957 since Batista was using U.S. B-26 aircraft and tanks to stamp out internal revolt, thereby associating the United States with a repressive government and violating the terms under which the arms were sold, which forbade their use for internal security. These considerations were not actually strong enough to prevent the continued sale of U.S. arms to Cuba, but the U.S. government did begin to defer the sale of arms as a lever to try to modify Batista’s behavior, particularly by getting him to commit to holding elections in June 1958. Batista’s response was to seek weapons from the United Kingdom and from Canada.<sup>22</sup> (*Our Man in*

19. The CIA certainly kept an eye on Greene during the filming in Havana in April 1959 (Sherry 2005:142-43), so they might well have been following him in 1957, unless they shared the British unwillingness to stray too far from Havana.

20. Greene 1980:248; cf. Santamaría 1980 and Hart Dávalos 2004. Greene met Haydée Santamaría again when he returned to Cuba in 1966: see his letter to Catherine Walston, October 3, 1966, in Greene 2007:285-86.

21. See Greene’s letter of October 23, 1958 to Delargy, asking him to raise some opposition to the sale of British planes to Batista, in Greene 2007:232-33; and *Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 1958/59, vol. 584, 888, March 17, 1958.

22. This and the following paragraphs draw extensively on Phythian & Jardine 1999 and on Hull 2007.

*Havana's* passing reference to U.S. attitudes comes when the U.S. consul speaks at the lunch where Wormold is nearly murdered: "He spoke of the spiritual links between the democracies— he seemed to number Cuba among the democracies" [p. 217]).

In August 1958 – after the completion of Greene's novel but before its publication – the United Kingdom agreed to sell Comet tanks and Sea Fury aircraft to Batista on the back of a matchless Foreign Office assessment that the "chances are now remote ... of Fidel Castro coming to power and our consequently finding ourselves in the embarrassing position of having supplied Batista with arms."<sup>23</sup> Twelve of the seventeen aircraft ordered reached Cuba by December 1958, just in time to be used against the guerrillas in the last days before Batista's departure. A parliamentary row over the export of the Comet tanks was caused by a question asked on November 19, 1958 by Greene's friend, Hugh Delargy, this time of Foreign Secretary Selwyn Lloyd. Would it not be better not to supply arms to either side, Delargy enquired, given that a civil war is raging? Lloyd refused to recognize that there was civil war: "There is a good deal of disagreement as to what is taking place in Cuba today," he said. But he did agree that the situation had changed since the deal was made and said he would inform the House of Commons before any further weapons were sent.<sup>24</sup> Lloyd's capitulation on this point was deplored by the Cuban ambassador in London, who pointed out that Cuba had supported Britain in the United Nations over Suez (the only Latin American country to do so), and so expected support in return against its own rebels (Hull 2007:601). Any embarrassment was short-lived because of Batista's fall from power, and the potential future embarrassment of previous U.K. support for Batista when faced by his replacement was avoided by the new Cuban government's gratitude for having come into possession of recently delivered heavy arms with which to defend the Revolution. So, when Castro's army finally rolled into Havana on January 8, 1959, it did so atop an array of military hardware which included fifteen British tanks. Greene's immediate response was to write a letter to *The Times* which began: "The welcome success of Dr. Fidel Castro in overthrowing the dictatorship of Batista reminds us again of the extraordinary ignorance of Cuban affairs shown by the British Government" and goes on to ask: "What kind of information ... was the Foreign Office receiving from its representatives in Cuba?"<sup>25</sup>

In June 1959 the new Cuban government upped the ante by saying that they would like to swap their Sea Furies (five of them still undelivered) for more powerful Hawker Hunter jets. Selwyn Lloyd was rather inclined to

23. Memorandum from H.A.A. Hankey, August 6, 1958 (PRO: FO371/132175/ak1192/6), quoted in Phythian & Jardine 1999:35.

24. *Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, 1958/59, vol. 595, 1133-34, November 19, 1958.

25. *The Times*, January 3, 1959, in Greene 1989:74-75. That comment inevitably reflects on the failings of Sir Stanley Fordham, British ambassador to Cuba between 1956 and 1960.

agree, but the U.S. government in turn increased the pressure, notably in a series of memoranda from the Secretary of State, Christian Herter, who suggested that Cuba's new government might use the planes "for purposes hostile to the principles for which the Free World stands," conceivably postponing "the inevitable day when Castro will have to face judgement."<sup>26</sup>

Lloyd's reply was skeptical about Herter's assessment, but of course Lloyd did not know – because he was not told – that Herter could be upbeat about Castro's imminent encounter with judgment because the CIA was already plotting with Cuban dissidents in Florida to engineer his downfall. The real reason that the United States did not want Great Britain to sell arms to Cuba was that it knew that any new weapons would be used to resist the U.S.-backed invasion which was already being planned, and which would soon get approval from the outgoing U.S. president, Dwight D. Eisenhower. So the British government decided against selling more planes to Cuba, or replacing the Sea Furies with Hunters. The Cabinet was told that the decision had been taken because of U.S. pressure: "although our trade interests in Cuba might suffer if we refused the [Cuban] request, a failure to support the U.S. where their strategic interests were involved might have even more harmful effects on our economy." However, it would be desirable to publically relate the decision to the continuation of tension in the Caribbean rather than to U.S. pressure.<sup>27</sup>

As a result of this British decision, Cuba had a very small airforce in April 1961 at the time of the Bay of Pigs invasion: just 13 planes, five of which were put out of commission in a bombing raid two days before the invasion. However the remaining British Sea Furies proved extremely effective, disabling the freighter *Houston* and preventing it landing equipment, and hitting the CIA command vessel, the *Barbara J.*, forcing it to withdraw. As a result, a British Sea Fury has pride of place on the forecourt of the Museo de la Revolución in Havana.

Though not fully aware of all these machinations in late 1958 and early 1959, Greene surmised enough to conclude that the Foreign Service and the Secret Service amply merited the gentle ridicule of *Our Man in Havana* (Greene 1980:249). As Greene noted, any tourist to Santiago (as he had been in November 1957) could have told Selwyn Lloyd that the conflict in Cuba did amount to a civil war – with the unspoken implication that the British ambassador and any members of the Secret Service in Cuba never bothered to leave Havana to find out what was happening.

The only two additions to the film of *Our Man in Havana* with a political dimension come in the Wonder Bar scenes where Wormold and Hasselbacher

26. Washington telegram no. 2335 to Foreign Office, Herter to Selwyn Lloyd, November 4, 1959 (PRO: FO 371/139474/AK1223/88), quoted in Phythian & Jardine 1999:50.

27. November 26, 1959 (PRO: CAB 128/36 C60 (59) 4), quoted in Phythian & Jardine 1999:54.

meet to drink and chat. On one occasion the headline in the newspaper on the bar reads: "Latin America in Need of Dollars Not Arms." Then, when Wormold is explaining to Hasselbacher why he wants to take Milly away from Cuba, he says "Civil war, men like Segura." That reference to "civil war" is Greene's very pointed comment at the ignorance of the British government and its intelligence services about events in Cuba as revealed by the Foreign Secretary in that short period between the publication of novel and the making of the film.

The most significant difference between novel and film is the absence from the film of the episode with greatest resonance for the Cuban political situation as Greene experienced it in late 1957: Wormold's trip east to Santiago.<sup>28</sup> Wormold always travels in his old Hillman, but when it breaks down in Santa Clara he decides to go to Santiago by coach: "Perhaps in any case it was quicker and safer that way, for in the Oriente province, where the usual rebels held the mountains and Government troops the roads and cities, blocks were frequent and buses less liable to delay than private cars" (Greene 1958:77). The phrase "the usual rebels" perhaps echoes *Casablanca's* "the usual suspects" and is entirely characteristic of Greene's careful prevarication. It could certainly be Wormold's own phrase, the slightly cynical expression of an English expatriate in a Latin American country, always hearing about rebels in the mountains. But just as the original phrase was used by Captain Renault to camouflage Rick's involvement in the killing of Nazi officer Major Strasser, so "the usual rebels" might equally well obscure Greene's knowledge that the rebels were by no means "usual." Any such echo would, in any case, suggest an equivalence between the French resistance and the struggle against Batista, something that the new Revolutionary government might have had in mind when allowing the film of the novel to be made in Havana. In a delicious twist, the chief of the Service Service in London has a hunch that these rebels do not even exist, that they are just an excuse fabricated by the Cuban government to shut down a censorship over the area, a neat joke of Greene's given his awareness of Batista's attempts to suggest that the rebels did *not* in fact exist.

The tone of the novel darkens considerably during this Oriente episode. The evening hours in Santiago are described as "the empty dangerous hours of the unofficial curfew" (Greene 1958:77). The shops are closed, the streets almost deserted, the greenery hangs dark and heavy. Everyone treats Wormold with suspicion. On his way back from an inconsequential meeting with his retailer ("Trade was bad" [Greene 1958:78]), he is stopped by two policemen who want to know what he is doing out so late. It was ten o'clock. There is no curfew, as Wormold unwisely points out:

28. Quentin Falk suggests that the film of *Our Man in Havana* follows the book faithfully with "merely a handful of incidental scenes omitted" (Falk 2000:105), but this Santiago sequence is far from incidental.

Suddenly, without warning, one of the policemen slapped his face. He felt shock rather than anger. He belonged to the law-abiding class; the police were his natural protectors. He put his hand to his cheek and said: "What in God's name do you think ...?" The other policeman with a blow in the back sent him stumbling along the pavement. His hat fell off into the filth of the gutter. He said, "Give me my hat," and felt himself pushed again. He began to say something about the British Consul and they swung him sideways across the road and sent him reeling. (Greene 1958:79)

This sudden violence changes the tone of the novel dramatically. Not for the first time – and just as it had done for Greene himself – a trip from Havana to Santiago has provided an education in how matters really stand in Cuba. The rumors of repression and brutality no longer seem quite so much in the background. Since Wormold focalizes the novel, this almost random violence visited on him in Santiago at the hands of the police is quite startling. It also compromises Wormold morally. When he is threatened with further violence he invokes the name of Captain Segura: "He is a friend of my daughter ... I don't think Captain Segura would be pleased" (Greene 1958:82), which serves to frighten the policemen into releasing him.

*Casablanca*<sup>29</sup> set a template for postwar political thrillers which it was almost impossible to escape, and the film provides an interesting lens through which to read *Our Man in Havana*. There are some obvious and fairly general similarities between the two: a Third-World setting, a moment of political transition, an individualistic hero caught up in a larger war, a woman who flies in and disrupts the hero's life. But most significant is the similarity between Segura and Renault, the two police officers whose ambiguously shifting loyalties lie at the center of the respective works. Both are womanizers, though – unlike Renault – Segura operates entirely properly and Greene is careful not to suggest that Milly is in any imminent sexual danger even though she is a wholly innocent sixteen-year-old when the novel opens, only just within the age of consent. Segura is in fact rather touchingly committed to convincing Wormold that he would make a suitable husband for Milly. He is obsessed by doing things correctly, and his lack of realization as to how little chance of success he has increases his vulnerability, and therefore makes him more sympathetic to readers than he would otherwise be. Renault – though superficially a more engaging character with his ready wit and devil-may-care attitude – is in fact sexually voracious, selling exit visas to desperate women in exchange for sex, an aspect of *Casablanca* which only narrowly got past the censors and which the film rather glosses over in its rush to the "start of a beautiful friendship" ending, with its homoerotic undertones, once Ilsa Lund has, to her evident dismay, been ushered on to the plane to spend the rest of her life with Victor Laszlo.<sup>30</sup>

29. Dir. Michael Curtiz, 1942.

30. The Production Code Administration objected to the suggestion that Renault seduced women in exchange for exit visas, see Harnetz 1993:162-64.

Even more pertinently, both Renault and Segura cover up the murders committed by the works' respective protagonists. Both culminating scenes take place in airports, where Renault protects Rick from the consequences of him killing Strasser, while Segura, taking his failure to marry Milly with eminently good grace, lets Wormold leave, while giving him the bullet that killed Carter to show that he knows that Wormold is getting away with murder (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Segura with Wormold and Milly at the airport

Greene offers no physical description of Wormold, but conveys an impression of a diffident middle-aged man who is not exactly physically active: “anxious and criss-crossed, and fortyish” (Greene 1958:4). Alec Guinness, forty-five – exactly Wormold’s age – when he played the part in the film, provides a handy enough image. Wormold is a difficult character to read – as Greene no doubt intended. In one sense he is the hero of a comedy and therefore his role is preordained: he will survive all difficulties and get the girl at the end. The problem comes in reconciling the diffidence necessary to get him into trouble in the first place – the badly paid job in a Caribbean outpost, the broken marriage, the daughter out of control – with the activity necessary to get him out of the trouble he has got himself into – killing the enemy agent who has been sent to murder him. In some ways Greene seems to have looked inwards for this reconciliation: Wormold is often read as something close to a self-portrait and his creation of an imaginary spy network and missile system is presented as the work of a would-be novelist of some considerable imagination. At one point Wormold tells Milly he is becoming “an imaginative writer.” His characters – the invented agents – “grew in the dark without his knowledge.” “You talk like a novelist,” Beatrice says to him (Greene 1958:91, 127, 133). Norman Sherry (2005:133) reckons that Wormold’s inventiveness makes him “closer to



Figure 3. Wormold and Beatrice in the Shanghai nightclub

Greene than any other created character in the author's repertoire." Wormold is even given a hint of Greene's own difficult schooldays when Greene was, as he recalled, "tortured" by a boy called, inevitably, Carter.<sup>31</sup> Even more intriguingly, the novel clearly suggests that Wormold has the kind of detailed knowledge of Havana nightlife that Greene himself possessed. When Milly suggests going to the Shanghai nightclub for her birthday, Wormold is startled that she has even heard of it; but he knows it well – it is where, as he later notes, three pornographic films were shown nightly between nude dances.<sup>32</sup> When

31. "For there was a boy at my school called Carter who perfected during my fourteenth and fifteenth years a system of mental torture based on my difficult situation. Carter had an adult imagination – he could conceive the conflict of loyalties, loyalties to my age-group, loyalty to my father and brother. The sneering nicknames were inserted like splinters under the nails. I think in time I might have coped with Carter – there was an element of reluctant admiration, I believe, on both sides. I admired his ruthlessness, and in an odd way he admired what he wounded in me. Between the torturer and the tortured arises a kind of relationship. So long as the torture continues the torturer has failed, and he recognizes an equality in his victim" (Greene 1971:79-80).

32. Before the Revolution the Shanghai was infamous for its live sex shows featuring Superman and numerous female companions. In the novel Superman is actually referred

Wormold and Beatrice have to warn Teresa, one of his supposed agents working at the Shanghai, Wormold knows that the second performance will not yet be over (Figure 3). And to Carter's question about where Wormold plans to take him, Wormold replies "Any one of a dozen whore-houses. They are all the same ... About a dozen girls to choose from. They'll do an exhibition for you" (Greene 1958:246). Wormold clearly knows his way round the seamy side of Havana. The importance of all this only becomes apparent when Wormold is preparing to kill Carter. Carter has murdered Hasselbacher and tried to kill Wormold and will no doubt try again. So, strictly speaking, Wormold needs no further motivation. But it is apparent that his author feels the need for a different kind of motivation for Carter's killing: Carter has to be humiliated before he is killed.



Figure 4. Carter failing to undress the stripper

By this point in both novel and film, Wormold has gained considerably in status. His wife had left him, he remembers, because he just stands there, as she had put it. But his pseudo-spying activities have given him a new lease of life. He has attracted Beatrice, played in the film by Maureen O'Hara, then nearly 40 (Beatrice is 31 in the novel), but still a very beautiful woman who had recently played opposite John Wayne in *Rio Grande* and *The Quiet Man*,

to as performing at the San Francisco brothel, but Greene had seen him at the Shanghai, just as he had seen a lesbian show at the Blue Moon, where Wormold takes Carter in the film (Greene 1980:241). Apparently Greene spent quite some time during the filming of *Our Man in Havana* trying to track down Superman, who had gone underground after the Revolution. For a contemporary account of the Shanghai, see Roberts 1953:226-29.

lending Wormold by association an image of masculinity that his demeanor hardly suggests. He has outdrunk Captain Segura and taken his gun, a symbolic unmaning which requires little interpretation. Just in case we fail to get the point, in the first nightclub they stop at Carter is approached by a stripper to unhook her black lace corsets. (From the front in the film, and they are a lighter color; Figure 4). Carter fumbles and blushes, clearly unfamiliar with the finer points of women's underwear, and Wormold offers to help him. Then, when they approach a brothel, Carter gets even more flustered and lurches into a pathetic confession that he tries to want women but "It doesn't work, Wormold. I can't do what they want" (Greene 1958:250). So throughout all these scenes Wormold becomes more and more like his author, with a kind of worldly assurance, and Carter becomes more and more pathetic. Carter tries to argue with Wormold that they are both foot soldiers in some great political struggle and should therefore have some fellow feeling, but Greene has ensured a deep character division as embodied in differential sexual adequacy, as if to drain any possible empathy in his readers towards Carter. But then, characteristically, Greene pulls back from the division he has just created because Carter's humiliating confession makes it *less* easy for Wormold to kill him: "I have to do it, Wormold thought, before he confesses any more to me. With every second the man was becoming human, a creature like oneself whom one might pity or console, not kill" (Greene 1958:250). Nonetheless, kill him he does, Greene protecting his hero by having him shoot *back* as Carter tries to kill him (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Wormold shooting Carter

The figure of Segura is certainly the key to the novel's relationship with Cuban realities. Greene did not keep up the pretence that Segura was not based on a real person: in *Ways of Escape* he openly discussed Ventura Novo,

while noting that he had “changed a savage Captain Ventura into a cynical Captain Segura.”<sup>33</sup> Greene was clearly not interested in simply writing a novel about Batista’s Cuba. But the connections between Ventura Novo and Segura are certainly there, most significantly perhaps in the references to torture. Whenever Greene wrote about pre-Revolutionary Cuba, he stressed its reliance on torture. In the letter he wrote to *The Times* immediately after Castro’s overthrow of Batista, berating the British government for the intelligence failures which had led to it supplying arms to Batista, Greene highlighted “the mutilations and torture practised by leading police officers.”<sup>34</sup> Three years later, in a further letter to *The Times*, he broadened the claim, recalling that “President Batista’s police state, addicted like most police states to the practice of torture, was supported not only by the American Government of the time, not only by the more influential racketeers of Las Vegas, who controlled the gambling concessions and brothels of Havana, but also, in a blinkered way by the present British Government” (Greene 1989:109).

Segura’s reputation as a torturer therefore provides one unbreakable connection to Ventura Novo: Hasselbacher notes that Segura “specialises in torture and mutilation” (Greene 1958:39) and it is well known that he carries a cigarette case made of human skin. But Greene did not want to make Segura a simple copy of his despicable model, partly for generic reasons – a comedy thriller cannot have a genuinely evil villain, and partly for intellectual reasons – Greene never created black or white characters: the relationship between Segura and Wormold works because of the way Greene complicates our sympathies and expectations.

So Segura is given some real complexity as a character. Making Segura a suitor to Wormold’s young daughter immediately puts the two characters into an archetypally tense personal relationship, particularly since the two men belong to the same generation: Segura’s age is not mentioned in the novel, but Kovacs was forty when the film was made, just five years younger than Wormold (and Guinness).

Segura is also allowed a philosophical outlook which could be seen as responding to his island’s position within the world order: he is, quite literally, more worldly-wise than the Englishman. His description of the distinction between the torturable and the untorturable is undeniably cynical: “One never tortures except by a kind of mutual agreement” (Greene

33. Greene 1980:249. He also owns up to Stewart Menzies, head of MI6 during the War, as a model for aspects of the Secret Service chief, and Baron Schacht, whom he had known in Capri, for Hasselbacher (Greene 1980:250). The unsympathetic British ambassador would have been based on Stanley Fordham.

34. “Cuba’s Civil War,” *The Times*, January 3, 1959, in Greene 1989:74-75. He recalled the same incident in a further letter to *The Times* supportive of the Cuban Revolution on February 21, 1962 (Greene 1989:109-10).

1958:189); but it is followed by a sharply observant account of just who belongs to the “torturable class”:

The poor in my own country, in any Latin American country. The poor of Central Europe and the Orient. Of course in your welfare states you have no poor, so you are untorturable. In Cuba the police can deal as harshly as they like with émigrés from Latin America and the Baltic States, but not with visitors from your country or Scandinavia. (Greene 1958:189)

Greene had a good eye for postcolonial realities. As with Vietnam in *The Quiet American*, he saw how Third-World countries could become merely the setting for cold-war hostilities with which the global players would prefer not to sully their own territories. In *Our Man in Havana* Captain Segura is allowed a measure of respect, both because ultimately he is a nationalist and because Greene senses that the greater evils are elsewhere. Indeed Segura voices Greene’s own analysis, a remarkably prescient one for 1958:

Of course we are only a small country, but we lie very close to the American coast. And we point at your own Jamaica base. If a country is surrounded, as Russia is, it will try to punch a hole through from inside. (Greene 1958:188)

Oriente never did see the establishment of those large weapons which looked like the insides of a vacuum cleaner, but something not dissimilar happened in 1962 when Khrushchev sent nuclear weapons to be stationed on Cuba (actually in the west, in Pinar del Río).<sup>35</sup>

Segura is even allowed to explain away the cigarette case made of human skin: the skin belonged to a police officer who had tortured Segura’s father to death.<sup>36</sup> So this was an individual gesture of revenge which serves at least partially to deflect the stories of police brutality and torture. Wormold’s final judgment on Segura in the novel is: “All the same, he wasn’t a bad chap” (Greene 1958:262).<sup>37</sup> Admittedly, when Wormold passes this judgment he is in Segura’s debt and has committed a murder, so it is not entirely obvious that

35. Greene even managed to parody a *future* novel about the Cuban missile crisis, Leon Uris’s mammoth cold-war tome, *Topaz* (1967), which was later turned into probably the worst film he ever made by Alfred Hitchcock. Hitchcock had offered £50,000 to buy the film rights to *Our Man in Havana*, but Greene had never admired Hitchcock, and wanted Reed to direct the film (Greene 1995:559). On the “secret kinship” between Greene and Hitchcock, see Sinyard 2003:96-108.

36. “Even Captain Segura is allowed a father who was tortured to death by a previous generation of policemen, a personal fate which removes him from the gallery of wax figures inhabited by the believers in thrones and powers. His cruelty has a basis in his personal life while theirs belongs to a bland placing of institutions before people” (Smith 1986:143).

37. In the film, slightly less ringingly, “he’s not without humor,” perhaps a knowing reference to Kovacs’s TV career as a comedian.

we should concur, but the remark further blurs any clear divisions readers might want to make between these two characters, one supposedly associated with torture and brutality, the other an upstanding Englishman who knows little about politics but would kill to avenge his friend's murder. Judith Adamson (1984:99) suggests that Segura is treated mildly despite being responsible for the book's violence: "The far less sadistic Harry Lime [in *The Third Man*] received a much harsher sentence." But Lime is guilty of killing and maiming scores of children through his penicillin racket. Although Segura is hated by *habaneros* and has a reputation for violence, he does not commit any violent acts in the novel. Despite Wormold originally suspecting Segura of Hasselbacher's murder, the killer turns out to be Carter, whom Wormold had initially been so pleased to see because Carter stood for "the English midlands, English snobbery, English vulgarity, all the sense of kinship and security the word England implied to him" (Greene 1958:210). Wormold felt safe with Carter – who had come to Cuba to murder him. All the killings we see in the novel and film are actually done by Englishmen: Carter kills the pilot and Hasselbacher; Wormold kills Carter. So much for English kinship and security, notions that Greene was very keen to puncture.

In November 1964 Graham Greene wrote a deeply sarcastic letter to *The Daily Telegraph* contrasting the U.S.-supported Vietnamese army's triumphalist photographs of their torture of Vietcong prisoners with the good old days in which "hypocrisy paid a tribute to virtue by hushing up the torture inflicted by its own soldiers and condemning the torture inflicted by the other side" (Greene 1989:114-15). Then in November 1971 he berated the British Home Secretary, Reginald Maudling, for his defense of what he called the "deep interrogation" of IRA suspects – long hours of enforced standing, hooding, permanent noise, sleep deprivation. Nobody has ever suffered permanent injury from these techniques, Maudling said, foreshadowing Donald Rumsfeld's breezy dismissal of exactly the same techniques at the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base. When applied by communists or fascists, Greene noted, we call it "torture," but when applied by the British we downgrade it to ill treatment (Greene 1989:154-56). The CIA calls it "enhanced interrogation."<sup>38</sup> That, fifty years on from *Our Man in Havana*, torture is still at the forefront of debates about how to combat terrorism, and that those debates should still focus on Cuba, but now on a U.S. base situated within the island – one suspects that none of this would have come as much of a surprise to Graham Greene.

38. See "Leave No Marks: 'Enhanced' Interrogation Techniques and the Risk of Criminality," A Report by Human Rights First and Physicians for Human Rights, August 2007, <http://www.humanrightsfirst.info/pdf/07801-etn-leave-no-marks.pdf>, and McCoy 2006.

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SAINT MARTIN'S CHANGE OF POLITICAL STATUS:  
INSCRIBING BORDERS AND IMMIGRATION LAWS  
ONTO GEOGRAPHICAL SPACE

Anthropologists often analyze globalization as the circulation of goods, people, and ideas that triggers the decrease in nation-state prerogatives and the opening of nation states' borders. In such an analysis, migrations are transnational: people move back and forth between their home country and the host country. Economic and demographic change in St. Martin seems to be a model for the usual scholarly approach to study globalization.<sup>1</sup> As for the circulation of goods and capital, the economic growth of St. Martin as an offshore financial center and a free port has been due to the movement of untaxed capital for the development of tourism. Where the circulation of people is concerned, up until recently no visa was required for Caribbean citizens, and the absence of a border between the French and the Dutch sides ensured the movement of people from the Caribbean, Asia, and Europe – who make up nearly 80 percent of the total population – between the two parts of the island. The recent migrations of these people succeeded the migrations of St. Martiners themselves who, from the late nineteenth century until the 1960s, moved to other Caribbean islands or the east coast of the United States either seasonally or permanently. Thus residents of St. Martin have family networks that cover several continents and which can be characterized as transnational. Finally, with regard to the circulation of ideas, English is the mother tongue of St. Martiners, while French and Dutch are the official languages used by the governments. Most residents are multilingual and speak English, French, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. The change in the institutional status of the two parts of the island toward total independence from their respective regional

1. This article was translated from French by Hanneke Teunissen.

I use “St. Martin” to designate the whole of the island, “Saint Martin” for the French part, and “Sint Maarten” for the Dutch side. The term “Saint Martinois” refers to those families living on Saint Martin for several generations, “Sint Maarteners” to people on Sint Maarten, and “St. Martiners” includes everyone. I use the term “residents” for the entire population, including foreigners. For a map of the island, see Figure 1.

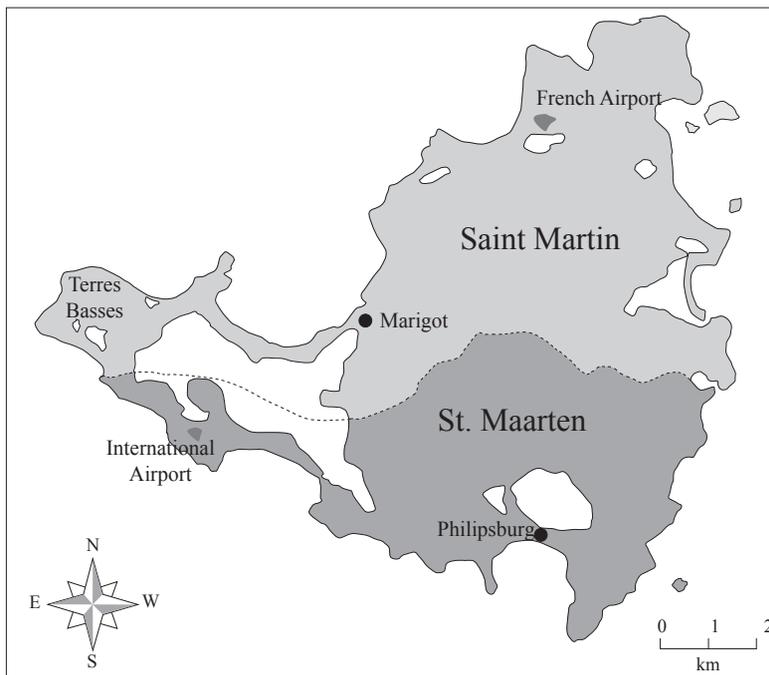


Figure 1. Map of St. Martin

metropoles, Guadeloupe and Curaçao, and a less restricting relationship with France and the Netherlands appear to be the political culmination of economic, demographic, and cultural flows.

In reality, only very specific categories of people and goods may move freely to and throughout the island. The poorest migrants who move to St. Martin do so at a high price: they live in a highly precarious legal, social, and financial situation. These residents, most of them without residency documents, earn less than the legal minimum wage and live in unhealthy housing conditions. They cannot leave the island for fear of not being able to return; they move around the island with difficulty for fear of being deported. Their mobility is the opposite to that of tourists, residents of European origin, and investors, who enjoy the benefits of duty-free shops and tax breaks on their personal and company incomes.

A second anthropological approach to globalization articulates the movement and the enclosing of populations, the development of international institutions or multinationals, and the reinforcement of certain prerogatives of the nation-state. The globe has not become smaller, it has been reorganized into a hierarchical unity of unequal spaces (Heyman 2004). In the anthropology of borders, which has until recently focused on the study of transborder communities, the analysis has shifted to the political definition of the bor-

ders of contemporary states, and studies have shown how the borders of the most prosperous zones are being strengthened.<sup>2</sup> Examples of these borders are the wall at the Mexico-U.S. border, the minefields on the eastern border of Europe, and the wire fences around the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco. However, borders are also represented by restrictive legislation on the entry and stay of foreigners.

In this article, I examine, above all, the articulation between Saint Martin's institutional change and the production of a political space characterized by the legal and spatial redefinition of the island's borders. A process of territorialization accompanies the creation of the overseas collectivity of Saint Martin, causing the island's borders to be closed to foreigners from the Caribbean and the presence of the French state to be reinforced.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore this article introduces two aspects of Caribbean migration that are infrequently dealt with. I bring to light the existence of intra-Caribbean migratory movements, in contrast to most studies that focus on migration to the European and North American continents, and describe the political and legal barriers restricting these migratory movements, which the concept of transnationalism has in part helped to mask (Puri 2003).

#### THE ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC EVOLUTION OF ST. MARTIN

In the referendum of December 7, 2003 on the status change of the overseas departments of Guadeloupe and Martinique, Saint Martin, a commune of Guadeloupe, opted to separate from Guadeloupe both administratively and politically, and to increase its autonomy in relation to the French metropole. In February 2007, Saint Martin became an overseas collectivity (COM, *Collectivité d'outre-mer*) administered by a territorial council elected by the population.<sup>4</sup> Sint Maarten is following a similar evolutionary path. In a series of referendums between 2000 and 2005, the islands of the Federation

2. Wilson & Hastings 1998, Vila 2003, Cunningham 2004, Cunningham & Heyman 2004.

3. The following analysis is based on several stays on Saint Martin since 1994 which were dedicated to the therapy management of people living with HIV or sickle cell anemia, and to the change in institutional status. I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers of this journal for their suggestions and advice, as well as Franck Bardinnet and Claire Rodier for their feedback, and Marie Duflo for her attentive and painstaking reading of the analysis of immigration laws in overseas France. I would not have been able to draw the map of Saint Martin without the assistance of Frank Fulchiero at Connecticut College.

4. St. Barthelemy, formerly a commune of Guadeloupe, is engaged in the same process. Legally, the two COMs are governed by the *Loi Organique* (2007-223) which states the application of the Constitution and the *Loi Ordinaire* (2007-224), both dating from February 21, 2007. They fall under the authority of a prefect delegated to the prefect of Guadeloupe.

of the Netherlands Antilles, consisting of Curaçao, the seat of the federal government, Bonaire, Saba, St. Eustatius, and Sint Maarten voted to change their status. The Netherlands Antilles will cease to exist as a federation. Each island will have a one-on-one relationship with the Netherlands, either with tighter or looser ties to The Hague. In the very near future, Sint Maarten will become an autonomous territory of the Netherlands.

The political evolution of St. Martin is a response to the great economic and demographic upheavals that the island experienced since the 1960s for the Dutch part, and for the French part it was in the 1980s when economic development based on tourism was set in motion.

#### THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM

The economic development of St. Martin is based on the offshore and tourism services it offers. Between the beginning of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1990s, the number of tourists and cruise ship passengers choosing St. Martin as a vacation destination increased fiftyfold.<sup>5</sup> In 2004, with approximately 1.5 million visitors from cruise ships per year and nearly 500,000 visitors coming to St. Martin by air from the Dutch side – few visitors come by air or sea to the French side because the international airport and deep-water harbor are located in Philipsburg – St. Martin has become the island with the most visitors of all the islands in the Lesser Antilles.<sup>6</sup> St. Martin has the world's highest tourism penetration index among forty-seven islands with comparable demographic characteristics and a similar level of development.<sup>7</sup> The French and Dutch sides of the island attract very different types of tourists. Restaurants in Grand Case and luxury boutiques in Marigot appeal to a wealthy clientele, whereas tax refund electronics stores and shops for cheap jewelry in Philipsburg and hotel-casinos draw more middle-class tourists.

Klaus de Albuquerque and Jerome McElroy (1991) have proposed a model for the development of tourism that explains the economic, demographic, and environmental changes of the small islands of the Caribbean whose development is based on tourism.<sup>8</sup> The model describes three stages:

5. In 1965, 23,835 tourists visited the island; in 1993 there were more than 1,100,000 visitors. See Chardon & Hartog 1995.

6. Central Bureau of Statistics Netherlands Antilles: [http://www.central-bureau-of-statistics.an/traffic/traffic\\_n7.asp](http://www.central-bureau-of-statistics.an/traffic/traffic_n7.asp) and [http://www.central-bureau-of-statistics.an/traffic/traffic\\_n9.asp](http://www.central-bureau-of-statistics.an/traffic/traffic_n9.asp).

7. That is, islands with a population of one million inhabitants and an area less than 20,000 km<sup>2</sup>, which have opted for tourism-based development. See McElroy 2004.

8. These authors have simplified and adapted the model to the Caribbean situation, basing it on the “product cycle model” developed in the 1980s by Butler (1980). This model was criticized because characteristics of one stage of development could also be those of

emergence, expansion, and maturity, the last being characterized by slow or no growth at all (de Albuquerque & McElroy 1991, 1995). The evolution of tourism on St. Martin is a good example of this process. From an island that was frequented by the jet set, it has become an island of middle-class tourism, one that consists in particular of cruise ships that disembark a stream of visitors who come to spend one day in the tax refund stores in Philipsburg.<sup>9</sup>

The emergence phase corresponds to the 1960s, when subsequent to the U.S. embargo on Cuba, St. Martin became a destination for wealthy Americans (Samson 1989). The first hotels were small and were built on the waterfronts at Philipsburg and Little Bay.

The expansion phase began in the 1970s in Sint Maarten and in the 1980s in Saint Martin. On the Dutch side it was marked by the development of mass tourism with the construction of hotel complexes that had a capacity of 100 to 600 rooms and a casino. The number of rooms doubled between 1980 and 1990.<sup>10</sup> Investments that made possible the development of tourism on the French side were prompted by tax exemption regulations; the first, called *Loi Pons*, dates from 1986 and reduced the income taxes of individuals and introduced tax breaks for companies. The number of hotels increased by more than thirty between 1986 and 1992. Marinas were constructed to attract luxury yachts.

In 1990, the Caribbean was the primary tropical tourist destination: eleven million tourists vacationed there, and St. Martin was the most popular destination in the Lesser Antilles with 23.6 percent of all who visited that part of the archipelago going there. In 1990, St. Martin became the fourth most popular destination for cruise ships after Puerto Rico, the Bahamas, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The number of cruise ship passengers spending a day on the island increased fivefold in ten years.<sup>11</sup> In twenty years, the number of tourists arriving via Princess Juliana International Airport was multiplied by five: from 100,000 in 1970 to 528,315 in 1991.

The 1990s correspond to the maturity phase. Hurricane Luis (1995) is generally seen as the cause of the decline in tourism because of the infrastructure it destroyed, and because it was followed by other hurricanes (George in 1998 and Lenny in 1999). Effectively, since 1995 the number of people coming to the island had decreased, while vacancies in hotels had increased, though the early warning signs of diminished tourism could already be detected since the early 1990s. Since 2003 the number of visitors and the

other stages and because they represent the development as being linear, which it is not always the case (Thomas, Pigozzi & Sambrock 2005). See also McElroy 2006.

9. The following remarks are based on my own observations and those of Sanguin 1982, Samson 1989, Chardon & Hartog 1989, 1995, and de Albuquerque & McElroy 1991, 1995.

10. From 1,670 in 1980 to 3,500 in 1990 (de Albuquerque & McElroy 1995:76).

11. 105,000 visitors in 1980 as compared to 515,000 in 1990.

occupancy of hotels have risen on the Dutch side, though they have not yet attained pre-Luis figures. On the other hand, the number of cruise ship passengers spending a day on the island is increasing significantly.<sup>12</sup>

#### THE DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF ST. MARTIN

The construction and exploitation of the tourism infrastructure on St. Martin has relied on labor from the poorest Caribbean islands. These laborers were employed in construction and in the very lowest positions in the service industry and they lived in precarious conditions. Management positions, on the other hand, were held by Europeans, mostly from France. From 1970 to 1990 the population increased by a factor of five and went from 14,000 in the 1970s to more than 60,000 at the end of the 1990s.<sup>13</sup>

In 1999, the year of the last census of the entire population of Saint Martin,<sup>14</sup> French of metropolitan origin or from Guadeloupe constituted just over 65 percent of the total population, with those said to be originally from Saint Martin estimated at 15 percent of the total population.<sup>15</sup> The proportion of people of foreign origin was about 32 percent of the population, with a majority from the Caribbean. The proportion of the population living in Saint Martin that originally came from Haiti was 11 percent, about 5 percent came from Dominica, and 4 percent from the Dominican Republic.<sup>16</sup>

In 2001 the demographic composition of Sint Maarten was appreciably different from that of Saint Martin. The Dutch population originally from the Netherlands, the Federation of the Netherlands Antilles, or born on Sint Maarten was 50.6 percent. It was thus smaller than the French population of Saint Martin, though Sint Maarteners are more numerous than Saint Martinois, accounting for 30.5 percent of the population. The foreign-born population on

12. From 1991 to 2006 the yearly number of visitors has tripled: it has gone from 469,667 to 1,421,645 (personal communication, Edward Dest, St. Maarten Tourism Bureau, 2007).

13. According to the 1999 census, 29,112 on the French side. According to the intermediary census in 2001, 30,594 on the Dutch side. In 2005 the population of the island numbered 73,035, 38,000 on Saint Martin (data estimated by INSEE - Antilles Guyane & ACSE 2006:9), and 35,035 on Sint Maarten (data estimated by the Central Bureau of Statistics 2005:13).

14. Since January 2004, the census of the resident population in France has been carried out annually and is based on a sample of the population. Before that, it was taken every eight years and concerned the entire population.

15. This is an estimate because the census does not distinguish between Saint Martinois from the French Antilles and metropolitan French, contrary to the census of Sint Maarten, which does make the distinction.

16. I calculated these percentages from the data of INSEE - Antilles Guyane & ACSE (2006:17).

Sint Maarten is more significant, constituting nearly 50 percent of its population. More than 30 percent of the total population is Caribbean: 10.1 percent of the population on Sint Maarten is from the Dominican Republic, 9.7 percent from Haiti, 12.4 percent from Jamaica, Dominica, and Guyana.

According to the 1990 census, the percentage of foreigners living on Saint Martin was comparable to that of Sint Maarten, with proportionally more Haitians living on the French side.<sup>17</sup> Between the census in 1990 and the one in 1999, the number of foreign-born inhabitants decreased by 5,700, with 2,600 of them being Haitians.<sup>18</sup> The population of foreign-born inhabitants on Saint Martin decreased by 38 percent; whereas it represented 53 percent of the population in 1990, it was no more than 32 percent in 1999. The reduction in the number of foreigners on Saint Martin is directly related to the policy of deportations implemented by the French government. From 1992 to 1997, this policy led to the deportation of 3,275 foreigners.<sup>19</sup>

From an emigration island, with its population in the 1950s migrating to the United States, the island has become an immigration island, with the original population having become a numerical minority and the Caribbean population being kept in a situation where they do not have immigration papers.<sup>20</sup> In the Caribbean context, such demographic dynamics and fates of foreigners are not exceptional. The same is happening on other small, dependent territories such as the Turks and Caicos Islands, as well as the Bahamas, which in the 1960s also opted for economic development based on offshore financial services and tourism. The exploitation of labor, largely of Haitian origin, enabled development, and now that the infrastructure of these islands has been completed, these laborers are subject to deportation (St. Jacques 2001; Brown 2004). The border prerogatives of nation-states are revealed in the monitoring of labor-related migrations (Puri 2004).

17. The data available from the 1999 census do not give percentages per nationality but according to the double criteria of nationality and place of birth, that is, immigration status. An "immigrant" is a person born a foreigner in a foreign country but living in France. A "foreigner" is a person living in France who does not have the French nationality. On Saint Martin the percentage of foreigners and migrants being more or less the same, I felt I could compare the percentage of migrants on Saint Martin with the percentage of foreigners on Sint Maarten (INSEE - Antilles-Guyane & ACSE 2006:5). The appearance of the category of "migrant" in INSEE statistics is in fact recent and is based on the political stakes studied by Spire 1999.

18. INSEE - Antilles-Guyane & ACSE 2006:8.

19. In the aftermath of Hurricane Luis there were 2,769 expulsions and 506 voluntary departures (personal communication with the air and border police (PAF), August 1998; I was unable to obtain the figures for 1990-1991 and 1998-1999).

20. For an introduction to the complexity of Caribbean migration patterns in regard to the legal/illegal status of migrants, see Martinez 1999.

Because there was no monitoring of foreigners by the French government before the former were admitted to the island, deportations took the place of the nonexistent border inspections and therefore played the role of external borders. Until August 2007, Saint Martin was an exception as regards the administration of its borders. First of all, the French government had no means of monitoring foreigners entering the island, regardless of whether they were visitors or residents. A large majority of people coming to the island come via Princess Juliana Airport or the harbor at Philipsburg, both on the Dutch side, where the air and border police (*Police de l'air et des frontières*, PAF) cannot operate. Besides, there is no border checkpoint that stands as a physical reminder of the border and shows the links of the two sides with their European metropolises or regulates the flow of people and goods between the two parts of the island. Travelers and residents move from the Dutch to the French side without being asked to show identification, in accordance with the Treaty of Concordia, which, in 1948, ratified the joint use of the island by France and the Netherlands and set the conditions for the circulation of people and goods. Only a monument erected in 1948 to the glory of three centuries of peaceful coexistence stands as a physical reminder of the border. The borders of the French territory are thus defined by Dutch legislation and are monitored by Dutch police.

Deportations occur at a proportionally greater frequency in the overseas territories than on metropolitan French soil. The French laws regulating the conditions for the entry and stay of foreigners in France contain specific articles for these territories which facilitate monitoring and deportations.

#### IMMIGRATION LAWS AND THE REINFORCEMENT OF BORDERS

The overseas regions that, together with the French metropole, make up the Republic of France, include several institutional categories of territories. Apart from uninhabited territories and New Caledonia, which has a specific status, the first category of territories includes the former colonies of Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, and Réunion, which have acquired, with the assimilation law of March 19, 1946, the status of French overseas department (*Département d'outre-mer*, DOM). Since 2004 these DOMs have been designated as departments and overseas regions (*Départements et régions d'outre-mer*, DROMs), confirming that each of these entities is a monodepartmental region.<sup>21</sup> The second category comprises the overseas

21. In continental France, departments and regions are two distinct administrative entities, the region encompassing several departments. Each administrative entity is represented by an assembly – the general council for a department and the regional council for a region. The DROM is both a department and a region and it is represented equally by two assemblies.

collectivities of St. Pierre and Miquelon, Mayotte, Wallis and Futuna, French Polynesia, St. Barthelemy, and Saint Martin.

The French Republic is a plurilegislative state (Rolland & Lampué 1949). Legislation concerning the DROM comes under the principle of assimilation and is identical to that of the departments and regions of France on the continent, unless, as the constitution of 1958 – the founding text of the Fifth Republic, which is still in force – indicates, their situation requires adaptations. These measures may not concern certain spheres such as nationality, civil rights, the administration of justice, and criminal law. The laws regarding the COMs, with the exception of those applicable to St. Pierre and Miquelon, are based on the principle of exceptionalism: the laws are not applied automatically but only when their application is signaled by specific language to that effect.

The presence of foreigners in overseas territories is considered by the legislature to be a specific situation requiring adaptive measures. These measures may concern a department or even a district within a department, in the case of Saint Martin, or specific regions within a department, in the case of French Guiana and now Guadeloupe, showing the territorial applicability of the law. These measures accompany more restrictive policies than those defined for the territory of the French metropole. In the case of the COM, legislation is defined by an ordinance specific to each collectivity.

An analysis of the legislation concerning the conditions for the entry and stay of foreigners allows for a concrete understanding of the implementation of immigration policies by the French government. It shows that a border is not so much a physical demarcation as a political project. “The boundary is not a spatial fact with sociological consequences, but a sociological fact that forms itself spatially,” to quote Georg Simmel’s 1993 groundbreaking analysis (Frisby & Featherstone 1997:143).<sup>22</sup> Borders must be analyzed not as a limit, but in the context of the internal political project of the country that constructs them (Febvre 1962, 1949).

Until 2005, immigration laws in France were governed by the ordinance of November 2, 1945 on the entry and stay of foreigners in France. This ordinance was regularly modified in accordance with immigration policies defined by the government, leading on March 1, 2005 to the Code de l’entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d’asile (Ceseda; Code concerning the entry and stay of foreigners and the right to asylum), which has already been modified by two laws.<sup>23</sup> Following the 1973 oil crisis the French government

22. Georg Simmel’s analysis of boundaries is part of an essay published in 1903, “Soziologie des Raumes,” translated for the first time in English in 1997 with the title “Sociology of Space” in Frisby & Featherstone (1997).

23. The law of July 24, 2006 regarding immigration and integration and the law of November 20, 2007 regarding control of immigration, integration, and asylum.

put an end to labor immigration. The modifications to the 1945 Ordinance, with the exception of the modifications made during the first office of the French socialist president, François Mitterand (1981-1988), and two laws passed modifying the *Ceseda* are inclined toward restrictions to the entry and stay of foreigners on French territory.

It was not until 1980 with the act of January 10 called *Loi Bonnet* that the scope of the applicability of the 1945 Ordinance was extended to include the overseas departments. Until then, immigration laws were governed by two decrees dating from colonial times, one from July 29, 1935 for Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Réunion, the other from November 4, 1936 for French Guiana. Nevertheless, certain aspects of these decrees regarding the circulation of foreigners between the overseas departments and the French metro-pole applied until 1987 (Rodier 1999).

Since 1980, immigration laws always contain specific articles for the overseas territories. These adaptations are characterized by more restrictive conditions for the entry, transit, and stay of foreigners, extended identity checks, and the easier and more rapid implementation of deportations.<sup>24</sup> Legislatively, notably for Saint Martin, these adjustments took several forms:

- The application of a law favorable to the conditions of stay of foreigners on French continental territory may be deferred for the overseas departments. Thus *Loi Deferre*, an act passed in 1981 which repeals the unfavorable provisions of *Loi Bonnet*, was postponed for five years for the DOMs.<sup>25</sup>
- The application of particular articles of a law may be postponed. Thus the law of August 2, 1989 created the Commission du titre de séjour (an advisory body which conveys its recommendation to the prefecture as to the right of a foreigner to apply for the renewal of his or her resident permit) which the prefect must consult if he/she considers refusing the granting of or the renewal of a residency visa, the commission being only an advisory body. The law of January 10, 1990 created the possibility of filing a suspensive appeal with a judge against a deportation order so that a foreigner may be allowed to stay in France until the decision by a tribunal. These two laws postponed for five years the application of these provisions for the DOMs and St. Pierre and Miquelon. The law of August 24, 1993 once more prolonged this exception for another five years, after which *Loi Chevènement* of 1998 extended it once again for five years for Saint Martin and French Guiana.

24. For a chronological review of legislation concerning foreigners, see Alaux 1997; GISTI, Cercle Frantz Fanon, Association des juristes pour la reconnaissance des droits fondamentaux des immigrés 1989; GISTI 2007.

25. In fact it never took effect because in 1986 the return of the political Right to power in the first coalition and the passing of the *Loi Pasqua* in the same year also meant a return to the positive aspects of the *Loi Deferre*.

- The permanence of restrictive provisions that were supposed to be temporary. The internal security law of March 18, 2003 makes permanent the postponement of five years for the creation of a Commission du titre de séjour and the possibility of suspensive appeal for Saint Martin and French Guiana.
- The extension of articles enacted for one commune or one DROM to other communes or DROMs. The July 24, 2006 law called *Loi Sarkozy* extended for a period of five years to the whole of Guadeloupe the nonsuspensive character of appeals against deportation orders; until then this provision had only existed in the department for the commune of Saint Martin. The same law gives Guadeloupe and Mayotte the right to carry out identity checks without written permission from the district attorney; until then that possibility had only existed for French Guiana (since 1997).<sup>26</sup>

The right to asylum, which is the same for the metropolitan and overseas territories is, in fact, applied differently, and overseas requests for refugee status have little chance of succeeding (Castagnos-Sen 2006).

In the same way as for immigration laws, circulation between the DROM and the metropole betrays a dual perception of French territory:

- The enforcement decree of the Schengen Convention, signed in 1995, which allows a foreigner with a short-stay visa (called a Schengen visa) entering one of the signatory countries, or one of those associated with the convention, to travel freely between these states does not apply to the French overseas territories even though it does apply to the overseas territories of Spain – the Canary Islands – and Portugal – the Azore Islands and Madeira.
- A Schengen visa, which is valid for entry to the French metropole, is not valid for the DROM and vice versa.
- Even if no visa is required to enter the French metropole, a visa may nevertheless be required for the DROMs, depending on the nationality of the foreigner (Duflo 2007).
- Different visas are necessary to travel from one DROM to the other, except those in the Americas (Rodier 1999).

#### DEPORTATIONS IN THE GUISE OF BORDER CONTROL

Between 2002 and 2007, when the present president of the French Republic, Nicolas Sarkozy, was the Minister of the Interior (2002-2004 and 2005-2007) five laws pertaining to immigration or asylum and five other laws concern-

26. In France, the police may only check one's identity in the event of a flagrant delict or with a written order from the public prosecutor for a specific zone in the territory where offences are likely to occur.

ing criminal infractions, the war on terrorism, and security were passed. In 2003 the implementation of a policy aiming to increase the number of deportations of foreigners without documents led to, in 2006, quotas being assigned to each prefecture, and the civil servants at these prefectures are penalized if they do not meet their set targets.<sup>27</sup> The creation of a Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity, and Co-development (Ministère de l'immigration, de l'identité nationale et du co-développement) by presidential decree on May 18, 2007 upholds the idea that migrants threaten the identity of the French nation – insofar as the concept of a national identity is pertinent – and that they must be deported.

The use of the word *rafle* (raid) for the massive arrests of foreigners is subject to debates in France because historically it was used as a term for the arrests of Jews during World War II and the Algerian population during the Algerian War of Independence. The *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (The historic dictionary of the French language) unambiguously defines *rafle* as a “police method” consisting of “arresting people in great numbers” (Rey 2000). An examination of the attitude and methods of the French police in the past and today shows similarities that justify using the term. There are at least four similarities:

- a certain number of individuals living on French soil are considered undesirable;
- techniques used to detain people designated as suspects are identical: sending misleading invitations to prefectures to “trap” the undocumented foreigner once there, the school arrests of children for so-called humanitarian reasons, that is, so as not to separate deported parents and children – though detaining parents whose children are born and go to school in France could be considered humanitarian – home arrests, mass arrests by neighborhood racial profiling;
- confinement in detention centers before deportation;
- group deportations, these days in charter flights.<sup>28</sup>

27. Because they had not met the quotas assigned to their departments, nineteen prefects were summoned on October 14, 2007 by the Minister of the Interior (M. C. T. & A. N., “Brice Hortefeux convoque les préfets qui n’expulsent pas assez,” *Le Figaro*, October 14, 2007). The French president dismissed the director of the *police générale* of the prefecture of Paris (DPGPP) by decree on January 16, 2008 for not having met the deportation quota: he had been responsible for only 2,800 instead of 3,680 deportations (Giovannoni 2007).

28. For this analysis I draw upon Terray 2006, and blogs by Jean-Pierre Dubois, “Techniquement, rafle est le mot juste,” *Contrejournal*, 27 September 2007, [http://contrejournal.blogs.liberation.fr/mon\\_weblog/2007/09/jean-pierre-dub.html](http://contrejournal.blogs.liberation.fr/mon_weblog/2007/09/jean-pierre-dub.html), and Laurent Giovannoni, “Les rafles ont commencé quand la police avait du mal à atteindre ses objectifs,” *Contrejournal*, 28 September 2007, [http://contrejournal.blogs.liberation.fr/mon\\_weblog/2007/09/giovannoni.html](http://contrejournal.blogs.liberation.fr/mon_weblog/2007/09/giovannoni.html).

The increase in the number of deportations and the manner in which arrests are conducted have led the secretary general of Cimade, an association which plays a major role in France in supporting and defending foreigners, in particular of people requesting asylum, to speak of “the industrialization of deportations.”<sup>29</sup>

Though the raids in metropolitan France in their current form reappeared in 2003, when through the circular of October 22, the Ministry of the Interior requested that the number of deportations be doubled, they had already been taking place in the overseas territories at the beginning of the 1990s, especially in French Guiana and on Saint Martin, where adaptations to the 1945 Ordinance facilitated deportations. Everyone living on Saint Martin in the 1990s can recall the early-morning police raids: the red vans of the PAF driving towards the Haitian neighborhoods, men warning, by telephone or by cries, of the arrival of the police, the encircling of the neighborhoods, warrantless work and home arrests, and the airplanes on Tuesdays and Fridays at the Grand Case airport that flew off the deportees without the legal deportation measures having been observed. Hurricane Luis, which in September of 1995 left the island in ruins, presented the French state, the municipality of Saint Martin, and the government of Sint Maarten with the opportunity of razing the shanty towns of the island, the collection of “cardboard palaces” as two journalists called them, and increasing the number of deportations.<sup>30</sup> A delegation of lawyers, members of a Martiniquan association in support of foreigners’ rights (Association Solidarité Karayib, ASSOKA), as well as a larger delegation consisting of several French associations for the protection of the rights of foreigners and the unions of judges and lawyers of France (Syndicat de la magistrature, Syndicat des avocats de France) concluded that the destruction of these homes was illegal. Several French tribunals recognized the responsibilities of the municipality and the French government, but appeals slowed down the procedures leading to compensation (Manville 1999). The arrests took place in the morning at the time that workers were heading to their jobs, and on days when Maternal and Child Health Office (Protection maternelle et infantile) visits were held at the hospital or public clinics. This led to diminished activity at the hospital in Marigot and there was a notable decrease in the number of deliveries following Hurricane Luis (Bardinet, de Caunes & Hamlet 1995). From 1993 to 1997 there were about 460 to 600 deportations

29. Karl Laske, “Interview de Laurent Giovannoni ‘On est confronté à une industrialisation de l’éloignement,’” *Contrejournal*, December 28, 2007, [http://contrejournal.blogs.liberation.fr/mon\\_weblog/2007/12/on-est-confront.html](http://contrejournal.blogs.liberation.fr/mon_weblog/2007/12/on-est-confront.html).

30. Mario Kleinmoedig & Henky Looman, “Paleizen als van ‘karton,’” *Beurs Magazine*, no. 12, 1995, pp. 14-17. Where Saint Martin is concerned, as of December 31, 1995, the number of official voluntary returns since September 6, 1995 was 506, the number of deportations between September 6 and December 31 was 190 (ASSOKA et al. 1996).

per year. They seem to have decreased thereafter: from 2001-2006 there were 1,931 deportations, an average of 257 per year.<sup>31</sup>

The year 2006, which is the year deportation quotas were introduced, marks a turning point in the increase of deportations. They reached a figure of 413, surpassing the objective of 280 set by the Ministry of the Interior. The number for the first half of 2007 was 263, whereas the goal set by the Ministry of the Interior was 300 for the year. Identity checks are carried out as part of the raids, or on a more individual basis, such as in the operating room of the hospital of Saint Martin.

The refusal of employers to register their employees, the near total absence of social assistance for undocumented or documented foreigners from the commune of Saint Martin and the regional council of Guadeloupe, and the infrequency with which residence permits are granted together shape the precariousness of the living conditions of the foreign population, so that these populations are more susceptible to economic exploitation. The foreign population lives in “legal and structural marginalization,” to quote Paul Brodwin’s characterization of the Haitian situation in Guadeloupe, which makes their economic exploitation easier and facilitates their deportation when they are deemed to have become too numerous (Brodwin 2003). Undocumented foreigners are people who work but who are not registered. In many cases employees, if they wish to be registered, pay their employers social security taxes. The number of jobs rose from 2,800 in 1982 to 12,000 in 1990, but there were hardly 400 employees registered between 1985 and 1991 for the 2,685 companies operating on the island (Marie 1991). After Hurricane Luis, to protest against the growing number of deportations which were going to deprive them of cheap labor, some entrepreneurs went as far as slashing police car tires to limit the number of round-ups (Alaux & Tillie 1996). According to the local intelligence services, between 5,000 and 10,000 persons are presently undocumented on Saint Martin, which amounts to between 40 and 80 percent of the 13,000 “immigrants” living on the territory (Comité interministériel de contrôle de l’immigration 2007:170-1; INSEE - Antilles Guyane & ACSE 2006:9).

“INBETWEENENITY,” THE POLITICAL BORDERS OF SOCIAL WELFARE,  
AND THE “REGIME OF MOBILITY”

The concept of “inbetweenity” proposed by Dennis Brown (2004) to characterize the position of Haitian migrants on the Turks and Caicos Islands also applies to the Caribbean migrants on Saint Martin, particularly

31. Comité interministériel de contrôle de l’immigration (2006, 2007) for the period 2001-2005 and year 2006 respectively. Personal communication with the PAF for the first half of 2007.

Haitians. As a result of their undocumented sojourn, migrants occupy the social and spatial fringes of their host country – the bush on the Turks and Caicos Islands, certain neighborhoods on the periphery of Saint Martin where they hide away for fear of being deported. In a context of discrimination and human rights violations, on Saint Martin, just as on the Turks and Caicos Islands, migrants access work with difficulty, and health care and social services limitedly. In fact, the borders are deterritorialized; they are institutional (Spener & Staudt 1998).

For John Crowley (2005) the “institutional border” consists of mechanisms which turn access to social security into a site of immigration control away from the physical border enclosing a territory. On Saint Martin, this institutional border has always existed because of the difficulty, if not impossibility, for foreigners, even those with documents, to get access to the welfare benefits that French law guarantees. In a sense this institutional border became territorial in 1999 with the introduction of CMU (Couverture médicale universelle, free basic medical care for everyone) which requires foreigners to show proof of having been on French soil for three months in order to receive care. This border has been strengthened in that social assistance and the prefecture demand additional proof of residency in order to provide social care or grant residency permits.

Take, for example, the question of the one-year resident permits for care (*visa de séjour pour raison médicale*) which intersects that of visa delivery and access to social assistance. Obtaining such a one-year, renewable permit, extended to foreigners who suffer from an extremely serious illness which cannot be treated in the country of origin, is a real obstacle course, replete with persecutory measures. How well the file is put together depends upon the abilities of the social workers at the hospital who have increasingly been led to educate themselves about the law in order to be able to deal with the difficulties and arbitrariness of the administration.

The notifications of the medical inspector of Guadeloupe have always been in favor of granting these permits, which the prefecture has never denied until now. Today nearly 350 foreigners benefit from this right to a stay for medical reasons. Nevertheless, the person requesting permission rarely receives an actual document giving permission, but only three-month extension slips. The actual permits are printed in France, and employees of the prefecture recently protested that there was no request form to get them, even though the form is available on the internet. And in the case of permits delivered a few days before their expiry date, employees of the prefecture either throw them away or staple them to the receipt of the renewal request if the receipt is ready at that moment. The permits are only delivered or renewed with great difficulty under the pretext that the person requesting such a permit has committed various offences. Such is the case of Mr. R, who had been suffering from a chronic

illness for ten years and in August 2005 was refused a seventh permit, with the claim that Martinique had issued a deportation order for him in 1980.<sup>32</sup>

Mr. R asserts that he has never been to Martinique. Since many surnames in the Caribbean are homonymous, there is a strong chance that the deportation order on Martinique was issued for someone else. The subprefecture of Saint Martin, however, demanded that Mr. R supply them with proof that the order has been repealed if he wishes to remain on Saint Martin. In November 2006 the prefecture of Martinique informed the subprefecture of Saint Martin that it cannot repeal the deportation order because the file of Mr. R or the person with the same name has been lost. The prefecture specified that if Mr. R does not pose a threat to the public order there is no reason to deny him a medical permit. It was necessary for a Paris-based medical NGO to intervene and appeal to the Prefect of Saint Martin for a temporary authorization for Mr. R, which was granted in July 2007, allowing him to stay for three months. For more than two years, Mr. R did not have residency papers and had lost his medical coverage – as an undocumented foreigner he no longer had access to social assistance – and the various forms of social assistance that he had received until 2005. Moreover, he was in a very vulnerable position if he were to be arrested and issued a deportation order.

In a more banal and practically systematic way, the difficulties with this type of visa begin when the file is put together. Few foreigners are able to furnish the necessary proof of residency, that is, a rent receipt and a water bill bearing their name, or proof of housing with a photocopy of the ID of the renter – no landlord likes to declare that he is lodging an undocumented migrant, if only to avoid being convicted for helping undocumented migrants. As for the required identification papers, a passport, and a birth certificate, the spelling of the names is often different on all documents, leading to suspicion about the identity of the plaintiff. When all documents have finally been assembled, the vigilance, support, and expertise of the medical team at the hospital are needed to trace the files, prepare the renewal requests for the permits two months before the expiry date, keep a copy of the file, and photocopy the permit requests and extension slips, which the prefecture often claims to lose.

The visas for medical reasons belong to the “regime of mobility” that Horng-Luen Wang (2004) conceptualized to designate state control over the movement of persons from the moment a passport or visa has been issued. This “regime of mobility” which defines the political border is based on territorial residency and is more restricted now that Saint Martin is a collectivity.

32. The name and place of residence of this person have been changed to protect his identity.

## THE CREATION OF NEW BORDERS

A speech by the mayor of the commune before the senatorial commission on the island in January 2006 set the tune for upcoming policies concerning foreigners. After having described the way in which “the presence of the population of immigrants overburdens the collectivity in collective needs and resources” he specified “[that] the territory of Saint Martin must be made socially less attractive for its Caribbean neighbors. Revising family reunification is a priority. The same goes for the criteria for settling in the territory, which must become more restrictive. Without this the collectivity will not be able to function and is destined for failure.”<sup>33</sup>

The territorial council governing the collectivity of Saint Martin elected in July 2007 is currently preparing for the transfer of administrative competencies from the department/region of Guadeloupe and from the French government in the domains of taxation, regional planning, economic development, and social affairs. Activities of the French government proper, such as foreign affairs, security, and immigration laws will remain under the control of the state. The change in status for Saint Martin will see even more restrictive migration policies being put in place. First, just as in the other COMs, an ordinance whose implementation is foreseen in 2008 will regulate the conditions of entry and stay of foreigners and will make deportations easier. Next the enforcement decree of a cooperative accord between France and the Netherlands on the shared surveillance of the island's borders published in 2007 has allowed the PAF to begin the inspection of foreigners arriving on the island.

## THE CREATION OF AN INTERNAL BORDER: THE REINFORCEMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL BORDER AND ORDINANCE

Even though it is difficult to say precisely what a future ordinance for Saint Martin will contain, it is possible that it will be inspired by that of Mayotte, a COM in the Indian Ocean that has the most deportations of all French overseas territories. The number was at 13,258 in 2006, or 20 percent of the foreign population.<sup>34</sup> The employees of the prefecture of Saint Martin draw a parallel between the migratory situation on Saint Martin and Mayotte. The poorest people in the Caribbean or on the Comoro Islands are said to be

33. For the full text of the speech, see [http://statut.sxml.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=202&Itemid=35](http://statut.sxml.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=202&Itemid=35).

34. At the time of the census in 2002, there were 160,265 people. In 2006, there were 9,633 documented foreigners as opposed to an estimated 50,000 undocumented foreigners (Comité interministériel de contrôle de l'immigration 2007:171).

attracted to the island and they are said to migrate to French territories not because they find work there, but because their families benefit from social welfare, their children have access to the French educational system, and the women can deliver their babies in a French hospital. In the case of Saint Martin, one forgets that undocumented foreigners were reported to the PAF in hospitals and that numerous foreigners, in particular Haitians, had their passports confiscated at the front desk until they were able to pay the costs of their care, which could amount to several thousands of euros.<sup>35</sup>

Without an internal border, people are able to circulate freely, that is, without an identity check, between the French and the Dutch sides of the island. The French and Saint Martin authorities ceaselessly emphasize that not only undocumented foreigners living on the French side use the social, sanitary, and educational infrastructure, but also foreigners living on the Dutch side, who are not able to access care and the educational system without costs. The issuing of permits and the granting of social assistance will require a greater number of documents proving residence by the French side.

The ordinance will reincorporate the restrictive articles of the law of July 24, 2006, called *Loi Sarkozy 2*, for Guadeloupe, notably the identity checks without written authorization from the district attorney within a one-kilometer zone along the coastline. Given the shape and layout of Saint Martin, the inspections along the coastlines on the east and west will in fact function as internal border inspections while the border has no physical presence in the form of border control checkpoints.

#### THE MATERIALIZATION OF AN EXTERNAL BORDER: SHARED BORDER INSPECTIONS BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND THE DUTCH

An important change, tied to the signing on August 21, 2007 of an enforcement decree of a cooperative treaty between France and the Netherlands on the shared inspection of the borders and retroactive since August 1, 2007, is going to take effect.<sup>36</sup>

A pilot committee of ten people, amongst them two lawyers, is being assembled for the implementation of this treaty. PAF agents will be in charge of border surveillance for Saint Martin, while agents of the foreign police are charged with the responsibility on Sint Maarten. According to Article 13 of this treaty, agents will carry out the inspection of foreign nationals, except those from European countries, coming from countries to be drawn up in a

35. It was not until September 2007 that one of the key figures involved in this form of embezzlement was arrested and incarcerated in Guadeloupe.

36. This accord, the groundwork of which began in 1979, was signed by France and the Netherlands on May 17, 1994 and then ratified by the French National Assembly on July 25, 1995 and the parliament of the tripartite Kingdom of the Netherlands in October 2006.

list by the pilot committee. The pilot committee will instate a working group in charge of identifying flights that are "sensitive"; the list will be kept up-to-date for joint controls. An emergency procedure will be put in place for flights that are not on the list but which turn out to need inspection.

Entry will be granted in accordance with the conditions defined by Article 4, that is, essentially the possession of "a visa or a disembarkation authorization valid for both sides of the territory allowing the crossing of the border." This treaty will lead to the harmonization of the list of countries from which the citizens must have a visa to enter the island. If PAF agents ask for the removal of a person, the police of Sint Maarten will make the decision to remove that person.

"The border is an active verb" wrote Henk van Houtum (Van Houtum, Kramsch & Zierhofer 2005:3). In the case of the French overseas departments, the borders are active verbs of inspection and rejection of foreigners. Upon a proposal by the present Minister of European and Foreign Affairs, Bernard Kouchner, the senatorial committee of foreign affairs adopted, on December 11, 2007, a bill on transborder cooperation between France and Suriname to monitor the movement of people from one side of the Maroni River, while the populations living along the river have always occupied both sides at the same time – their settlements could be on the French side while their gardens were on the Surinamese side.<sup>37</sup>

The treaty is supposed to be the cornerstone of future policies on border inspections on Saint Martin, to such a point that for some employees of the prefecture "if the inspection of the entry of adults is going to be sorted out at Juliana Airport, we must focus on the code of nationality and the children." On Mayotte, Ceseda already authorizes the registrar to contest the acknowledgement of paternity, and a bill seeking to revise the nationality code was up for proposal in Parliament before being rejected by the Council of State (*Uni-e-s contre une immigration jetable* 2007).

In this context of border closings, the border is not simply a physical line marking the separation between two territories, it is made up of "ports of entry" which are, according to the analysis by Heyman (2004), the "nodes" of a world that is shutting itself off to the movements of populations.

## CONCLUSION

The status change suggests four issues for a future research agenda. First, the institutional evolution of St. Martin toward a status of association with, rather than total independence from, the European metropolises follows the evolu-

37. For a summary of Bernard Kouchner's hearing before the senatorial commission on foreign affairs, see <http://www.senat.fr/bulletin/20071210/etr.html#toc>.

tion of numerous small microinsular states which do not seek total political independence but which explore the various kinds of associations with their metropolises in order to retain the political and economic advantages tied to this dependence.<sup>38</sup> Even more paradoxical, however, is that the transformation of Saint Martin into a COM reinforces the presence of the French government on the territory. How, therefore, do we characterize the postcolonial situation of the French overseas territories? Second, the creation of the COM entails the creation of a territory at an almost primary level: the delimitation of a new political entity by means of borders. As such, the anthropology of borders is also an anthropology of nationalisms that need to be closely explored (Wilson & Hastings 1998). Third, the place of Saint Martin in migratory policies illuminates the central role of the peripheral territories in defining France and Europe. Since the 1990s the island has been closing itself off to migrants, and the status of COM creates and strengthens new borders. St. Martin, called the “Friendly Island,” is often described as a laboratory for cultural encounters (Guadeloupe 2006), but in reality the island is an experimental laboratory of repressive policies regarding foreigners (Migrants Outre-Mer 2007). The cooperative accord on the shared monitoring of the island’s borders, the possibility of border inspections at the airport, the reinforcement of the institutional border for access to social assistance, the greater ease with which identity checks can be done and with which deportation can take place are all means which France and the European Union have also put in place to monitor the presence of foreigners on European soil (Tsoukala 2005). The island has become an outpost for the most restrictive immigration policies of France and Europe. The borders of Saint Martin, like those of other DROMs, are the borders of overseas Europe. “The overseas fortress” is thereby one of the first walls of a Europe which is closing itself off to migratory movements (Uni-e-contre une immigration jetable 2007). Actually, the study of border crossing in the context of globalization is the study of the permeability of borders, especially as concerns the circulation of capital, but it is also the study of the “bounding of bordering process” (Newman 2005), of “rebordering” (Spener & Staudt 1998), and of the closing of borders to the poorest populations and political refugees (Guild 2005). In the case of Saint Martin, and also of French Guiana and Mayotte, these borders are closing to the historical movements of populations in the region. For Mayotte and French Guiana, the migrant populations considered to be “illegal” are populations who, not long ago, were French, such as that of the Comoros before the 1975 independence from France, or populations that never defined themselves as French or non-French

38. For a typology of the kinds of governance in the Small Antilles and the advantages of dependence, see Hintjens 1994, 1997, McElroy & Pearce 2006a, McElroy & Sanborn 2005, McElroy 2006. For an analysis of separatist and autonomous tendencies, see Taglioni 2005. For the Dutch Antilles see Oostindie 2006, Oostindie & Klinkers 2003. For Sint Maarten see Altink 2003.

but as being transborder communities, such as in French Guiana. These immigration policies are being developed at a time when France is also conducting cultural, linguistic, and religious battles in these territories. The implementation of these immigration policies on the fringes of the former colonial empire reflects the reinforcement of a republican ideal which rejects the demographic and cultural diversity of the French population.

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“SOI-DISANT COLUMBUSES”: THE DISCOVERY OF  
DOMINICA’S BOILING LAKE AND  
THE COMMODIFICATION OF KNOWLEDGE IN  
COLONIAL SOCIETIES

No man is an island, entire of itself;  
every man is a piece of the continent,  
a part of the Main.

John Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions* (1623)

“My picture would be in the *Illustrated London News*,”  
he explained, rather pathetically. “I have always  
wanted to be in the *Illustrated London News*.”  
Elizabeth Peters, *The Mummy Case* (1985)

It may indeed be “a truth universally acknowledged” that “no man is an island, entire of itself.” Nonetheless, the entirety upon itself that Donne assumes as a given in connection to islands may be true only as far as geography and geometry are concerned – or perhaps, in the case of the poet, as far as the pure idea, the literary conceit, goes. The truth is that given the pernicious history of European colonization around the world, no island has retained its entirety of itself for very long after being “discovered” by Europeans. One may thus wonder if Donne himself was quite unaware of the irony implicit in his verses. In 1596, more than a quarter century before he penned his famous lines, he had had his own brush with conquest and colonization. In that year, he had enlisted in the Earl of Essex’s unsuccessful privateering expedition against Cadiz, and in 1597 he had sailed with Essex and Sir Walter Raleigh in the near-disastrous Islands Expedition, which had sought to intercept Spanish ships bringing gold and silver from South America as they sailed past the Azores.

The un-colonized island, like Donne’s entire-of-itself-man, is a rare phenomenon. Discovery, whether of island or man, entangles the discovered in a complex web of relationships and connections – of power, of capital, of language, of culture – that forestalls self-containment. It means to move from

self-containment to the ambivalent state of being “a piece of the continent, a part of the Main.” The hierarchy of discovery may place the discoverer in an advantageous position, but it constitutes nonetheless a fleeting, unrepeatable moment, since once the surprise is surpassed, discoverer and discovered must turn to each other with an identical question – *now what?* The answer to that question, as far as islands around the world are concerned, has been a broad variety of colonialisms – as many, perhaps, as there have been islands to colonize. The processes that have become known as “colonization” are perplexingly complex, as they have emerged out of interactions between the colonizer and the colonized, each transformed by the other through peculiar symbioses, neither to remain the same. The colonization of islands, spaces where self-containment has often led to varied and idiosyncratic cultures, has produced myriad forms of colonialism that can hardly be subsumed by one singular term. The forms they take – and the changes they undergo in response to specific historical, political, economic, and social circumstances – are directly the result of the specificities of local conditions. They can best be understood, not by totalizing theories that essentialize a “colonial” experience and critique some apparently understandable and graspable notion of “colonialism,” but by a detailed knowledge of the historical and material conditions responsible for specific phenomena at specific times.

A rich vein of colonial phenomena whose study yields significant glimpses into the various forms colonialism takes in the West Indies is found in the discoveries of Caribbean geological sites and phenomena that followed in the wake of Charles Darwin’s momentous five-year scientific expedition of 1831-1836 – recounted in his *Journal of Researches into the Geology and Natural History of the Various Countries Visited by H.M.S. Beagle* (1839). Between 1839 and the first decade of the twentieth century – years during which natural history emerged as a scientific discipline – a number of scientific and pseudoscientific travelers, aided and abetted by the increased ease of travel fostered by new technologies and bankrolled by Victorian prosperity, descended upon the Caribbean islands in search of anthropological glimpses at native societies and the opportunity to gaze at and collect specimens of local flora and fauna. Their particular gaze on the Caribbean entered into the debate over colonial control of the islands’ cultural, political, and economic development raging in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

Among the targets of discovery in this period was Dominica’s Boiling Lake, a site whose exposure to the larger world in 1875 became the focus of heated debate in the island between Euro-American “scientific” knowledge and local “lore.” The lake is the centerpiece of the Valley of Desolation, a rock-strewn, barren, rumbling valley of bubbling fumaroles and simmering pools of water nestled deep within the range of high forest-clad mountains of southern Dominica. The lake itself, fenced in by perpendicular banks of ash and pumice sixty to a hundred feet high, extends about seventy yards across and one hun-

dred and ten yards in length. It lies 2,300 feet above sea level, and its waters, heated to near two hundred degrees Fahrenheit, rise and fall to the pressure of escaping gases. It appears to the traveler, in the words of William Palgrave, one of its earliest European visitors, as "a gigantic seething cauldron, covered with rapid steam, through which, when the veil is for a moment blown apart by the mountain breeze, appears as a confused mass of tossing waves, crossing and clashing in every direction – a chaos of boiling water" (Palgrave 1877:372).

I would like to offer here – through a discussion of the discursive complexities of the discovery and exploration of the Boiling Lake – an example of the various ways in which the visits and resulting texts of the lake's discoverers enter the discourse of national formation in the Caribbean, seeking in many cases to reinscribe colonial and imperial categories threatened by emerging Creole elites and newly emancipated peasantries in the islands' postslavery economies. The rhetorical complexities of the narratives of discovery and exploration of the Boiling Lake opened a space where conflicting versions of history, clashing discourses, and contrasting disciplines conflated. The attempts of its discoverers to impose upon a specific Dominican space the cultural categories of Euro-American pseudoscientific discourse came up against a contestatory local discourse, resulting in a struggle to determine what negotiations were necessary for a particular narrative of the history of the lake's discovery to emerge.

The Boiling Lake was allegedly "discovered" – that is, first visited by white Europeans – in January 1875. Its "discoverers," Edmund Watt and Henry Nicholls, were young midlevel colonial officials in Dominica. Although only in their mid-twenties, they held the sort of positions unattainable for someone of their youth and inexperience except in colonial settings. Watt was a magistrate, and Nicholls, a recent graduate from the medical schools at the universities of Aberdeen and London, was superintendent of hospitals. As officials in the growing bureaucracy of the empire, they interpreted their mandate as representatives of the Crown as requiring their chronicling in great detail the natural and anthropological phenomena encompassed within their imperial gaze. Themselves avid readers of exploration narratives, and aware of the publicity value of such publications to help them out of a colonial backwater, they reported their feat widely in the scientific journal *Nature* and the more popular *Illustrated London News*, *The Times*, and *The Field*. They recounted the "strenuous hike" – as Dominican anthropologist Lennox Honychurch realistically describes it – "in the tones of dramatic Victorian adventure, similar to exploring the Congo or reaching the source of the Nile" (Honychurch 1991:62). Their zeal in spreading the tidings of their momentous achievement was such that by the time Hesketh Bell arrived in 1899 to take up his post as Dominica's administrator, he acknowledged the lake to be "the chief 'sight' of Dominica" (Bell 1946:10).

My interest in "encounters" such as that of the Boiling Lake stems in part from the understanding that such discoveries serve to historicize the speci-

fictities of the various forms of colonialisms operating in the West Indies in the second half of the nineteenth century. In “The Historical Anthropology of Text,” Neil L. Whitehead argues for the necessity of fully contextualizing the texts that result from “first contact situations” such as that of the discovery of the Boiling Lake, which constitute a “special class of historical event which is much rarer and more limited than its iconography in current debates would suggest” (Whitehead 1995:55). Methodologically, he proposes that, in addition to the study of the internal tropes through which these accounts have been constructed, we

consider native social and cultural praxis, particularly as expressed in native tropes, of course retrospectively constructed from artefactual, textual and oral records. While the description of this native praxis is obviously an initial object of European textual description, native praxis is itself a necessary and viable context for the interpretation and analysis of European texts: quite literally, it is a *context* – it “goes with” the text. (Whitehead 1995:55)

My approach to the study of this particular encounter – as illustrative of the responses of colonial representations and practices as specific to particular social, political, and geographical circumstances – follows Whitehead as well as Nicholas Thomas’s *Colonialism’s Cultures* which argues for an understanding of a “pluralized field of colonial narratives, which are seen less as signs than as practices, or as signifying practices rather than elements of a code” (Thomas 1994:8-9). Thomas has based his notions on Pierre Bourdieu’s analytic strategy, “which situates colonial representations and narratives in terms of agents, locations and periods” conducive to a vision of colonialisms rather than colonialism (Thomas 1994:9).

The colony of Dominica had a complex early history. It had been one of several territories granted by Royal Decree to the Earl of Carlisle in 1627, but it was not successfully settled until the mid-eighteenth century, when French planters established sugar plantations on the island. Despite coming firmly under English control on 1805, it remained, until well into the twentieth century, French at heart. The peasantry, and to a certain extent the powerful colored Creole elite of small-scale planters and merchants, held adamantly to their French patois or *Kwéyol*, even though government schools (to which the peasantry had very limited access) taught only English (Eliot 1938:222). British influence, however, was manifest in the institutions, the administrative and legislative patterns, the political model, and the style of social life among the community of English settlers (Paravisini-Gebert 1996:3-4). This white community was small and generally not very wealthy. Landowners often allowed their overseers to run their estates, and the island lacked the society rooted in grand estate houses that characterized the white upper classes of Antigua and Jamaica.

The island had, in fact, never partaken of the legendary riches spawned by the plantation economy. The fertility of its soil was legendary, but the sugar plantation was already past its heyday when the price collapse of the 1880s virtually wiped it out. Dominica, moreover, had always been a relatively inefficient sugar producer. The planters' ill-fated decision to switch from coffee to sugar cultivation in the 1840s had come just a few decades before market prices began the irrevocable decline (see Trouillot 1988:56-57). The island's rugged terrain and poor infrastructure had kept the size of plantations small, and they could not compete with the larger, more technologically advanced plantations on other islands. The dependence on local overseers – many of them of mixed race – had contributed to the entrenchment of the powerful colored elite who exerted considerable influence on local government. The topography also made the black population much more independent; there had been, even before emancipation, large settlements of free Blacks and Mulattoes who owned land or lived as squatters on abandoned or neglected estates. After the sugar industry's collapse, a number of potentially profitable cash crops were tried – cacao, vanilla, and spices, cassava for starch, rubber, Liberian coffee, limes, and most recently, bananas. Moreover, the colored elite dominated the Legislative Council; the Brown Privilege Bill of 1831 had ended political discrimination based on race, leading to a majority of colored members in the legislature by 1838 (Honychurch 1984:34). Throughout the nineteenth century the British colonial government attempted unsuccessfully to curb the influence of the colored elite by proposing changes that would give colonial officials more influence on government matters.

Henry Nicholls's career as a colonial official in Dominica developed against the background of these political tensions. An ambitious man who held appointed positions in the local legislative council until his death in 1929, Dr. Nicholls built his reputation (and a modest fortune) on his scientific endeavors. In his two reports to the government (1880 and 1894) on the cure for yaws (which translated local curative practices into scientific discourse) added to the fame he had earned as the lake's discoverer. His experiments in the cultivation of lime at his estate at St. Aroment, it is claimed, set the foundation for the Dominican economy from the collapse of sugar exportation in 1885 until the late 1950s. (Nicholls worked with his mentor, Dr. John Imray, on adapting the Martiniquan process of extracting essential oil from the lime rind [Trouillot 1988:60].) When James Anthony Froude visited Dominica in the late 1880s, he described Nicholls as "the only man in the island of really superior attainments" (Froude 1888:164-65). The discovery of the Boiling Lake in 1875 was, for Nicholls, the beginning of a career as a colonial official of scientific accomplishments. His initial reaction to the "discovery" however, was marked by awe rather than scientific restraint. His description of the "expedition" to the lake, published in the magazine *The Field* in June 1876 attempts to imbue the moment of arrival with all the wonder of grandiose achievement:

Scrambling over the masses of sulphur we attained the summit and from thence beheld a most marvellous sight. We seemed to be upon the brink of an awful abyss, from whence were vomited up volumes of hot steam and suffocating vapours. Loud rumbling noises and peculiar bubbling sounds saluted our ears; noxious sulphureous gases filled our nostrils. Altogether the sound was so strange, so unexpected, so wonderful, that many minutes elapsed before we were able to speak to each other. We stood still and gazed on. After a time the wind veered and blew aside the vapours, when we saw at our feet a Boiling Lake!<sup>1</sup>

Bernard Smith has suggested, in *European Vision and the South Pacific*, that “European control of the world required a landscape practice that could first survey and describe, then evoke an emotional engagement with the land that new settlers had alienated from its aboriginal inhabitants” (Smith 1985:9). In this his first description of the “view” of the lake – represented as being “at our feet” – Nicholls makes a fetish out of his “discovery,” eroticizing it in a mimicry of surrender and signaling its first salvo as a tourist sight. Whether this fetishizing of the view will lead to the control that Nicholls’s rhetoric takes for granted is another matter entirely. A discovered site, Thomas has argued, could be subsumed “to the form of a picture, and seeing a thing first as a representation and secondly as something beyond a representation created a peculiar sense of power on the side of the viewing colonist, which was of course not necessarily reflected in real control over the populations in any particular place” (Thomas 1994:112). Ironically, when placed in the context of Dominican society in 1875, Nicholls and Watt’s will-to-discover might very well have been inspired by their perceived need to help firm up English control over a colony and a local population consistently slipping out of British grasp. Lennox Honychurch has argued convincingly in *The Dominica Story* (1984) that so successful was the local resistance that Dominica became the only West Indian island where British colonial control was successfully challenged in the nineteenth century (see Savory 1998:5-6).

Nicholls’s rhetorical approach is above all a mimetic element that lays bare the language of its pretext, revealing its antecedents in a growing literature of geographical exploration and discovery. His bombastic dissemination of information about the discovery of the Boiling Lake, of which the article in *The Field* is but one example, fulfills two functions. It indicates to the reader how he/she ought to assess the importance of the achievement at hand, while equating the text generically with the contemporary accounts of geographical discovery flooding the European book market. Nicholls, for example, appeals to the reader’s sense of wonder – an almost de rigueur rhetorical response to a discovery. Stephen Greenblatt, writing about the literature of the exploration of South America, identifies wonder as the discoverer’s stock response:

1. Henry Alfred Alford Nicholls, “Dominica’s Boiling Lake,” *The Field*, June 1876, p. 6.

“Wonder – thrilling, potentially dangerous, momentary immobilizing, charged at once with desire, ignorance, and fear – is the quintessential human response to what Descartes calls a ‘first encounter’” (Greenblatt 1991:20).

Watt and Nicholls’s “reports” responded to a mimetic impulse mediated by the popularity of the narratives on geographical and scientific exploration that had created a new breed of popular hero in Victorian England, the scientist-cum-explorer whose exploits were read widely in the pages of the *Illustrated London News* and other publications intended for the edification and entertainment of the British middle and upper classes. The fabulous expanses of terrain, the exotic locales and architecture, the wondrous tales of rituals and ceremonies, the unfamiliar peoples and races contributed to enhancing the nation and its Queen in the eyes of British subjects at home and abroad. As imperial propaganda, they served to justify conquest and colonization abroad, often providing the link between expatriate families throughout the Empire. As entertainment, they encouraged the illusion among the middle classes that they possessed valuable “knowledge” that they could share with a pretense of “culture” during elegant dinner parties.

The texts most closely linked to Nicholls and Watt’s adventure were those published between 1873 and 1875 by and about Lieutenant Verney Lovett Cameron (1844-1894) following his 3,000-mile walk across Africa from Zanzibar on the Indian Ocean to Benguela, on the Atlantic coast (later collected in his *Across Africa*, 1877). In 1872, Cameron had been commissioned by the Royal Geographical Society to lead an expedition to locate and bring aid to the missionary/explorer David Livingstone (1813-1873), thought to be lost in eastern Africa. Livingstone’s adventures had been one of the most closely followed and richly reported of all exploration narratives of the latter half of the nineteenth century, and this intense focus turned towards Cameron as his expedition, shortly after leaving Zanzibar, met Livingstone’s servants bearing his body and continued on to Lake Tanganyika to recover the late explorer’s papers.

Cameron’s expedition had gone on to establish the lake’s outlet at the Lukuga River and trace the Congo-Zambezi watershed, reaching the African west coast in 1875. The lieutenant, unabashedly entrepreneurial, exploited his fame and dashing good looks to further his career as an explorer. Upon his return to England he hit the lecture circuit with élan, followed his exploits with his best-selling book, *Across Africa*, and for the rest of his short life was associated with commercial projects in Africa, among them the Cape to Cairo railway partially built by Cecil Rhodes and the African-Asian railway from Tripoli, Libya, to Karachi [now Pakistan].

Dominican writer F. Sterns-Fadelle, in a pamphlet grandly entitled *The Boiling Lake of Dominica: A Historical and Descriptive Account of a Unique Phenomenon* (1902), speaks of his own contribution to the discovery of the lake in 1875 as having consisted of lending Watt, an intimate friend from boy-

hood, his copies of Cameron's descriptions of his African expedition. Having read Cameron, Watt, who "had always been given to indulge in the roving propensities which were to him as an instinct," was inspired "with an enormous zeal to imitate his pedestrian prototype" in footing it across the island (Sterns-Fadelle 1902:4). Watt's first Cameron-inspired transisland trek was a cheery catastrophe. Abandoned by his guides, he loses his way in the mountains – an abandonment that Sterns-Fadelle compares, not without a trace of pompous irony, to Emanuel Gomez's abandonment of Ferdinand Magellan on his voyage of discovery through the South American Straits. Search parties are sent out in fruitless pursuit, and Watt emerges from the deep tropical wilderness a week later, "a wild figure, clad in foul rags, with matted hair, bronzed and sunken cheeks and hungry eyes" (Sterns-Fadelle 1902:5). His reports on his wanderings among the sulphur-crust boulders of the Grande Soufrière and of his intimations of the presence of "some important and unknown volcanic center in that region," would lead to a second expedition during which the Watt-Nicholls party would reach the lake itself.

I want to return to Sterns-Fadelle's report of Watt's admiration and imitation of Cameron's texts as directly conducive to the Boiling Lake expedition, because it points to a most vital gap between their tale of the lake's discovery and its rhetorical models. The discovery of the lake is an enterprise mediated by the narratives of the achievements of travelers trekking across vast continents (Africa, Asia, South America) in quest of natural wonders, which in turn lead to the appropriation of vast expanses of land and the incorporation of myriad peoples into the expanding British Empire.

The discovery of the Boiling Lake, by contrast, is an island-bound enterprise that does not lend itself to hyperbolic epic treatment without a slight tinge of irony, given the noncontinental dimensions of the terrain to be traversed. Dominica is, after all, a small island some thirty-five miles long and fifteen miles wide at its broadest expanse. It is not a land mass, despite the thickness of its forests and difficult topography, that can hide its geological treasures from the truly committed explorer for very long. In this finite island terrain, Cameron's continental expedition must be reduced to Watt and Nicholls's "strenuous island hike." Watt and Nicholls may write grandiosely about their achievement without self-irony, but more objective observers such as Sterns-Fadelle cannot. The latter will write of the discovery of the lake as an expedition "which marks an epoch in the history of Dominica," but cannot refrain from showering good-humored irony on his friend Watt, who is credited with surviving his earlier ordeal to write "a thrilling narrative" of his earlier adventures and sufferings as he "painfully" wended "his weary way through the four or five square miles covering the area of the sulphur beds" (Sterns-Fadelle 1902:7, 6).

If irony and parody are Sterns-Fadelle's strategies to account for the rhetorical gap between Nicholls and Watt's narratives and an enterprise that

lacks heroic proportions, the so-called discoverers will predictably seek to confer importance on their feat by turning to the native peasant population as ignorant, superstitious, unscientific mirrors to their comparative bravery and intrepidity. "Discourses of conquest," Nicholas Thomas has observed, "often seem to operate through denigrated stereotypes, through types of 'others' such as the savage or lazy native" as they do in most accounts of the discovery of Dominica's Boiling Lake (Thomas 1994:124).

Charles William Day, writing about Dominica in his *Five Years' Residence in the West Indies* (1852) before the "discovery" of the Boiling Lake, already posited the white European would-be discoverer in a superior relationship to the native (peasant or Creole bourgeois alike), possessors of a lesser kind of knowledge, or of no knowledge at all. Claiming that two-thirds of the island territory has never been explored (revealing thus his own ignorance of extensive eighteenth-century surveys and maps by the likes of Rigobert Bonne, Jacques-Nicolas Bellin, Thomas Jefferys, and Emanuel and Thomas Bowen), Day alludes to the natives' lack of courage for exploration (i.e., enterprise) and intimates his belief that discovery is a European prerogative:

No one here has spirit enough to organize an expedition into the interior, out of the beaten track. Vague rumours occasionally come down from erratic negroes: but to the civilized world – if the term be not misapplied *in toto* to the white population out here – the interior of Dominica is as much a *terra incognita* as the sources of the White Nile in Africa. ... A very fine, extensive lake is said to exist in the interior of Dominica but no white man has, as yet, seen it. Any race of whites might readily populate the mountainous regions of these islands; and a very good way, too, it would be of gradually superseding the necessity for the negro. (Day 1852:239)

Day is writing at a time when geographical exploration had become the Empire's chief weapon for expansion and economic development. His critique of the Dominicans' lack of enterprise fits into a well-developed rhetoric of justification of continued colonization that requires the presentation of the natives (regardless of race or class) as lesser beings whom it is quite fit to dispossess. Lacking in all the attributes needed for supremacy – the result of ethnic, racial, cultural, technological, and economic inferiority – they are not equipped to value and exploit the land and resources they possess. His anticipation of forthcoming discovery "by white [British] men," as these geological features are already known to "erratic negroes," outlines a series of discursive strategies that we will find oft-repeated in the many accounts of travels to the Boiling Lake that follow in the wake its "discovery." Bravery will be the province of Whites; cowardice that of the natives. True knowledge, as an attribute of white civilization, must eventually replace the native's "erratic" notions. Discovery and exploration must lead to white colonization, and thus to the replacement of

the native (whether that means substitution of natives by Whites or the replacement of the native in his “proper” subordinate space, he does not make clear).

It would be easy to set aside Day’s dismissal of the “negroes’” incapacity for enterprise as stemming from racialized presuppositions that are part and parcel of colonial thought. From this perspective, there would be no role for the black “native” (if the term is adequate to refer to populations made “native” by forced migration and enslavement), except as cheap labor, in the economic and social development of colonized territories for which geographical exploration was such a cornerstone. The negro, Day claims, “will ever be a bad peasant; and nature has unfitted him for anything higher in the social scale” (Day 1852:239). The fact, however, is that Day is writing, at best, with very little understanding of Dominica or, at worst, with a conscious intention of distorting the truth about the realities of island conditions. Of previous geographical exploration by the French colonizers who preceded the British in Dominica he seems to know nothing. Of the prosperous, economically and politically powerful Creole elite (most of them colored) he has nothing to say in this context, except perhaps inasmuch as they are the “whites” only partially deserving of the title of “civilized.” The independent-minded peasantry, which from his perspective is superfluous – except to the degree that their labor was required for the renewal of the plantation economy after emancipation – must have appeared to him as a considerable threat to colonial control. The truth was that in Dominica, Creole and expatriate lack of enterprise in populating the interior – the result, for the most part, of the obstacles to expansion posed by the often impenetrable mountainous terrain – had left it open to black peasant ownership.

In Dominica, whose mountainous terrain and poor infrastructure had made it a site marginal to the large sugar plantation model that dominated the region’s economy, local mulatto families had secured a foothold in the medium-scale plantation economy that set the standards for production on the island. As a result, it possessed a fairly entrenched Creole middle class. In any case, by the time of Day’s visit, those among the more recent English settlers (medical officers, government officials, vicars, and tutors) who ventured into plantation agriculture (as did Dr. Nicholls and his mentor, John Imray) did so with varying degrees of moderate success, primarily because of unstable access to potential workers. As Rolph Trouillot has observed in *Peasants and Capital*, in late nineteenth-century Dominica, “the contradiction between property relations on the one hand and labor and distribution relations on the other was obvious: planters owned the land, but sharecroppers could exploit the low supply of labor to impose distribution conditions more favorable to themselves” (Trouillot 1988:86). The presence of large settlements of free Blacks and Mulattoes who owned land or lived as squatters in abandoned estates had produced an independent-minded peasantry, which included a substantial population of Caribs, who had a virtual free rein in the interior of the island and were

accustomed to negotiating the terms of their employment and the parameters of their acceptance or rejection of foreign and local power with greater freedom than their counterparts in neighboring islands. This was not a group of “natives” – Creole, black, or Carib, peasant or bourgeois – likely to accept the passive role imposed on them by these narratives of discovery without an attempt at inserting their own versions of events into the tale.

Nicholls's original account of their “discovery” becomes the mediating text for subsequent essays on visits to the site, and this narrative, as published in *The Field* in 1876, seeks to place the local peasantry in the position of an audience so intellectually and courageously (because racially) inferior as to reflect the white discoverer's feat in its proper, superior light. Nicholls acknowledges no irony in describing how he had sent two peasants as an advance party to open a track through “the primeval forest” – they do so with such assurance of the most expedient route to the lake as to take the group there almost directly – but disparages as superstitious the very knowledge of the local terrain that makes it possible for the group to find the lake by the morning of the second day. Given the relatively modest distance traversed, and the apparent certainty of imminent arrival, the “expedition” is more akin to a party of tourists led by experienced guides.

William Palgrave, who accompanied Nicholls on his third “expedition” to the lake in 1877, juggles some torturous rhetoric in dismissing the possibility of previous native/local awareness of the lake's existence, only to acknowledge that Watt and Nicholls's 1875 feat was somewhere between a “task of verification” and a “discovery.” The ascent to the lake, he concludes, “though more than once attempted, had for seventy years at least remained unaccomplished”:

Tradition only, speaking through an old French description of the island, told of a large and active “soufrière,” nestled amid the highest ranges ... But for a century or thereabouts not only had no European succeeded in penetrating to this reported wonder; no negro charcoal-burner, however familiar with the “bush,” had pushed his roving to the brink of the soufrière; the Caribs ... knew nothing, or at any rate had nothing to say, of the lonely region that towered above their abodes. The strong smell of sulphur, that when the wind happened to be from the southeast, reached the town of Roseau itself, though at a distance of fourteen or fifteen miles in a straight line, alone gave witness how huge must be the dimensions, how constant the activity of the soufrière whence it proceeded. (Palgrave 1877:367)

This curious passage, which speaks with such authority about the native's ignorance and silence, unveils the assumption that knowledge can only be claimed by the existence of a text. Palgrave falls easily into the fallacy of assuming that a lack of literacy on the part of the native peasant population precludes the possibility of knowledge. The assumption had marked colonial thought since the

earliest writings of the Spanish *conquistadores*, who privileged the mastery of writing as “an unmistakably superior representational technology”:

The unlettered peoples of the New World could not bring the strangers into focus; conceptual inadequacy severely impeded, indeed virtually precluded, an accurate perception of the other. The culture that possessed writing could accurately represent to itself (and hence strategically manipulate) the culture without writing, but the reverse was not true. (Greenblatt 1991:11)

Drawing upon Tzvetan Todorov’s work on the rhetoric of the conquest of America, Greenblatt wonders if there indeed is “a ‘technology’ of symbolism as capable of evolution as the technology of tools,” and whether this indeed means that “societies possessing writing are more advanced than societies without writing” (Todorov 1984:80). The assumption has entered the rhetoric of discovery as a given, providing an a priori rationale for establishing and describing relationships between discoverers/colonists and natives. In the writings of latter-day discoverers, such as Nicholls’s, the “absence of writing” on which these cultural hierarchies were built is conflated with the absence of literacy, as if they were identical phenomena and resulted in identical incapacities for self-representation.

The Dominican peasantry these discoverers encountered in 1875, however, did not live in a society marked by the absence of writing. They may have been illiterate in a literate society, but they had a working command of three languages (French, *Kwèyol* or local patois, and English) and a rhetorical tradition (which they shared with the local Creole elite) that had mastered parody, irony, mockery, and humor as ways of negotiating the subtleties of colonial rule. These negotiating strategies required a nuanced understanding of the colonizer’s ways that allowed for veiled scorn and strategically deployed sarcasm. Long experienced in navigating colonial relations across three languages and in using irony and derision as weapons, they were well versed in the verbal artillery required to conduct a ritual of power plays. Faced with English colonial supremacy, the native Dominicans, peasant and bourgeois alike, struck back by mocking Whites.

With these rhetorical complexities as background, it is perhaps easier to understand the temptation to “silence” the Dominican peasant in the narrative of the discovery and exploration of the lake or to find a discourse the local population, peasant as well as bourgeois, did not command – that of science. The strategy seems twofold: either the native has nothing to say for himself about the existence of the lake, or what he has to say is mere folklore that never rises to the category of science. Given the professionalization of science that had marked nineteenth-century Europe, “true knowledge” about the Boiling Lake was only possible through the writing of scientific or pseudoscientific texts. The development of scientific methodology in the century before had created a hierarchy of discourses that separated the information

accessible to the common man from that available to the specialist. Bruno Latour, in *The Pasteurization of France*, uses the history of the laboratory to show how the creation of a space designed for isolated experimentation separated scientific knowledge from commonplace experience (Latour 1988).

In the laboratory, Latour suggests, “unprecedented things were now to be expressed in written signs” (Latour 1988:85) that created a hierarchy of its own – formulas, equations, reports that constituted a separate discourse. Discovery in the laboratory as well as in the field followed by detailed explanation of the features and uses of the phenomenon discovered was the mark of the true scientist. Hence the commodity value of the claim to discovery for Dr. Nicholls, who had, after all, been educated as a medical doctor in British universities that had trained many of the foremost British scientists and explorers of the day and that had followed his writings on the discovery of the lake with a number of serious scientific papers on various geological and botanical phenomena in the West Indies. Palgrave, a writer with scientific pretensions of his own, when forced to question the validity of Nicholls’s claim, will turn a critical eye on the latter’s own narrative of discovery, letting its own bombastic rhetoric – “they described [the lake] as by far surpassing in extent and grandeur anything yet known in the West Indies” – deflate itself when made to stand against his debunking of the enterprise as “confirmation” rather than “discovery” (Palgrave 1877:366). But he will still attempt to salvage Nicholls’s claim to a discovery of scientific importance. His and Watt’s discovery, “though difficult and even dangerous” of access, may not be “available to any ends” (i.e., not exploitable commercially), but still remains something “of curiosity, perhaps of science” (Palgrave 1877:367). The issue of whether knowledge about the lake constitutes science and of who possesses and controls that knowledge is central to this discussion. Hence my interest in the natives’ unacknowledged knowledge. These narratives that silence the native or reduce his utterances to superstition or folklore prompt questions such as *How much did the native know? And when did he know it?*

Bernard Cohn, writing about the conquest of India – a continental conquest if there ever was one – describes the importance of securing and disseminating “official colonial knowledge” to sustaining the notion of Empire: “the conquest of India was a conquest of knowledge ... the vast social world that was India had to be classified, categorized and bounded before it could be hierarchized” (Cohn 1985:283-84). A similar colonial mandate motivates the many visitors to the Boiling Lake that followed in the wake of its discovery, but the scale of investigation is much narrower, as befits an island-bound enterprise. So here I must return to Dominica’s island condition and the likelihood of the peasantry not knowing about the existence of the lake before its discovery.

Nicholls acknowledges no prior information about the lake, other than the “intimations” in Watt’s narrative of his rampage through the woods. Day speaks of “notions” put forth by “erratic negroes.” Palgrave even denies the

natives the title of guides, as it presupposes prior knowledge, preferring to refer to them as “the carriers of our provisions, hammocks, and so forth,” claiming the existence of no track, except what “we” might make for ourselves (a “we” that does not include the silent bearers who are actually opening a path through the dense tropical forest with their cutlasses). Palgrave can, in the same breath, negate any prior knowledge on the part of the natives while chastising them for their silence and lack of imagination about the lake:

I wish that I had some interesting legend to recount connected with the spot and for such we curiously inquired, but in vain, from our dusky attendants. No negro, no Carib tradition adds the wonders of imagination to those of fact; no story of past demi-god or devil, of nymph or neckar, assigns an origin or a history to the Lake ... the Boiling Lake has, for aught that we could discover, remained a mere natural phenomenon for Indians and Creoles no less than for Europeans; and when ... one of our attendants, turning back, addressed the vaporous gulf with a cabalistic “Salaam-Aleykum” picked up from some African cousin of Mohammedan origin, he gave the first and only expression of superstition aroused by the view. (Palgrave 1877:373, 374)

Palgrave’s disappointed expectations of legends and myths betray his assumption that the Dominican peasant, as a premodern man, would have responded to the existence of a Boiling Lake through archaic, nonscientific modes of thought and “superstitious” rituals. His rather keen disappointment upon finding that the local peasantry has treated the lake as a “mere natural phenomenon” seems only to reduce the peasantry’s own value as a phenomenon whose own myths and legends would contribute to the value of the lake’s discovery.

Surprisingly, Hendrik De Leeuw, upon questioning his guide in the 1920s, finds that “many tales and legends have been hatched about this awe-inspiring place” (De Leeuw 1937:225). Natives, he explained, feared visiting the place, believing that “miserable and vengeful ghosts and evil spirits wander about, perpetrating dirty work and nasty tricks.” Other “superstitious natives” would leave offerings of food at the lake to appease the mountain spirits and would warn visitors that they could be “sucked to the bottom of the cauldron by a sudden and irresistible force” as punishment “for presuming to disturb the peace of the spirits.” Inquiries about spirits and ghostly apparitions left the guide shaking “like an aspen leaf,” twitching about “like a parched pea.”

Frederick Endlich, for example, writing for the *American Naturalist* in 1880, describes a minor volcanic eruption at the lake, presaged by a huge dark cloud hovering over Roseau and followed by a rain of fine particles of some gray, mineral-like material that covered all foliage and vegetation. He juxtaposes in his description the “apprehension” awakened in those believing the “mysterious legends as to volcanic activity on the island” with the “cool observers, among whom Dr. Nicholls of Roseau was prominent” (Endlich

1880:766). Describing his expedition to the lake he claims that as his group neared the “point of greatest chemical activity” they were deserted by their guides – adding that it was “not that their guidance was in the least valuable, but [that] we wanted them to carry specimens” (Endlich 1880:765). No persuasion or threat availed to make them follow, he claims, since they believed that the mountain was inhabited by evil spirits. A refusal to get nearer because of an awareness of possible dangers connected to the environment does not seem to occur to him. However, there is little in the tradition of Dominican folk *kònts* (tales) that would justify such fears relating to the Boiling Lake. Among the tales gathered by Gary Ray Smith in his comprehensive study of the Dominican oral tradition (1991), only one cautionary tale, “The Dangerous Forest,” could be indirectly connected to the dangers lurking within a lake such as the Boiling Lake.

There is, however, a tongue-in-cheek nature to these tales of superstitious natives that forces the reader to wonder – particularly in the absence of any such “superstitions” surrounding the lake in Dominican folklore prior to the 1875 “discovery” – if they have been invented by the writers, or more likely, by savvy guides who understood the value of legend and superstition as commodities bound to make the exotic experience of visiting the lake more titillating to tourists. There is a performative aspect involved in the dramatic “Salaam Aleykum” of Palgrave’s guide that suggests an impromptu response to the explorers’ expectations of superstition and legend, an implicit understanding that the addition of those elements would increase the touristic value of the lake and bring more income to the village of Laudat, from which the guides were drawn. Are the explorers, one wonders, having their proverbial leg pulled? Have their guides, indeed, invented a tradition of myth and legend to satisfy the expectations of foreign visitors?

The possibility of an ironic reading based on the native’s perception of the visitors’ expectations – which they could have easily gleaned from the Europeans’ inquiries – allows for a more nuanced analysis of these writings about the lake’s discovery. Often in these texts, the native’s fears (whether real or assumed by the writers) are countered by descriptions of the white visitors’ coolness and fearlessness. American geologist Kenneth Earle, describing the “terrible spectacle” of the Boiling Lake in his “Geological Notes on the Island of Dominica,” describes a small beach at the north end of the lake as “accessible to photographers and other venturesome spirits – but not to negro guides!” (Earle 1928:182). However, the local guides’ “fearfulness” – if seen from their perspective – can be read as understandable caution. Most of the guides involved in the increasingly large number of visits to the Boiling Lake throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries belonged to the Rowle family of Laudat, many of whose members had witnessed or been the victims of all the fatal accidents that had taken place at that same beach to which they would not venture. When accounts of

their “fearfulness” are read from their perspective, fear becomes acceptable caution and the visitors’ “courage” turns into reckless arrogance.

In visitors’ texts, the Dominican peasantry’s easy familiarity with nature is the only knowledge they are easily granted. When abilities are acknowledged, they are physical rather than intellectual. Endlich has little to say in praise of the local guides, other than to commend their “climbing quality and endurance” (Endlich 1880:796). Likewise Stuart Elliott who, writing in 1951, in awe at his guide’s remarkable climbing ability, resorts to comparisons with animals:

His soles were a half inch thick with callouses and were as tough as a tapir’s hide; and his toes, unwarped by any artificiality, were broad and straight and widely spread. When he stepped on a slippery rock, his toes curled around the edge and gripped almost like the clutch of a bird.<sup>2</sup>

A. Hyatt Verrill, in *The Book of the West Indies*, credits the natives’ superior understanding of the physical conditions that makes access to the lake safe (he relies on their knowledge of when they would be safe from poisonous gases) but falls into delighted surprise when he sees how cleverly the men use the lake’s boiling waters and hot steam to prepare their food “in Nature’s stove” (Verrill 1917:23). Familiarity is expected, ingenuity is not.

Frederick Ober, an American naturalist who visited the lake in 1879, is the first visitor who grants the Dominicans a voice, thus breaking the peasants’ customary silence in these narratives. Proud of being “the first American to look upon [the lake] and the first of any nationality to take a photograph,” he is also the first to include in his account extended instances of reported speech (Ober 1904:333). In his *Camps in the Caribbees* (1886), he describes the “mountaineers” who lead him into the forest in search of rare species of birds, as “bronzed as to complexion, and very much mixed up as to ancestry ..., faithful, honest, untiringly zealous in serving, and as woodsmen ... unsurpassed” (Ober 1886:67).

Perhaps Ober’s more democratic American perspective explains the vivid presence of the Dominican peasant in his writings, although this presence is not without condescension or an understanding that their evident superiority in nature is nonetheless class-bound. His guide to the lake, a Laudat man known as Zizi (Jean Baptiste Rowle, Watt and Nicholls’s guide, who some years later died by falling into the lake), was the “embodiment of all the servingman’s virtues,” and had moreover “an overwhelming regard for the white man – the white man whom he could respect – who, he said, was next to the Bon Dieu. ‘White man he next to God; I thank ze Bon Dieu eef I can speks ze Eengleesh’” (Ober 1904:333-34).

2. Stuart E. Elliot, “The Mouth of Hell,” *Natural History*, December 1951, p. 443.

Ober opens the narrative of his visit to the lake in 1877 by questioning the possibility of its remaining undiscovered and unknown until so recently: "It seems incredible that in an island with scarce one hundred miles of coast line, and containing only three hundred square miles, there could exist not only a lake of boiling water, detonating frequently with loud reports, but a large area of volcanic activity, without any human being being aware of the fact through several centuries" (Ober 1904:336). He, moreover, allows one of his "boys," Joseph Rowle, to tell the story of Watt's clueless ramble in some approximation of his own words:

M'sieu Watt he walk, walk, walk, pour tree day: he lose hees clo's, hees pants cut off; he make nozing pour manger but root; he have no knife, no nozing; hees guide was town neegah ... ; zey was town neegah, sah, and leab him and loss him. Bien, he come to black man's ajoupa in wood, an' ze black man sink he jombie an' he run; when he come back wiz some more men for look for jombie M'sieu Watt he make coople of sign – for he have loss hees voice and was not to spek – an' zey deescovair heem. (Ober 1886:67-68)



Figure 1. Joseph Rowle and family, Laudat, Dominica, circa 1890  
(courtesy of the American Museum of Natural History)

This version of Watt's "Lost in the Woods" episode underscores the foolishness and credulity of young Watt as he embarks on his nearly disastrous ramble through the dense Dominican tropical forest. Seen from the native peasant's perspective, it would be sheer madness to venture into the forest trusting to town people unfamiliar with the terrain, with no knife or cutlass of his own to cut through the bush, and with no ability or knowledge to secure anything to

eat but roots. When he emerges from the forest, traumatized and unrecognizable as a man, he resembles someone who has gone to the other side, who has endured a sort of death, a *jombie*. And in an inversion of the norm in narratives of discovery, Watt “goes native” (i.e., he is silenced and needs to communicate by “coople of sign”) and the natives must “deescovair” or recognize him. Ober may have been charmed by Rowle’s quaintness of language and expression into including this first-person narrative into his account, without realizing that it represents an almost revolutionary stance. From questioning the possibility of the lake having remained undiscovered until 1875 to ridiculing Watt, his account reveals a peasant in full command of his rational powers, ready to “read” Watt’s behavior in a critical light, expressing his own superior understanding of what was required to avoid such an unnecessary adventure.

Similarly, in an 1880 letter to the Royal Geographic Society, G.B. Blanc, the island’s Surveyor General, inserts into his description of a recent eruption at Dominica’s Grand Soufrière his second-hand account of the report of a team of villagers from Laudat. Here, the villagers’ report is appropriated into a scientific account published in one of the premier forums for such information in the world. Their narrative reverts to the benefit of the surveyor general – to whose reputation as a scientist it contributes – while the peasants themselves remain outside the scope of scientific discourse:

this morning the people of Laudat ... *observed* that the ridge which divides the watershed of the central branches of the Roseau Rives from the northern branch of the Point Mulatre River has almost disappeared ... *I sent a party of experienced woodmen* to ascertain the extent of the country destroyed, and *they reported* that after passing the middle branch of the head-waters of the Roseau River, the path ... was completely obliterated ... They were obliged to follow the middle branch up, wading knee-deep in the soft, sandy ash thrown out by the convulsion ... From the ridge, which had considerably fallen in height, away to the east as far as the deep valley of the Point Mulatre below the Boiling Lake, was a bare, barren mass of debris; not, *they say*, a standing tree or leaf to be seen ... Whether the lake as a lake existed or not *they could not tell*, as they did not get within a mile of it. (Blanc 1880:62, my emphasis)

These accounts, however, are exceptions among the many narratives that reduce the native to the role of a silent bearer, a strategy that would be easy to attribute to a racist impulse or monolingual arrogance that seeks to impose scientific discourse over superstitious ramblings as the means to assert the social and economic hierarchies of colonial societies. But in Dominica in 1875, social and economic categories were not so simply defined in terms of black and white/English vs. native, as the island had a strong French-derived mulatto elite whose recognition of English authority was never unproblematic. For Watt and Nicholls, as minor colonial officials, this “discovery” represented an

opportunity to distinguish themselves among those readers in England who could further their careers. It is not that their discovery of the Boiling Lake could necessarily lead to territorial expansion or to profitable exploitation, but that Nicholls, particularly, recognized the potential career advantages of a publicity campaign centered on his discovery of the lake and consequently, on his emerging reputation as a scientist. In this he was quite successful – he would go on to “discover” the cure for yaws from watching native healing practices – and was eventually knighted for his services to the island.

These career-enhancing factors – coupled with Watt and Nicholls's conqueror-like arrogance in naming the mountains surrounding the lake after themselves (we have, as a result, Morne Nicholls and Morne Watts) – were given additional snob value when in 1901 a young Englishman, Wilfrid Meysey Clive, a cousin to the Earl of Denbigh and a descendant of Clive of India, died of asphyxiation by lethal gases during his visit to the lake. Clive was setting up his camera on the very spot from which Ober had taken the first photograph of the lake in 1877 when one of his two guides (a man named Wiley) was overcome by the fumes and toppled into the water. Clive dispatched the second guide to Laudat for help but was himself stricken by the gases and died before the rescue party arrived. Ober, writing after his second visit to the Boiling Lake in 1903, describes the pathetic scene in the language of romantic tragedy:

Through the wild forest which we had traversed so light-heartedly, over the rough trail beneath the giant trees, amid the dense tropic growth, the relief party made their return march by night, lighted by torches of gum wood, and bearing their ghastly burdens on hammocks between them. Years before a similar party had borne to Laudat poor old Zizi, my guide and friend, another victim of the Lake, who had scalded to death in its waters. (Ober 1904:340-41)

After the Clive tragedy, Nicholls would insert the tale of the young man's death – rewritten as a heroic attempt to save his guide's life – as a requisite element in his own narrative of what had by then become “his” discovery, in acknowledgment that the death of this young aristocrat gave the enterprise the perfect martyr, one who through his connection to Clive of India would enhance the importance and significance of the achievement. For a “native” narrative of Clive's death we have to wait until 1951, when Cyril Rowle, grandnephew to Ober's guide, Zizi, tells the story to Stuart E. Elliott, an American visitor. Cyril's “vivid story,” which Stuart claims had been received directly from his grandfather, was that upon their arrival at the lake,

an enormous bubble, which all but covered the entire lake, rose, swelled ... and broke into foam, releasing its gases into the air ... Wiley fell where he stood, never to move again. Rowle, who happened to stoop down in a slight declivity where a rivulet sought the lake, escaped the worst of the gas cloud, but he felt a dreadful nausea. Clive scrambled down and stood beside him.

From Rowle's account, Clive refused to believe that Wiley was dead. He tried to revive him with brandy, while Rowle pleaded with him to leave the spot before another bubble should come. However, Clive could not grasp the danger, and belittling the warning, he ordered Rowle to return to Laudat for medical aid. So bidden, Rowle left, and the last time he saw Clive alive, the Englishman was standing with his back against a bank, gazing down on Wiley. When, hours later, Rowle returned with the rescue party, Clive was still in the same position, looking down at the prostrate guide. Clive's eyes were open but saw nothing. He was dead, and so was Wiley.<sup>3</sup>

Rowle's account of Clive's death debunks the latter's heroism, so central to the narrative of English colonial expansion. Clive's efforts to save his guide – proof of British noblesse oblige and selfless heroism – emerge in this version as a foolish refusal to heed the warning of his experienced guide, a fatal inability to recognize that Wiley was beyond help, and an arrogant use of his authority as employer/white man to peremptorily send away his only hope for survival. It is “the Other's” version of history, perhaps as flawed as the one generally accepted as truth, but one which underscores the malleability of narrative to serve particular interests, such as those of the colonial officials, exemplified by Nicholls's dependence on the lake for relentless self-promotion.

Nicholls's “discovery” of the lake, the intense self-promotion that followed – and his success in making it serviceable to the advancement of his career and income – drew the fire of that very mulatto elite whose political and economic power rivaled that of the British authorities. There were manifest political tensions between Dominica's colonial bureaucracy and this Creole elite of French descent, two fairly distinct groups whose differences went beyond language and social patterns and spilled into the dominant political debates of the period (see Paravisini-Gebert 1999). The Creole elite dominated the Legislative Council and used its strength to counter the British administration at every possible turn. It was most successful in keeping out of the Council those among the recent English settlers they perceived as conservative in political, social, and racial matters, despite the power open to them as members of the colonial administration. Such was the case with Nicholls, a conservative in all matters important to the Creole elite, who failed at numerous attempts at election despite a thriving medical practice and promotion to Chief Medical Officer.

Nicholls, in turn, was lionized by the expatriate community in Dominica and neighboring islands, coming to be known as the “Uncrowned King of Dominica” (Menzies 1926:203).<sup>4</sup> To the annoyance of Dominica's Creole elite, British residents and visitors sung the praises of Sir Henry Nicholls for

3. Stuart E. Elliot, “The Mouth of Hell,” *Natural History*, December 1951, p. 476.

4. J.H. Menzies, “The Uncrowned King of Dominica,” *United Empire*, no. 17, 1926, p. 203.

his “unremitting efforts and zeal for his Empire and Dominica” (De Leeuw 1937:226). Hendrik De Leeuw, visiting Dominica after Dr. Nicholls’s death in 1926, wrote of Sir Henry as having arrived in Dominica “at a time when the planters again were going to rack and ruin, and the peasants, who were on the point of starvation, were abandoning their work to go to more prosperous neighboring islands” (De Leeuw 1937:219). De Leeuw’s rewriting of history credited Dr. Nicholls with almost single-handedly restoring the Dominican economy through his introduction and encouragement of the cultivation of limes, the island’s chief crop throughout most of the twentieth century. Quoting his English sources, he described Dr. Nicholls as “the Joshua who led the people of Dominica into the Promised Land” (De Leeuw 1937:219).

Nicholls’s career, however, was emblematic of how, “even when colonizers surround themselves with the persuasive scenery of possession and rule, the gap between projection and performance are frequently betrayed by the anxieties of their texts, which reveal the gestural character of efforts to govern, sanitize, convert and reform” (Thomas 1994:16). Nicholls was the poster boy for the successful colonial official: he had gathered honors in his profession, had been knighted, had run a moderately successful plantation where he conducted his botanical experiments, had been widely published in journals devoted to colonial medicine and science, had raised a prosperous large family after his marriage to the daughter of a rich Creole, he had been lionized by his peers for his accomplishments. Yet the recognition of his local society eluded him – it was, in fact, consistently and consciously denied in an act of sustained resistance to what he represented as a colonial officer of conservative notions.

Nowhere had this been clearer than in the Creole elite’s response to the discovery of the lake. The editors of the *Dial*, the newspaper of the Creole/mulatto middle class, had greeted the news of the feat with undisguised scorn, repeatedly claiming that early map makers and local hunters had known of its existence for a century or more before Nicholls’s visit. It is true enough that the Grand Soufrière area and the Valley of Desolation of which the lake is the centerpiece appear in earlier descriptions of the island, although whether they refer to the lake as a specific feature of that landscape is not always clear. Thomas Atwood’s 1791 book, *The History of the Island of Dominica*, offers the following description of the Valley of Desolation in a tone of awe markedly different from the scientific/discovery rhetoric of almost a century later:

These sulphureous mountains are certainly among the most wonderful phenomena of nature, and command our astonishment and admiration. To see vast tracks of land on fire, whose smoke, like clouds, stretched far around; brimstone in flames, like streams of water issuing from the sides of precipices; in the vallies large holes full of bituminous matter, boiling and bubbling like a cauldron; the earth trembling under the tread, and bursting out with loud explosions, are objects truly terrific to the beholders; who,

on the spot, are struck with awe and admiration, on viewing such dreadful works of the Almighty, who causes them to exist, for purposes only known to him. (Atwood 1931:78)

Atwood's detailed description of the area surrounding the lake was cited often by Nicholls's political enemies as proof of the emptiness of his claim to have discovered the lake. Nicholls would also seek to validate his claim by alluding to a seventeenth-century legend related to "a Lake of Fire somewhere in Dominica's interior never visited by a white man" (De Leeuw 1937:220). According to this legend, there existed in the neighborhood of this Lake of Fire, at a distance of two or three hours from Roseau, a monstrous serpent with "a jewel the size of a carbuncle embedded in its head" that illuminated the forest for miles around. The legend is reported to have lured Nicholls and Watts into the forest, leaving the populace sitting on pins and needles for three days, until they emerged "with the startling news that they had discovered the legendary lake, a boiling one at that – and thus closed a romantic episode in the history of Dominica" (De Leeuw 1937:220).

The lake's "discovery" served as the focus of an intense political debate that did not abate until Nicholls's death and had less to do with the lake itself and more with the tensions between local native knowledge and its commodification abroad for the benefit of a white colonial elite bent on using scientific/discovery enterprises to enhance their status with both the colonial and colonized societies. In nineteenth-century Dominica the Creole merchant and planter class was forever ready with a contestatory discourse which used irony as its principal weapon, as we can see in the following passages, taken from a 1887 response to yet one more article by Nicholls flaunting the discovery. They convey not only the mulatto elite's case against Nicholls's claim of discovery (still going strong twelve years after the fact), but also the importance of the issues at stake in the *Dial's* repeated attempts to discredit Nicholls:

How Dr. Nicholls can claim to be the discoverer of the Boiling Lake of Dominica with Mr. Watt's "Lost in the Woods" still legible in the introduction to one of the Old Dominica Almanacs?, and how, with the Boiling Lake marked on an old map of the island, and with Dr. Clarke's [sic] reference to this "most wonderful phenomenon" in 1797, either of the two soi-disant Columbuses can unblushingly lay claim to having discovered the Boiling Lake is an enigma we do not pretend to solve.<sup>5</sup>

The three documents cited here are of particular interest, not only because they support the Creole elite's contention that Nicholls's discovery of the lake represented an appropriation of knowledge already claimed by others, but because the sources were closely allied to the French-derived Creole elite

5. "Windward News," *Dominica Dial*, May, 7 1887, p. 2.

and not to British colonial representatives, and could thus be claimed as local knowledge. Watt, he of the hysterical scramble through the woods, had grown up in Dominica and was connected to many Creole families. Hence the article's willingness to give him and his text, "Lost in the Woods,"<sup>6</sup> primacy as the preferred report on the discovery over Nicholls's own essay in *The Field*.

The claim to the lake's being marked on "an old map" could refer to any of a handful of extant maps displaying unnamed features that could be identified as the Boiling Lake: Archibald Campbell's "Sketch of the Coast" (1761), the earliest published map of the island by Emanuel Bowen (1745), the maps by LeRouge of the 1778 French survey of the island, and those by Thomas Jefferys (1775), Thomas Bowen (1778), Thompson (1814), the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (1835), and George Phillip & Son (1856). They offer evidence of fairly comprehensive surveys dating back to 1745, making it impossible to contend the assertion that Dr. Nicholls's "discovery" constituted the first visit to the area by native or European.

Of greater importance in the Creole elite's arsenal against Nicholls's claim is a book by James Clark, a physician who spent a number of years working in Dominica (1771-1788, 1789-1796, and 1804-1818) researching the incidence and treatment for yellow fever, typhus fever, dysentery, malaria, dry belly-ache, cholera, and tetanus. In *A Treatise on the Yellow Fever as It Appeared in the Island of Dominica* (1797), Clark analyzes the hot baths at Soufrière and makes reference to the "most wonderful phenomenon" in the Valley of Desolation. As only one of two books written about Dominica in the eighteenth century, before the island was ceded to the English by the French – the other being Atwood's *History of the Island of Dominica* (1791) – Clark's account bears the additional authority of his outstanding reputation as a scientist. Being that Clark's work was the most comprehensive medical treatise on Dominica to that date, critics of Nicholls's questioned whether the newly appointed superintendent of hospitals could have been unaware of the book's existence or unfamiliar with its contents, particularly since a lengthy synopsis of the book had appeared in Clark's 1797 work. In 1880, reporting on a recent volcanic eruption in Dominica to the Royal Geographic Society, Mr. G.E. Blanc, Surveyor-General of the island and a member of the colonial elite, assured his readers that "the Boiling Lake was visited for the first time, in this generation, five years ago; but its existence was known of a century previously, as it is referred to in a work by one Dr. Clarke, F.R.S., dated 1777" (Blanc 1880:366).

To the evidence against Dr. Nicholls' claim, as outlined in the preceding, the editors of the *Dial* add a heavy dose of sarcasm and what amounts to public repudiation:

6. Watt's "Lost in the Woods" had appeared in a local publication, *The Dominica Almanac*.

But if Dr. Nicholls is able to prove himself the discoverer of the Boiling Lake then an ungrateful world should hasten to christen this lake *locus fervidus Columbi Nicholii*, in recognition of the talented explorer who about the same time tried hard to get our woodsmen to change the name of one of their familiar mountains to Morne Nicholls and if the real Dr. Nicholls would only drown himself in the phenomenon and not reappear, Phoenix-like, from his own bouillon, this part of the world would be saved much of that kind of fustian writing about this island with which the little doctor's article winds up.<sup>7</sup>

The editors of the *Dial* would heap further scorn on Nicholls and Watts by reminding readers that the mountains they had named after themselves were quite appropriate in their shape as Morne Watts was "tall and thin" and Morne Nicholls was "short and squat." Compared to the sarcasm displayed by the *Dial*, the lightly sprinkled irony that flows over Sterns-Fadelle's description of Watt's and Nicholls's feat with manifest gusto in *The Boiling Lake of Dominica* (1902) must have been read as almost flattering. Writing twenty-eight years after the discovery, Sterns-Fadelle, a Creole of French descent, educated at the University of Paris, demonstrates the persistence of the campaign against Nicholls, which can only be explained as necessary to the continued struggle to disenfranchise the British colonials of which he was a salient representative. His feat of discovering the Boiling Lake – as later his claim to have discovered the cure for yaws – had left him vulnerable to persistent attacks through which the Creole elite sought continuously to rebuff the full extent of English control. The mulatto-controlled Dominican liberal press, through its ideological struggle, opened a contestatory space that was both political and proto-literary. The *Dial's* main weapons to counter its opposition were wit, irony, and satire – deployed through impassioned argument and mordant commentary and inviting public participation through letters to the editor (see Paravisini-Gebert 1996).

Nicholls's appropriating gestures – the "discovery," the poetic raptures, the naming of mountains after himself – were easy targets for his enemies' satire precisely because they were not his intended audience, which was "at home" in England. The contestatory role belonged to those "in place," in a position (as his English readers were not) of having access to the landscape and being able to measure the gap between the prose and the reality it purported to reflect. The gap was broad enough for Nicholls's credibility to be nullified and for his claim to discovery (i.e., possession, however abstract given the lake's untouchability) to be openly challenged, a challenge symbolic of the Creole elite's refusal to accept British control without a struggle.

Bolstering the Creole elite's relentless mockery of Nicholls is the belief that discoveries such as that of the Boiling Lake, whether they privilege

7. "Windward News," *Dominica Dial*, May, 7 1887, p. 2.

scientific discourse or sentimental rapture at the island's natural wonders, usurp local knowledge through publication and dissemination abroad – and generally serve to reinforce colonial power relationships and racial hierarchies. In the case of nineteenth-century Dominica, however, a society with a wealthy and politically independent local elite and a savvy and moderately empowered peasant class, those attempts at colonial appropriation of knowledge through scientific enterprise or the traveler's gaze generate the discourse of resistance evident in the *Dial* and in the peasantry's counter-narratives of discovery, which allows the natives, who have long possessed the knowledge others claim to have unveiled, to use irony and parody to ridicule the colonizers' pretensions and destabilize their power.

It is fair to say that the efforts of the Dominican Creole elite to subvert and contest colonial control succeeded in many ways precisely because Dominica was a small island of relatively little importance in the Imperial scheme. Its colonial officials never had the advantage of a strong military establishment to uphold their pretense to power, nor were they able to sustain control without continuous negotiations with the well-established Creole elite bent on recovering its entirety-of-itself and a peasantry which, given the availability of abandoned estates, had to be coerced away from subsistence agriculture to work on estates. The type of colonialism that emerges in Dominica in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as a result, is more akin to a negotiated truce in which the hierarchies of colonial control become malleable and flexible. The perennial struggle for control manifested itself through myriad compromises and uneasy pacts that reflected the fluidity of colonial relations in a tiny outpost of the Empire. Of the many forms of imperialism possible, Dominica forged its own through continued adaptation to local events and circumstances – of which the discovery of the Boiling Lake is but one. Dominica's version of colonialism is drawn from its insularity. An island – a small island at that – it found its insularity to be its best defense.

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TWO ATTORNEYS AND AN OVERSEER

*Plantation Jamaica 1750-1850: Capital and Control in a Colonial Economy.* B.W. HIGMAN. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2005. xiv + 386 pp. (Cloth US\$ 65.00)

*Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World.* TREVOR BURNARD. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. xii + 320 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00, Paper US\$ 21.95)

These two works from differing perspectives add significant new layers to our knowledge of plantation management in the Caribbean. Both focus on Jamaica, Higman straddling the pre- and postemancipation period (1750-1850) and dealing with the attorneys (i.e. agents, managers) who administered estates for absentee proprietors, and Burnard depicting in unique detail the life of an overseer, right-hand man for attorneys and resident planters alike, and his rise to landed proprietorship. The books usefully complement one another.

Attorneys and “great” attorneys were significant in Jamaican development because from about 1740 sugar profits increasingly enabled planters to return to Britain if they wished to do so. The debate about their positive and negative qualities began among contemporaries then and has rumbled on through Caribbean historiography since Frank W. Pitman (1917) and Lowell J. Ragatz (1927) identified absentee proprietorship and its corollary, management by agents, as a key British West Indian problem. It was seen as promoting careless, cruel, and extravagant management and leaving estates in the real control of overseers. These judgments were first queried in a seminal article by Douglas Hall (1964) which pointed out that absenteeism had promoted the emergence of professional estate managers and concluded that without further careful research generalizations were likely to prove indefensible.

Higman re-opens the debate, investigates evidence from an impressively varied range of primary and secondary sources and presents his findings in a comprehensive overview (Book 1) complemented by two case studies (Book 2) based on published attorney-proprietor correspondence of attorneys

at work pre- and postemancipation, Sir Simon Taylor (1765-1775) at Golden Grove and Isaac Jackson (1839-1843) at Montpelier.

His findings lead him to conclude firstly that the managerial class which emerged in the wake of absenteeism was well trained and efficient and constituted an elite of professional planters. These men gradually took over from the managers appointed by the first waves of absentees who were, characteristically, fellow proprietors, merchants, relatives, or friends.

Secondly, Higman establishes that the professional attorneys were typically men who arrived as young white immigrants, often Scottish, from varied educational backgrounds and worked their way up the plantation management hierarchy, accumulating knowledge and skills as bookkeepers and overseers before taking over as the proprietors' representative. They were planters by profession, a meritocracy in no way inferior to or less efficient than resident proprietors. In 1832 when emancipation loomed, this elite numbered just 200 men who were in charge of 745 properties, characteristically larger than those belonging to residents. Their holdings included more than 50 percent of the sugar estates (some with associated pens) and they supervised more than 45 percent of Jamaica's slaves.

Thirdly, Higman resolves the vexing question of just how "great" the "great" attorneys were. Most attorneys managed just one property for one employer. Some 25 percent, however, had charge of five or more properties and worked for multiple employers; Higman ranks these as "great." The single most outstanding figure in 1832 was William Miller on Jamaica's northwest sugar belt; known as the "Attorney-General," his responsibilities included 26 sugar estates and 7,700 slaves belonging to 22 absentees. Statistics are firmest post-1817 (when Slave Registration became obligatory), but evidence suggests that in earlier decades, when more estates were operational and attorneys fewer, Miller was outclassed by men with as many as 49 sugar estates and 13,000 slaves.

Higman elaborates these findings with maps and commentaries that define geographically the extent of "great" planter domains and the rounds they rode, link attorneys and employers, and establish interattorney linkages and networks. All this, embedded in a wealth of supportive evidence, creates a new historical relief map of Jamaica with differentiated densities of attorney control superimposed on estates, pens, and plantations and on the slave population. It will prove an invaluable tool for further research.

The attorneys at work (Book 2) illustrate shifts that took place in the profession and in labor relations across the period. Taylor, heir to the fortune amassed by his immigrant father, was a typical mid-eighteenth-century appointee employed by a personal friend and paid the customary 6 percent commission on the crop produced. He had wide decision-making powers – limited chiefly by his employer's control of capital expenditures and the legal obligation, imposed by resident owners in the Jamaican Assembly (1740) –

on attorneys to provide yearly statements regarding the total produce of the estates for which they were responsible, sworn on oath for the public record to protect the interest of absentee proprietors.

Attorney professionalism was shaped by proprietor-attorney common concern to maximize profits. Taylor's employer, like most absentees, was reluctant to increase Golden Grove's labor force (reduced from 540 in his father's time to 369). Taylor consequently made sure that the overseers he hired and fired worked the slaves on the "pushing" system. As a result the acreage cultivated by every slave rose from 1 to 1.5 acres and hogsheads of sugar rose from 1 per slave to 1.3. Taylor's letters to his employer meanwhile eloquently expounded his humanitarian views on slave management.

Isaac Jackson (1839-43) was a typical nineteenth-century meritocracy man, an immigrant who rose through the ranks and by 1830 officially combined the roles of attorney and overseer for a sugar estate. This joint function together with payment by salary, a common practice by the 1820s, suggests that absentees adjusted to reduced profit margins by securing attorneys at a fixed rate and increasing their responsibilities.

These adjustments rather pale into insignificance when compared to the labor-management power shift that characterized emancipation. Employed (at £600 a year) by Lord Seaford (pillar of the West India Interest in Parliament) at Montpelier, Jackson, with labor in short supply, faced workers free to negotiate hours, wages, and rents and free to back up demands by strike action and threats. At the same time every unoccupied scrap of land sprouted ground provisions and he was forced to fence off estate pasture to keep out the workers' livestock and horses. Jackson – professional, persistent, hard-working – did his best to keep things going but strongly advised Seaford to follow the British Guiana example and import Indian contract workers at lower wages, though without success. Sugar production went down steadily to 1843.

Higman's wide-ranging discussion is a pleasure to read – a pleasure enhanced by the outstanding quality of the publication itself. He makes a persuasive case for the professionalism of the planting attorneys and the extent of their influence and their activities. Like all good investigative history, however, it provokes questions. Can we altogether accept this reassessment without complementary studies of resident planters? And the sheer scale of the "great" attorneys' operations, their 6 percent commissions on profit, and Taylor's Golden Grove on the "pushing" system unavoidably recall the accusations made at the beginning of the debate: that the common interest of absentees, attorneys, and by extension overseers primarily in crop production made for a cruel system in which overseers were responsible for flogging the work out of the slaves.

The attorneys' pre-emancipation success in delivering profits and maximizing commission earnings was dependent on lower management ruthlessness.

Overseers, however, tend to be marginal in the literature and appear only sporadically in attorney-proprietor correspondence. The 36-volume diary of Thomas Thistlewood, 17 years an overseer, 20 years a small proprietor, which chronicle his daily life (1750-1786) are therefore uniquely important.

Brought to public view initially by Douglas Hall (1989) they are comprehensively analyzed and contextualized here by Trevor Burnard. His book is a rich, densely informative study of mid-eighteenth-century society on Jamaica's developing sugar frontier in Westmoreland, more than half of which concerns slave-management relations.

Thistlewood, son of a Lincolnshire tenant farmer, tried his hand at trading ventures, including a two-year voyage to India and Brazil. But at twenty-nine, he had failed to find a footing in England. In Jamaica he had choices. Employed first as a pen keeper (40 slaves at £50 p.a.) by a prominent resident planter (Florentius Vassall), he moved up the plantation hierarchy to a sugar estate called Egypt (90 slaves at £60 p.a.), owned by another resident planter, and remained there (one year excepted) until 1767 when he achieved his original goal and became, not an attorney, but a small proprietor.

Thistlewood the slave manager rapidly emerges in Burnard's pages as a true professional. After observing his proprietor employer giving three hundred lashes to a delinquent driver, he established his authority at Vineyard Pen by whipping half the women and two-thirds of the men in the year he was there. On agroindustrial Egypt, work conditions were harder and relentless whipping (50-150 lashes) continued, elaborated for repeat offenders by imposing iron collars and chains.

Thistlewood targeted runaways in particular. Short-term (2-3 day) absences disrupted work routines and required two more slaves to bring them back; long-term runaways, more seriously, undermined owner/overseer authority and threatened brigandage. Once captured both categories were severely punished either by being whipped and having pepper rubbed in their wounds, or being covered in molasses and buried for ants to attack. More generally disruptive were the "starving times" regularly induced by provision crop failures. Slaves caught eating young canes and diminishing crop prospects were severely flogged.

And worse followed: slaves died of malnutrition or ate cassava roots in desperation as a way of poisoning themselves. In these circumstances, in order to deter cane eating Thistlewood added to his existing terrorist techniques by inventing Derby's dose (one slave defecated in another's mouth), administered occasionally from January to August 1756. His recourse, seen here as a reflection of individual character, is rather an example of human proclivities inevitably encouraged by conditions that are socially sanctioned (if only in a laboratory) to exercise unlimited personal power where the victims are without redress. Thistlewood was arguably an average product of a vile system.

Customarily established brutalities characterized his regime at Egypt. As his slaves expressed it, he was “no For Play” (p. 255) – he demanded respect.

Thistlewood exacted sexual services as well as work from slave women – usually more than once a day. He was careful, however, not to engage with women attached to elite workers, in particular gang drivers, on whose cooperation he depended to maintain work routines. He respected their property rights to particular women while exercising his own property rights over the rest – though at times acknowledging by payments and gifts that he had enjoyed an extra service.

Burnard’s twenty-first-century critique of Thistlewood’s conduct, while unexceptional in itself, rather underestimates the force of well-established Jamaican sexual mores on an individual who – in contrast to the Moravian missionaries in neighboring St. Elizabeth – was not committed to changing them. Jamaican mores, in any case, also sanctioned informal semipermanent arrangements which Whites with sufficient means often established – as Thistlewood and Sir Simon Taylor did – with slave women as their housekeepers. And if Thistlewood had the “unnatural and bestial longings of a quintessential sexual predator” how does one characterize Lord Byron?

Thistlewood’s “housekeeper” Phibbah, a strong-minded country-born slave (who had her own history of sexual encounters) emerges as a character in her own right. Shrewd, with a network of connections among the slaves, she became Thistlewood’s working partner whose influence extended beyond the household they established. Burnard’s study lends a new dimension to our knowledge of women in her position.

The interface of slave manager-slave worker relations is one of the most interesting aspects of this book. Despot Thistlewood had a close if contentious relationship with his African confidential servant, Lincoln (the first slave he purchased), taught slaves to fish, loaned out guns, led them in border wars to prevent slaves from neighboring plantations from robbing provision and fishing grounds. Most importantly, perhaps, he paid attention to slave health and compiled a collection of sixty recipes found useful for this purpose.

Undercurrents of tension, however, were always there. In his early days at Egypt, Thistlewood confronted and fought a runaway while his slaves stood by, waiting to see who would win before helping him out. He overheard them plotting his murder and found one “serviceable” woman in his bed with a knife. His nephew, sent out to train in planting, drowned when hunting alone in the swamp in ambiguous circumstances, having (against all advice) taken over the gang driver’s woman. And when slave rebellion broke out in May 1760, at first defeating the militia, and then spreading to the neighboring estate, Thistlewood took a risk and armed his slaves. Fortunately for him the military rapidly gained the upper hand, depriving the slaves of the opportunity to murder him.

Slave manager Thistlewood had intellectual interests; he arrived in Jamaica with almost one hundred books and a commission agent in London

supplied new ones. He had wide interests – science, mathematics, history, horticulture, and philosophy – and built up a circle of professional men and small planters who exchanged books and discussed them with one another.

To become a small proprietor he built up a twenty-seven-strong slave jobbing gang, investing shrewdly in a period of rising slave prices, mostly in young African men and women. In 1767 he moved with them and Phibbah (whose owner still insisted on collecting £18 a year for her) to Breadnut Island Pen (66 acres of dry land and 78 acres of swamp), where he raised cattle, goats, and small stock, renting out slaves at harvest and planting. The move improved his social status and allowed him to apply his horticultural knowledge and (perhaps following Voltaire’s advice) plant a garden which became a showpiece of tropical botany. As both manager and proprietor, however, his fortunes rested on slave labor.

Burnard deals thematically with all aspects of Thistlewood’s life, bringing sound judgment and sound scholarship to locate him convincingly in the Anglo-Jamaican world of his time. Readers might demur at the repeated identification of Thistlewood as a sadist. He was, arguably, just a conformist getting on with his life in a slave society and becoming, as Burnard puts it “a vital cog” in “an oppressive order” (p. 5).

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*Travels with Tooy: History, Memory, and the African American Imagination.*  
RICHARD PRICE. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. xiv + 452 pp.  
(Paper US\$ 24.00)

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Ethnography has proved a flexible form over the course of the twentieth century, not only in its presentation, but also in the range and depth of research that it reflects. Despite official invocation of ideals of extended engagement, relatively few ethnographers have produced truly long-term studies of particular groups or communities, even before moving out of villages. And although collaborative approaches enjoy a current vogue amid discussions of method in contemporary American anthropology, the conception of collaboration tends to focus on present interest and political claims rather than longer historical or cosmological trajectory. Richard Price's latest offering, *Travels with Tooy*, is thus a doubly rare and precious thing: the product of extended, historically minded engagement with a people and their worldview, simultaneously cast in a collaborative mode. Featuring Price's multifaceted (and multisited) encounters with a Saramaka wise man and healer, it is intensely personal in terms of both subject and mode of exposition, as well as rich in scholarly detail. The author's commitment to his interlocutor remains palpable on every page, matched only by an equal concern for academic rigor.

Such a level of engagement stems directly from a lifetime of study. For some four decades Richard Price has faithfully returned to visit Saramaka Maroons, first in Suriname, and later, following political conflict and subsequent migration by members of the group, in French Guiana. Although thus geographically anchored, the products of this research (authored both individually and jointly with Sally Price) have been strikingly wide-ranging in terms of topic, conceptual approach, and narrative form. *Travels with Tooy* is no exception; the text manages to be classically ethnographic and experimental at one and the same time. The work contains a treasure trove of mate-

rial related to Saramaka cosmology and esoteric language, all of lasting value in the archival sense to both specialists and the Saramaka themselves. At the same time it illustrates the actual practice of this knowledge by concentrating on the experiences of one óbia-man named Tooy. In presenting his story, Price emphasizes that it is neither unique nor typical, but rather exemplary. Moreover, Tooy is a close friend, in the complicated sense of a distinct, challenging equal, rather than the breezy American euphemism for a pleasant acquaintance. Even as Tooy shares his work with Price the anthropologist, he incorporates him into it, treating him in a parallel role as assistant. As noted in a prelude discussion of authorship (pp. viii-ix), however, though their lives may intertwine, they maintain separate spheres of expertise. In the end it is up to Tooy to prescribe treatments and to Price to write a book.

The complexities of relationship between the protagonists are apparent from the start. Rather than French Guiana or Suriname, Price's adopted hometown in Martinique serves as an initial narrative stage, when the author helps broker an attempted healing by Tooy for a Martiniquan businessman. Arriving by plane to consult with this client, the healer stays at the anthropologist's house and enlists his aid as a translator in performing the initial rituals. But the anthropologist is already deeply involved, connected by extensive village ties to the businessman, by a lifetime of study to the Saramaka, and by long-standing interest to the subject matter. Although the moment may appear extraordinary, as the work continues it grows clear that this is but a minor amplification of Tooy's usual practice in French Guiana. There, a BMW or Mercedes can easily park by his modest shack at the outskirts of Cayenne, its occupant drawn by promised relief from a personal problem, and following a chain of connections, beliefs, and recommendations that lead to this door.

In following and describing Tooy's vocation, Price traces many roots and tendrils, from a page of a *grimoire* worn by a Saramaka soldier in World War II to the multiple plants and gods that infuse this particular óbia-man's practice. It is here that the book most obviously rests on decades of cumulative research, as Price refers to an almost dizzying array of names, events, and story fragments, sorting them into the vast and ever-shifting puzzle of cosmology that informs Tooy's consultations. Moving back and forth between exposition and synthesis, the author allows the reader to share in moments of discovery and realization as well as suggesting underlying patterns. Most critically, perhaps, what emerges is an intricate and partial map, one that suggests both the full measure of his protagonist's knowledge and simultaneously how many gaps and loose ends remain for them both. No individual, not even a master practitioner like Tooy or a lifelong student like Price, can quite claim the whole. Nonetheless, they can certainly master a great deal, as both the healer's practice and the anthropologist's book attest.

In between Tooy's ritual performances, Price recounts other aspects of his subject's life: his political standing in the Saramaka community; a recon-

struction of his chronology; and his everyday relations with family members and friends. However dedicated to knowing gods, spirits, songs, and stories, the healer is very much a worldly man in a Saramaka way, renowned for his sexual appetites. Amid the pantheon surrounding Tooy is a troublesome spirit known as Frenchwoman. Despite warnings from his matrilineage, he fails to come to terms with this spirit before finding himself the subject of a court case, charged with rape from an encounter many years earlier with an underage partner. The ensuing trial, in which Price becomes involved both as a friend and as a cultural authority, is alternately fascinating and disturbing, a mix of minor tragedy and farce in a late colonial context. As Price (p. 177) summarizes, "This is not a pretty story and it has no heroes." In the event Saramaka understandings of sexuality prove incommensurable with those of French law, and Tooy is convicted. The same state that intervenes to punish him, however, ultimately saves his life by diagnosing him with a heart condition and providing medical treatment. Tooy is eventually released from prison on medical grounds, and resumes both his practice and efforts to achieve full recognition as a Saramaka political leader. After chronicling this dramatic moment, Price likewise returns to his cosmological explorations, offering a summation and comparison with other Caribbean religions, appropriately entitled "Reflections from the Verandah."

All said *Travels with Tooy* is a supremely rich and ambitious text. An unapologetic display of serious scholarship, chockablock with careful ethnographic and historical detail, it nonetheless breaks with classic conventions by highlighting personal experience and interweaving multiple threads. Fortunately the writing remains engaging throughout, and the many chapter and section breaks allow the reader to move in nonlinear fashion to check and retrace connections. Although the book lacks an index, it has an extensive coda detailing the esoteric language it references (with audio files accessible at <http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/price/>), as well as a helpful list of dramatis personae. But ultimately the work stays true to the classic ethnographic challenge of presenting another worldview: this is Tooy's story, and to follow it we must travel along. It is deeply appropriate, as well as heartening, that *Travels with Tooy* has won the 2008 Victor Turner Prize for Ethnographic Writing.

*Eric Williams and the Making of the Modern Caribbean*. COLIN A. PALMER. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006. xii + 354 pp. (Cloth US\$ 34.95)

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British historian E.H. Carr always warned his students to study the historian before they began studying the historian's presentation of the "facts." In a way, Carr had adopted this methodological stricture from his nineteenth-century compatriot, Herbert Butterfield, who warned that one should be aware of the big difference between "history" written after the facts and "history" written as events were unfolding. How very important, but also how very difficult both strictures are for anyone attempting to record the career of Eric E. Williams, the Caribbean's politician cum historian *par excellence*. The story of this Trinidadian man of words and of action can be said to have started with the writing of his Ph.D. thesis at Oxford and its publication in 1944 as the path-breaking *Capitalism and Slavery*, to have continued with *The History of the Peoples of Trinidad and Tobago*, written in the heat of the 1961 electoral campaign and move to independence, and his premature autobiography, *Inward Hunger* (1969); and to have ended in 1970 with his magisterial *From Columbus to Castro*. Never, during that extraordinary stretch of time, was it ever evident that Williams did anything other than write history as explanation and as guide to his all-consuming interest in politics.

It is evident, therefore, that it would take a person with highly developed analytical insights into the *dramatis personae* as well as mastery of long stretches of local and regional history to produce something original. Some half dozen attempts at biography were already on the shelf. Was there really a call, let alone an intellectual need, for yet another portrait of Williams the politician? Colin Palmer's deliberate decision not to write another biography was a felicitous one. His was a more complicated plan: to elucidate Williams's activities on the larger Caribbean stage by tracing what he calls the "dialectical relationship" between his domestic imperatives and his political positions – those taken on his own initiative and those cast upon him. Needless to say, writing this sort of history in such a way as to produce something original and relevant to our times required a wide array of multidisciplinary skills. Palmer's fine-honed insights into human nature and more specifically into Williams's own complex personality, his knowledge of the Trinidadian

and wider Caribbean context, and, crucially, his dexterity and knowledge of archival research all contribute to his success. He is the first to have accessed whole batches of official sources on the man and his times in London and Washington. Palmer begins the story in 1956 with the electoral victory of Williams's political creation, the Peoples National Movement (PNM) and ends it in 1970, when the Black Power rebellion came close to destroying everything Williams had created. It was an era in which both the nation state and the region were roiling in the turbulent seas of decolonization. Palmer's chapter on the struggle with the United States over the World War II antisubmarine base, Chaguaramas, helps focus the decolonization battle in its wider (i.e., not simply British colonial) dimension. His analysis of the dissolution of the West Indies Federation and the failure to create a unitary state with Grenada is simply first rate.

Palmer is equally enlightening when showing that even as Williams was crossing swords with the British and the Americans, he had to confront something that, although not of his making, was a problem he often did much to exacerbate: the racial and communal question that had long divided Trinidad (and British Guiana) but which had now reached a boiling point. Even as he was excoriating the Indo-Trinidadians for speaking of "Mother India," Williams was attempting to solidify his Afro-Trinidadian base by a prolonged tour of West African nations. In both cases the attempts at a primordial link were shown to be nothing if not wishful thinking. The historical connection between West Africa and the West Indies, Williams told some university students upon his return, "is nothing to be ashamed about, though the West Indians don't like it and I get the feeling that the West Africans like it even less" (p. 235). From then on he seemed to be governed by the old Trinidadian saying, "You have to grow where you are planted" – not an easy sell in a society so divided. Any student of ethnonationalism will benefit from reading this study of the intractability of nation-building when one side sees the nationalist movement as little more than an attempt at forcefully imposing racial and cultural homogeneity. Palmer is masterful in describing the thrust and parry of racial campaigning followed by contrite attempts at amends only half-heartedly accepted. It is sad but true that the society was more ethnically divided when the "father of the nation" passed away in 1971 than it had been when he began his politics in 1954.

Where Palmer's approach leaves some unfortunate informational lacunae is in his final discussion of the 1970 Black Power riot and the mutiny of the military Regiment. The nearly total dependence on British and American diplomatic dispatches proved to be inadequate to the task of unraveling so complex an affair. As much of Palmer's previous scholarship shows, he is aware that there exist ample published scholarly eye-witness accounts of that dramatic period. Those accounts could, and should, have complemented the archival documentation he used. That said, however, Palmer has given us a terrific read which

will surely stand the test of time amidst the many other studies on the life and times of this fascinating but complex personality which are sure to follow.

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*Nation & Citizen in the Dominican Republic, 1880-1916*. TERESITA MARTÍNEZ-VERGNE. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005. xviii + 235 pp. (Paper US\$ 24.95)

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Thoroughly researched, and imaginatively and subtly interpreted, *Nation & Citizen in the Dominican Republic, 1880-1916* is a must-read for students of Dominican history and society. It also merits close reading by students of Latin American and Caribbean politics, historians of gender, and students of feminist research methods. Those who know the literature on Dominican history may be surprised by what little salience Martínez-Vergne accords to processes that loom as giant developments in other historians' accounts of this period. The definitive entry of the Dominican Republic into the United States' neoimperial orbit and the rise of large-scale sugar producers to economic and political dominance are topics dispatched in a page or two in *Nation & Citizen*. Rather than dwell on these obviously momentous shifts, Martínez-Vergne devotes page after page to minute concerns of daily governance of the capital city of Santo Domingo and the eastern sugar port city of

San Pedro de Macoris. Minutes regarding trash disposal problems and court records of property and interpersonal disputes and on cases of petty thievery and drunken and disorderly public behavior, on the one hand, and idealistic initiatives to build a modern infrastructure and institutions of education, civic life, healthcare and hygiene, on the other hand, and perhaps above all, memoranda of the constant and, it seems, often frustrated efforts to police and regulate the daily lives of these cities' poorer denizens – these are the main sources from which *Nation & Citizen* builds its picture of urban life.

Rather than being mainly about the development of a sense of national identity in the Dominican Republic, as its title might suggest, the book makes an argument, not so easily pigeonholed into trendy categories of analysis, that the Dominican political landscape of the period witnessed an inchoate and short-lived blossoming of ideals of liberal, participatory democracy. While Martínez-Vergne disclaims any intention of debunking earlier accounts, this argument may look surprising to scholars who think of this period in Dominican history as the era of the *caudillo*, when governments were sustained and changed by the rifle rather than the ballot box.

Not surprisingly, Martínez-Vergne's emphasis on the ascendance of liberal ideals is most persuasive with regard to elite visions of a future of ever-expanding enlightenment and progress. She makes a notable contribution to Dominicanist history especially by analyzing the way patriarchal conjugal and family ideology resolved the contradiction between liberal meritocratic ideals and the exclusion of women (even those of education, property, and respectable family backgrounds) from political office and full enfranchisement as citizens.

She hits shaky ground when she asserts that working people, in seeking to enlist the support of state agents for their own ends, acted upon both a new subjective sense of themselves as "citizens" with "rights" and tacitly validated the state's authority as an impartial arbiter of rights claims. She is at times judiciously ambivalent in putting forward this argument, duly taking note of the dismal opinion that the Dominican elite held of the abilities and habits of their lower-income co-urbanites. Ambivalence gives way to confusion, however, when Martínez-Vergne makes claims that seem diametrically opposed; at one point she writes that the working class of Santo Domingo and San Pedro "act[ed] precisely as the intelligentsia had envisioned an active citizenry" (p. 155), but elsewhere states that "seemingly everywhere, the working class posed a threat to the renovation of the nation" (p. 127). While her argument, that the working class actively sought incorporation in the project of liberal governance, is worthy of serious consideration, it rests on sources that are simply too sketchy and uninformative to sustain sweeping generalizations about the subjectivities of the urban proletariat and artisanal classes. Based on the evidence she provides, it is not clear, for example, what plaintiffs in interpersonal disputes, lumped by the authorities under the heading of *escándalos*

(scandal or disorder), had in mind when they approached the police for assistance. Were they asserting “rights,” as Martínez-Vergne claims? Or were they acting out of an injured sense of “honor” or “decency”? In soliciting the aid of the authorities, were these people making an implicit claim to “citizenship” or positioning themselves as dependent clients of the police officers, bureaucrats, and politicians whose help they sought? Many other such questions could be raised. The larger point is that Martínez-Vergne does her own case no favor by giving short shrift to the other models of politics that might viably explain her evidence. Her argument, that an inchoate cross-class consensus was emerging around principles of liberal governance, might have been strengthened had she made a sustained effort to reconcile or contrast this fin-de-siècle vision of the Dominican future with the “caudillist” politics that Dominicanist scholars widely understand to have held sway during this period.

It is therefore telling that at one point Martínez-Vergne writes that “working men and women were asking the government ... to validate their ‘rights,’ although *they may not have used that word*” (p. 160, my italics). Especially in a historical context in which the terms “citizenship” and “rights” might have been new or even alien to many working-class Dominicans, the meanings of their actions are not as transparent as Martínez wishes us to think. At the book’s end, I am left hungry for more evidence to sustain, refute, or, more likely, complicate the depiction of the working-class politics of “scandal” and “honor” that *Nation & Citizen* so innovatively if only partially illuminates.

*Tuning Out Blackness: Race and Nation in the History of Puerto Rican Television.* YEIDY M. RIVERO. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2005. xii + 264 pp. (Paper US\$ 21.95)

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Yeidy M. Rivero points out that in spite of Puerto Rico’s political relationship with the United States, the representation of blackness on Puerto Rican television has been defined through a complex range of relationships, dialogues, and the re-articulation of local, Caribbean, and Latin American contexts. In addition to contributing to the historicizing of these relations, her

essay includes an analysis of racism and the ethnic frontiers in Puerto Rican television. Understanding the complexities of the representation of blackness in Puerto Rican television goes beyond the deconstruction of discourses of “racial democracy” Puerto Rican style that have developed around myths such as “racism doesn’t exist,” “everybody is mixed,” or “talking about race or racism merely imitates intellectual discourse in the United States.” Rivero historicizes the key moments of these representations in the period 1940-1990 and she closes with an epilogue in which she discusses the dilemmas of local Puerto Rican television when confronted by the supremacy of huge corporations such as Univisión-Puerto Rico, based in the United States.

The first chapter, “Caribbean Negritos: Ramón Rivero, Blackface and Black Voice in Puerto Rico,” focuses on the artistic trajectory of the famous comedian Ramón del Rivero (Diplo) and his use of “blackface” in Puerto Rican theater and television, making the connection clear between Cuban *teatro bufo* (1860s, a genre whose influence can be traced back to the Spanish Golden Age) and the “blackface” of the Puerto Rican author. The influence of what Rivero, following critic César Salgado, calls “Cubarican” socio-cultural expression is central for her argument, since she goes fully into a “transnational” consensus of the representation of race in both countries.

These alliances clearly occurred in popular culture (Diplo saw the mask for the first time on Cuban comedian Leopoldo Fernández), and as Rivero points out, they strengthened with the Vanguard movements and cultural and literary *negrismo* (négritude) as in the poetry of Palés Matos and Nicolás Guillén. During those years, Fernando Ortíz was already the director of the “Sociedad de Estudios Afrocubanos” (Society of Afro-Cuban Studies) where Tomás Blanco presented his conference “Racial Prejudice in Puerto Rico.” The allusion made to a particular discourse on race and racism that was being articulated in similar modes on both Hispanic Caribbean islands indicates that the radicalism and the complexity of Diplo’s black mask goes beyond a mere copy of the scripts and accent from Havana. It is a trans-Caribbean mask that represents – “from the top” and “from the bottom” – a series of discourses and social, cultural, and political issues. In the transition to television the radicalism of the scripts was transformed, making way after the death of Ramón del Rivero to other representations in “blackface,” such as Paquito Cordero’s character “Reguerete” (1965, *La taberna India*) and the Negrito “Doroteo” by Tino Acosta (1960), that lose the social and political cleverness of Diplo’s characters.

Chapter 2, “Bringing the Soul: Afros, Black Empowerment and the Resurgent Popularity of Blackface,” analyzes the 1970s in Puerto Rico and a more politicized discourse on racism in the mass media. Political and social alliances created by Puerto Ricans in the diaspora with African Americans in cities such as New York and Chicago are central to understanding the sociocultural and political debates about race. Rivero highlights the founding of the “Young Lords,” the Puerto Rican chapter of the Black Panthers in

Chicago, and the visit of Stokely Carmichael to Puerto Rico and his meeting with Juan Mari Brás, the leader of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

The first part of this chapter presents several interviews, photos, and images of variety shows, from the beginning of Lucecita Benitez's career as a singer of the *nueva ola* (new wave) until the moment of her political radicalization. Rivero points out that this can be seen at a musical level on her record *Raza pura* (1971) in which the singer interprets songs with a radical political edge, and at a visual level, in the singer's choice to transform her hair to an Afro style and to dress in a masculine manner. These gestures forced her out of local television for a number of years, although it gave her a degree of international fame: Lucecita won the Festival OTI in México in 1969, singing "Génesis" dressed in a blue gabardine suit and donning an Afro.

Rivero points out that discussions of race also touch on issues of gender and sexuality and analyzes Lucecita's polemic Afro in that intersection. Ironically, local programming closely followed musical shows in which African-American "soul" styles were the fashion, and Rivero mentions the Boricua version of *Soul Train* with Carol Myles and Melín Falú, the latter with a U.S.-style Afro. The second part of this chapter concentrates on the victory of Wilnelia Merced in the "Miss Mundo" contest and the reaction of the press. Rivero argues that Merced's victory revealed the ambiguity of racial categories in Puerto Rico. If for some journalists Wilnelia was *trigueña* (brown-skinned), for others her skin color was due to the "strength of the tropical sun" rather than her racial origin.

Chapters 3 and 4, "The CubaRican Space Revisited" and "*Mi familia: A Black Puerto Rican Televisual Family*," concentrate on comedies of the 1980s and 1990s. Rivero explores the importance of the presence of Cuban screenwriters such as Manuel Montero "Membrillo" and Felipe San Pedro for the production of comedies on local television. The world of Latin American soap operas owes a large debt to scripts for Cuban radio soap operas such as *El derecho de nacer* (The right to be born) written by Delia Fiallo, and Puerto Rican comedies also reflect the influence of Cuban scripts and comedies that arrived on the island before 1959. After the Revolution of 1959 and with the emigration of Cubans dedicated to media-related work, producers, directors, and scriptwriters went on to form part of the mass media of Puerto Rico.

If, as José Cobas and Jorge Duany (1997) point out, an anti-Cuban discourse against the new emigrants began in the 1960s ("Cubans are right-wing," "they always talk about Cuba," "they think they are better than Puerto Ricans," etc.), scriptwriters such as Manuel Montero "Membrillo" represented these issues in television comedies, interrogating, deconstructing, and redoing many of these stereotypes. The comedy *Los suegros* (The in-laws) is a clear example of these "ethnic" and "international" borders in Puerto Rican television. Rivero analyzes the scripts of several episodes to trace the interaction between the Puerto Rican and Cuban families, and at the same time, to

show how they reacted to Kathy, the character from the United States. The quality of the scripts created a conflict between Montero and various sectors of the Cuban community in Puerto Rico who considered that he was not “anti-Fidel” and did not have a “clear” political commitment to Cuba. One of the contributions of this chapter is the elaboration of this “Cuba-Rican” border in social, political, and cultural arenas. It also makes clear that the Cuban community in Puerto Rico since the 1960s has been as heterogeneous in its political visions as it is today in any part of the world.

Chapter 4 deals with the popular series *Mi familia*, starring Otilio Warrington (Bizcocho) and the late Judith Pizarro, highlighting the *puertorriqueñidad* represented by the characters that created a “de-racialized” image – one of the show’s initial proposals. Rivero analyzes which of these instances are positive and negative vis-à-vis that “de-racialized” image, while underlining its importance and popularity on Puerto Rican television. He points out that the comedy was a workshop for many black Puerto Rican actors, and contrary to other African-American series, it wasn’t necessarily focused on upper- or middle-class black families. After the chain Univisión purchased Channel 11 and turned it into Univisión-Puerto Rico in 2001, many local programs disappeared. *Mi familia* was canceled in 2003.

The book’s “Coda” discusses the social, cultural, and political implications of the control that conglomerates now hold over programming in Puerto Rico and Latin America more generally. If Puerto Rican television has not been a mere “copy” of programs from the United States or Latin America but rather a creative and dialogical expression of local contexts and spaces, what are the repercussions of programming that does not speak about local or national debates and racial, ethnic, and sociopolitical borders? Due to pressure from the large U.S. television chains, numerous Puerto Rican actors now live in Mexico, Miami, or Los Angeles to participate in this market. Making the jump from the local to the U.S. “pan-Latino” representations is equivalent to the creation of new languages of interpretation that, contrary to spaces such as the *Cubanorriqueño* (of a pan-Caribbean nature), make reference to postnational and globalized contexts. Are positive results possible or is local Puerto Rican television a colonial victim of the “equalizing” and “commodifying” currents of globalization? Rivero does not answer all of these questions, although she does emphasize that the products, actors, and creations of local television need to be defended and that there is a sense of urgency for academics on the island and in the United States to make these debates visible.

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*Slave Ship Sailors and Their Captive Cargoes, 1730-1807*. EMMA CHRISTOPHER. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. xviii + 241 pp. (Paper US\$ 21.99)

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*Slave Ship Sailors and Their Captive Cargoes, 1730-1807* is Emma Christopher's ambitious attempt to fill a significant gap in the historical literature on the eighteenth-century transatlantic slave trade. While historians have rightfully focused on either the statistical significance of the trade or African slaves' suffering within it, no study has thoroughly examined the role of the thousands of sailing men (and some women) who made the transatlantic slave trade possible. Christopher makes careful use of sailors' journals, Admiralty Court records, newspaper reports, and other printed material to build on the scholarship of W. Jeffrey Bolster, Marcus Rediker, and others (see, for example, Bolster 1997, Rediker 1987, and Linebaugh & Rediker 2000). In doing so, she tells a compelling story about sailors who demanded their own liberty while they kept others in chains.

The book is divided into two sections of three chapters each. Christopher first traces why slave ship sailors took up the task, acknowledging that it entailed poor pay, hazardous working conditions, and little chance of economic improvement (even as the well-connected slaving captains could make fortunes off the trade). These sailors were often "crimped" into service, through methods that could involve trickery, bribery, and even outright force. The second chapter examines the multiracial makeup of slave ship voyages. Though there might have been more on the women or Asian *lascars* involved in the slave trade, this chapter effectively contradicts the assumption that only white sailors carried black slaves. The section ends with a gruesomely disturbing chapter on the brutality and violence that characterized a slaving voyage. Herein lies the central paradox of sailors' experiences: while they were often targets of the captain's cat-o-nine-tails, slave ship sailors could just as easily turn that vicious whip onto their captive cargo.

Section 2 begins by following slave ship sailors' prolonged visitations to West Africa, either as convicts in British prisons, runaways seeking refuge, or womanizers looking for a good time. In fact, Christopher is at her best when discussing the sexual interactions between slavers and African women. Invoking Orlando Patterson's idea that slavery is best understood as a pro-

cess, she also suggests that slave ship sailors were the crucial mechanism whereby African *captives* were commoditized during the Middle Passage into African *slaves* (through the use of violence, subjugation, and then cleaning). The book ends with a detailed examination of the conditions that these sailors faced once in the West Indies. While they were necessary for the slave trade, ships that took less risky cargo from the Caribbean had no need for slave ship sailors, making the skills they learned during the Middle Passage virtually obsolete once slaves were sold on land. Stuck on the islands, they often maintained close friendships with slaves and free Blacks, making the local elite increasingly uneasy about alliances that cut through both race and class.

As fascinating as this text is, *Slave Ship Sailors* also leaves many questions unanswered. First, Christopher claims that the unique situation of slave ship sailors put them at the forefront of the fight for freedom in the eighteenth-century Atlantic. Their close proximity to African slaves obviously gave them a point of comparison from which to draw rhetorical energy. Sailors thus used their unique position of being close to slavery, but not actually in it, to resist unfair wages and nasty working conditions. This argument is not as clearly developed as it might have been, as Christopher could have used more examples to examine how sailors' individual fights for freedom had wider implications throughout the Atlantic world. Another problem is the issue of chronology. The title claims that the period from 1730 to 1807 will be covered, but the book never explains why these dates were chosen. Readers are left to assume that Christopher chooses 1730 because that was when British slave trading intensified. The official conclusion of British involvement in that trade, 1807, is an obvious ending point. Between these two dates, however, there is no sense of historical development or change. Did slave ship sailors' lives get better or worse over time? How was the nature of slave ship sailing transformed as a result of Atlantic revolutions? Perhaps most importantly, how did the end of the slave trade affect these poor seamen's lives? Did this momentous event represent for them a golden opportunity or a financial disaster? While Christopher does an admirable job of tracing sailors' journeys throughout the space of the Atlantic world, she seems less concerned with charting their historical changes through time.

This book nevertheless makes an important contribution by investigating an aspect of the slave trade that historians have too often neglected. Though it will probably not catalyze a paradigm shift in our understanding of slavery, maritime culture, or the Atlantic world (in fact, when Christopher cites historians, she often does so to support her own interpretation rather than to disagree with them), this was not the intention of the work in the first place. Instead, the text fills an important gap, examining the sailors who served as cogs in the massive wheel of the transatlantic slave trade. As Christopher reminds us, to ignore these Sons of Neptune is to misunderstand the central

role that slaving seamen played in the construction of racial slavery, transatlantic commerce, and ideologies of freedom.

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*Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750-1820*. DOUGLAS J. HAMILTON. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005. xv + 249 pp. (Cloth £55.00)

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This is by any standards an excellent first book. Like that genre it carries some of the marks of the Ph.D. dissertation from which it derives, but Douglas Hamilton brings a coherent argument to the forefront and usefully points to sources and questions that warrant further research. Like previous authors who have identified Scottish involvement with the West Indies as an important subject of study, Hamilton estimates the number of Scots who might have migrated to the West Indies over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but he parts company with his predecessors (notably Alan Karras, Trevor Burnard, and Bernard Bailyn) both in suggesting a higher total than any of them allow for (almost 21,000 in place of the previous highest estimate of 17,000), and in arguing that it was the quality and capability of the Scots, rather than their number, which rendered their presence in the Caribbean important, especially during the eighteenth century.

Hamilton shows that throughout these two centuries there were always some people in Scotland, driven more by want and social dislocation than by the spirit of adventure, who saw the possibility of making good in the Americas. However he finds that Scots could take but scant advantage of the better opportunities that this region presented until they were enabled by the Act of Union of 1707 between England and Scotland to engage as equals with their English counterparts in trade and colonization in the Atlantic. Thus, he concludes that after the events of 1707, Scots who would make their careers or fortunes overseas looked increasingly westward rather than, as previously, to the Baltic regions of continental Europe, and to the province of Ulster in Ireland. As they sought after opportunity in the Caribbean, Scots found that little was available on islands that had long been in British possession, and they therefore concentrated on islands that were only then being developed by the British (notably Jamaica), or those that came into British possession at the conclusion of the various treaties that ended the sequence of wars fought during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Europe and on the Atlantic. Thus, again, as Hamilton portrays it, politics determined where in the Caribbean Scots would make their most enduring impression, while domestic political configurations determined which Scots gained access to the patronage networks in Britain that determined who might purchase estates or procure appointment to civil and military positions in the British islands of the Caribbean.

Those of most interest to Hamilton are those who became members of the emerging colonial elites on the islands of Jamaica, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent, and Tobago. He has much to say also of the Scots whose educational attainments at home qualified them to hold positions as bookkeepers, financial managers, lawyers, doctors, merchants, clerks, and ship captains in the businesses associated with the various Caribbean islands on which Scots became a significant, or even a dominant element, and from which they established transcolonial networks extending from Demerara to Berbice to Florida. Hamilton gives special attention to the "clannishness" of the Scots, whether of Highland or Lowland origin, but more compelling is what he has to say of the progress made by Scottish merchant houses in advancing themselves in English port towns, notably Bristol and London. Most interesting is his account of the great Scottish trading house of Houstoun & Co., whose rise he attributes to its application in the Caribbean of the store system associated with the tobacco trade in the Chesapeake, and whose fall he attributes to its practice of investing its profits in British land that could not be easily liquidated to deal with the financial crises that arose at moments of uncertainty.

This brief summary will convey some impression of the original explorations and findings in *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World*, while the bibliography, and especially the detailed list of manuscript sources that shed light on the Scots in the Caribbean, means that this book will be the essential starting point for future scholars working on any aspect of British

trade and settlement in the Caribbean. My only regret is that Hamilton has failed to use his sources more fully to reconstruct the quotidian experiences of a few exemplars of the Scottish community in the Caribbean, which also would have enabled him to give more attention to Scottish, as opposed to English, responses to the inhumane work regimes with which traders and planters in the Caribbean were necessarily associated.

*The British Atlantic Trading Community, 1760-1810: Men, Women, and the Distribution of Goods.* SHERRYLLYNNE HAGGERTY. Leiden (the Netherlands): Brill Academic Publishers, 2006. xiv + 287 pp. (Cloth US\$ 120.00)

*A Deus ex Machina Revisited: Atlantic Colonial Trade and European Economic Development.* P.C. EMMER, O. PÉTRE-GRENOUILLEAU & J.V. ROITMAN (eds.). Leiden (the Netherlands): Brill Academic Publishers, 2006. xxx + 358 pp. (Cloth US\$ 134.00)

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After taking the field of Early Modern history by storm in the 1980s and 1990s, the notion of Atlantic history seems to be losing its luster. The two books under review illustrate different aspects of Atlantic history's difficulties. One of the attractions of the idea that the Atlantic World should be studied as a unit is the notion that Atlantic trade, especially trade with colonies in the Americas, played an essential role in Europe's economic development, especially in its industrialization. The essays in *A Deus ex Machina*, first presented at a conference at the University of Lorient in France in September 2001, interrogate the connection between colonial trade and European development and conclude that the idea has little merit. While this is a longstanding subject among Early Modernists and the conclusion is hardly new, the volume does make some unique contributions to a central debate in the field of Atlantic history. Usually, this debate has focused on Britain in the years between 1500 and 1800. *A Deus ex Machina* considers the impact of colonial trade on Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden as well as Britain and extends the analysis into the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries, thus crossing the divide between the “old” and “new” colonialism. Despite its broad temporal and geographic scope, the contributors reach several common conclusions. First, they point to the fact that – with the possible exception of Britain – “trade to and from the non-Western world was marginal and served as a *chasse garde* for uncompetitive firms” (p. xxviii).

Second, they note that “all authors agree that the spin-off effects of non-European trade were limited in economic as well as in geographic scope” (p. xxviii). This implies that the question is best explored at a local rather than a national level. Third, “most contributors confirm the fact that the British model of expansion and colonial trade seems to have been the exception and not the rule” (p. xxix). On the whole the essays are persuasive. While it is unlikely that this book will end the debate, certainly those who wish to support the notion that colonial trade played a major role in the development of Europe will have to contend with the evidence and arguments it presents. While I learned a lot from these essays, I do have a complaint. The volume lacks a full scholarly apparatus. Several of the essays are only lightly footnoted, a major handicap in a volume that is often historiographical in its focus. Further, there are no maps and no bibliography. Certainly, given the prices Brill charges, readers have a right to expect a more impressive scholarly apparatus.

If *A Deus ex Machina* is a direct frontal assault on the notion of Atlantic history, Sherryllynne Haggerty’s study is an oblique flanking movement. The major competitor to the idea of treating the Atlantic littoral as a whole is the much older tradition of slicing it up into several discrete parts defined by the empires of the various European nations that colonized the Americas. Thus there is a British Atlantic, French Atlantic, Iberian Atlantic, and so on. As Haggerty’s fine study demonstrates this older tradition still has much to recommend it.

Haggerty uses case studies of Philadelphia and Liverpool to study the British Atlantic trading community over the years 1760 to 1810. Usually, studies of those involved in trade have focused on elite male merchants. Haggerty breaks with the dominant historiographical tradition by defining trader more broadly to include everyone involved in the distribution of goods – retailers, auctioneers, peddlers, higglers, and hucksters – and this allows her to assess the role of lesser traders, including women in the distribution of goods around the Atlantic. Although Haggerty’s argument that Britain’s “Empire of Goods” could not have functioned without the contributions of these “lesser folk” is persuasive, I am not fully convinced that all these traders constituted a “community.” Haggerty argues that they shared a common business culture of risk, enterprise, trust, and reputation, and that they constituted a “community of interests” (p. 966) because of similar concerns with politics and government. While she tells us a lot about who these traders were and how they functioned within the distribution network, she fails to

show them coming together to pursue a common political goal and thus is not fully persuasive that the traders constituted a community.

Despite her failure to show that traders in either city actually functioned as a community, Haggerty has written an important book that deserves the close attention of all students of Early Modern trade. By defining trader broadly, she is able to show in great detail how goods were distributed in the British Atlantic world of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The comparison of Philadelphia and Liverpool is effective and illuminating. The two cities shared enough to merit comparison: both aspired to be the second city of the Empire, both were deeply involved in Atlantic trade and were home to substantial Quaker populations, both are well documented, and the volume of trade between them was high. While the two cities were similar in many respects, there were enough differences to make comparison revealing. Haggerty's standards of scholarship are high. She makes good use of the available sources, city directories, newspapers, court records, and the private records of traders. Her care in using city directories is especially impressive and should be consulted by anyone contemplating using such sources. While this book is primarily a contribution to the history of trade and commerce, it is also an important contribution to women's history, for Haggerty shows how, despite the substantial legal and cultural obstacles they faced, women still played a central role in the business of distributing goods throughout the British Atlantic.

Haggerty does not directly take on the issue of the impact of colonial trade on European development, but some of her results do speak to the issue. First, she seems to agree with the contributors to *A Deus ex Machina* that the profits of colonial trade did little to finance industrialization. With the exception of sugar refining and shipbuilding, few of the traders Haggerty studied invested in manufacturing activities. On the other hand, the distribution and credit networks she describes, initially created to serve the needs of Atlantic and colonial trade, could easily be turned to serve the needs of England's new industrialists. Indeed, it is here, on the impact of colonial trade on distribution and credit networks and associated institutions rather than on the sources of capital for industrialization that the debate over the impact of the Americas on European economic development is likely to focus in the future. Finally, the networks Haggerty describes seem to have been entirely contained within the British Empire, suggesting that while there clearly was a British Atlantic, the larger, more inclusive Atlantic World that has so captured the attention of historians in recent decades is largely the product of the imagination of a few historians.

*Caribbean Slave Revolts and the British Abolitionist Movement.* GELIEN MATTHEWS. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006. xiv + 197 pp. (Cloth US\$ 42.95)

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Within the last few decades a number of scholars have focused attention on slave agency in the abolition of British slavery in the Caribbean. A few of them, such as Hilary Beckles and Richard Hart, have expressed the firm conviction that it was the enslaved people who were largely instrumental in the abolition of the system. While they do not argue that the enslaved played as comprehensive a role in abolition as their counterparts in St. Domingue, they assert that they challenged the slave system in a more deliberate way in the last few decades before abolition. The polemical title of Hart's work, *Slaves Who Abolished Slavery* (1985), speaks clearly to this viewpoint. Earlier, Eric Williams, in dealing with the issue of slave agency, had asserted that it was a case of "emancipation from above, or emancipation from below. But EMANCIPATION" (Williams 1994:208).

Traditionally, interpretations of abolition have placed considerable, and in some instances almost exclusive, emphasis on the role of the British abolitionists in effecting the demise of slavery. While slave uprisings in the Caribbean were noted, they were often viewed as irritants or factors that tended to mitigate the slavery system and to place the abolitionists in a difficult position to maintain the view that these "bloodthirsty savages" were ready for emancipation. In other words, they tended to retard the progress of emancipation, the argument went, by indicating clearly that the enslaved were not sufficiently civilized to understand the meaning of freedom and to make positive use of it.

Gelien Matthews's book confronts these two, seemingly opposing, views of abolition and in a sense tries to reconcile them. She makes it clear that her intention is not to prove the precedence of one over the other, but rather to show that they interacted closely with each other in bringing about abolition. She declares that her book "provides the missing volume in the history of British abolitionism by examining the activist response to and utilization of the rebellion of nineteenth-century slaves in the English Caribbean" (p. 10), and she points out that her theory presents two foci. "First, it sets the slaves' agency against the abolitionists' in its analysis of the struggle against slavery. Second, the theory emphasizes that the major historical significance of

slave rebellions was the achievement of emancipation” (p. 10). At the same time, she argues that the theory of “emancipation from below” is seriously flawed because it “ignores that slavery was practically ended by British parliamentary legislation” and “erroneously elevates slave rebellion above other factors in the achievement of emancipation” (p. 11). Certainly, Matthews has not reflected the contention of Williams here, for, as noted above, he argued that the British parliamentary decision to end slavery was based largely on economic circumstances in Britain that had made slavery in the Caribbean colonies an anachronism, and he praised the humanitarians for the propaganda campaign that they conducted (1994:136, 169, 178).

The strength of Matthews’s study does not lie in any attempt to determine whether emancipation was effected from above or below, but rather to show in much more elaborate and careful detail the interrelationship between slave rebellions and antislavery propaganda. She assembles more than enough evidence to build a cogent argument for the view that the leaders of the antislavery movement moved cautiously, but in the end boldly, to the conclusion that slave rebellions were a logical reaction to the brutalities of slavery, and that such rebellions were used to promote the cause of abolition in Parliament. She opines that whereas before, members of the antislavery group were largely on the defensive when the pro-slavery group (represented largely by the West India interest in Britain) accused them of directly or indirectly fomenting rebellion in the colonies through their propaganda (p. 3), they now openly attacked the pro-slavers by arguing that it was the latter who were responsible for the rebellions (pp. 92, 103, 106, 121, et passim). She also argues that by the early 1830s it was these rebellions that were putting the pro-slavers on the defensive, while providing ammunition for the antislavery arsenal (pp. 55, 96). Using the Jamaica rebellion of 1831-1832 as one of several examples, she declares that “the crucial lesson of their failure helped stir the abolitionists into propaganda action” (p. 111). She goes on to point out that the London Anti-Slavery Society decided to hold public meetings in several parts of the United Kingdom to highlight the plight of the enslaved in Jamaica that led to the revolt and its brutal suppression.

Matthews’s book is well researched. Her primary sources include various published debates and other documents of the British Parliament; numerous pamphlets and other publications produced by the Anti-Slavery Society and a number of leading abolitionists’ unpublished documents in the British National Archives, the various missionary societies, the West India Committee, and so on; and the large body of polemical literature found in various magazines, newspapers, and periodicals in Britain. The debate on British abolitionism will continue long after the publication of her study, but her work should find an important place in the vast body of literature on the subject. My only regret about this work is that it does not include an index. I can only presume that this was due to an oversight (a major one) on the part of the publishers.

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*Flight to Freedom: African Runaways and Maroons in the Americas*. ALVIN O. THOMPSON. Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2006. xi + 381 pp. (Paper US\$ 40.00)

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This synthetic work wavers between modesty (“Because of space constraints ... I have not dealt, except in passing, with the social and cultural dynamics of Maroon life” [p. 8]) and expansive claims (“No study to date has attempted to provide the pan-American scope that is critical in understanding the role of marronage in the struggle of the hemisphere’s enslaved populations for freedom and dignity” [rear cover]). The book’s goals are laudable but the author’s reach tends to exceed his grasp. In the end, it is just one more addition to a growing bookshelf on its chosen subject.

Placing the basis of marronage in a kind of naturalized ideology of freedom, Alvin Thompson draws on numerous, largely historical, secondary sources to skim through such themes as the establishment of Maroon communities, military expeditions against them, the uses of judicial terror in slavocracies, the physical organization of Maroon communities, Maroon government, Maroon economy, and finally negotiations and treaties, and Maroons and revolutionary struggle. In the process, he touches on several topics that have drawn increasing attention during the last few years – maritime marronage, urban marronage, and relations between Maroons and Indians.

The text shies away from serious comparison and takes the form of strings of cherry-picked facts, giving it a faintly old-fashioned air. This thematic organization works better for some topics, such as punishments (for which the cumulative horror of multiple cases is palpable), than for others, such as

government, which demand greater depth. Its dependence on older historical syntheses (those of Yvan Debbasch, Gabriel Debien, and José L. Franco) rather than works by anthropologists who have lived with Maroons considerably lessens its overall persuasiveness. For example, to write about Maroon treaty-making without drawing on (or even citing) Kenneth Bilby's incisive comparative analysis (1997) or to deal with the aftermath of treaties and the return of runaways without reference to *Alabi's World* (Price 1990) undercuts its analysis and conclusions. And to discuss the formation of the two largest Maroon societies in the Americas, the Ndyukas and Saramakas, without reference to the two most important books on Ndyuka history (Thoden van Velzen & Van Wetering 1998 and 2004) and without any mention at all of any of the half-dozen relevant books by the Prices on Saramaka history published since 1983 (see, for the full list, <http://www.richandsally.net>) seems at best puzzling.

Thompson's judgments sometimes run counter to current orthodoxies. He deserves praise for arguing against the thesis, promoted by John Thornton and others, that Maroon communities based their organization on African ethnic identities. But much of the available evidence for his argument is in sources he does not cite.

Since *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Price 1973) first laid out the contours of the field, a significant number of general books have appeared on runaways, maroons, and slave revolts – by scholars as diverse as Eugene Genovese, Michael Craton, Gad Heuman, Rafael Duarte Jiménez, and Flávio dos Santos Gomes. Thompson's new synthetic attempt adds little to that growing shelf. Indeed, the in-depth studies that continue to appear on the history of *particular* Maroon societies (such as Bilby 2005, Price 2008, or Thoden van Velzen & Van Wetering 2004, to mention just a few) often seem to go farther toward answering the kinds of questions that Thompson poses – what was the role of African ethnicity? how did gender roles develop? what was Maroon military organization like? what was the role of ideology in the formation of these societies? and so forth – than this historically and ethnographically uncontextualized summary.

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*Mambisas: Rebel Women in Nineteenth-Century Cuba*. TERESA PRADOS-TORREIRA. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005. xii + 185 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95)

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With *Mambisas: Rebel Women in Nineteenth-Century Cuba*, Teresa Prados-Torreira has provided a much needed exploration of the role of women in Cuba's struggle for independence from Spain. In the last ten or so years, there has been a resurgence of work on Cuban nationalism and anticolonial insurgency, much of it focused on the links between slavery, race, and nationalism. But none of this work has taken as its central concern the participation of women in anticolonial politics. On that score alone, *Mambisas* represents an important contribution to our understanding of the history of Cuban independence and the history of Cuban women. But what is further noteworthy about the book is the fresh and dynamic way Prados-Torreira goes about recovering that history.

She begins with three background chapters devoted to the place of women in Cuban society before the start of the first war of independence in 1868. The heart of the book, however, is in the following chapters, which treat in depth the period of insurgency against Spain, beginning with the Ten Years War (1868-1878), the interwar period (1880-1895), and the final War of Independence (1895-1898). Prados-Torreira lays out the main problems at stake in each of the conflicts and argues that women's participation was

central throughout. Using brief, well-crafted, and engaging biographical portraits to carry her narrative forward, she paints a dynamic portrait of women active in both the military and political wings of the nationalist movement. Thus, though the term *mambí* was usually used to denote armed (or unarmed) insurgents camped in the woods and doing physical battle against the Spanish army, Prados-Torreira's *mambisas* are that and more. For both wars, she finds ample evidence of women taking active roles in armed insurgency: as fighters, as messengers, as nurses traveling with the troops, and in rare cases as officers. But she also pays significant attention to women who participated in different ways, as members of organized pro-independence groups in exile, as journalists and essayists, and, in general, as civilian activists who raised money, advocated, and participated centrally in debating and imagining the nation. These were women who met semisecretly with Ulysses S. Grant to request protection for Cuban medical students recently arrested by the colonial government; who outlined petitions to the United States to grant belligerency status to the Cuban rebels; and who served as delegates to receive funds being sent from revolutionary Cubans in exile.

Though much of the women's activism and energy was devoted to the cause of independence, there were some instances in which they sought an expansion of their rights not only as Cubans but also specifically as women. Early in the first war at the meeting of the First Constitutional Assembly, Ana Betancourt took the floor to praise the revolution's willingness to "destroy the enslavement of the cradle ... [and] the slavery of color" and to call on it to attack the unfreedom of women as well (p. 84). In the final war, women such as Edelmira Guerra and Aurelia Castillo wrote specifically about the expansion of women's rights in independent Cuba, the former (unsuccessfully) petitioning the rebel government to include women's suffrage in the rebel and then the national constitution. For Prados-Torreira, these women represent the "double aspirations for Cuba's freedom and women's citizenship" (p. 82). Still, she argues, for most of the women studied in the book, it was the former that appeared to take precedence. In this way, her study of Cuban women is broader in scope than Lynn Stoner's important work on twentieth-century Cuban women (1991), which limited its focus largely to women and politics explicitly feminist.

Prados-Torreira has done a commendable job with a topic inherently challenging because of the scarcity of sources. Information on women involved in the military campaigns is diffuse in the records and, when present, it is often enticing but frustratingly thin. Prados-Torreira acknowledges and discusses these obstacles and then goes about constructing a lively narrative that is still able to convey a world of politics and war populated, if unevenly, of women of different class and racial groupings. Less satisfying at times is her discussion of the things that moved these women to become involved. Though the answer most often is nationalism, that nationalism too often remains a vague and naturalized entity. Laying aside the certainty that that

was always the motivating factor, or going further in questioning particular meanings of nationalism at particular moments might have left more room for richer interpretations of women's patriotic poetry, of vibrant letters written from wives to husbands, and of women's public and private defenses of their incursion into the male world of war and politics. Still, Prados-Torreira has written an important and original contribution to the study of Cuban women and Cuban nationalism. In this admirable book, we see a facet of the independence movement that not only has long been overlooked, but one that was a central feature of its operation.

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*Music and Revolution: Cultural Change in Socialist Cuba*. ROBIN D. MOORE. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006. xvi + 350 pp. (Paper US\$ 24.95)

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Cuban music enjoys a long history of international dissemination and recognition. After 1959, debates surrounding the island's cultural production have been characterized by what Cuban critic Rafael Rojas (2006) describes as a symbolic war over memory and representations. Looking at the Cuban music scene before and after the Revolution from schematic "revolutionary" or "counterrevolutionary" points of view has been detrimental to gaining an understanding of the complex relationships between music and politics in contemporary Cuban history. Robin D. Moore's *Music and Revolution* is a thoroughly documented book that undertakes the challenging project of passing balance over Cuban music production in the last five decades, in order to "broaden the dialogue about the lessons to be learned from the revolutionary experience" (p. xiv).

The book addresses the trajectories of major popular genres, placing a special emphasis on the impact of cultural policies upon music production, and the ways in which musicians have responded to changing political and social circumstances. It is broad in scope and contains rich and detailed information on the island's musical milieu – clearly, the result of years of extensive research. Aside from the impressive documentation effort, the main contribution of *Music and Revolution*, in my view, is its focus on how transformations in musical styles and in music-making take place. Moore succeeds in presenting Cuban music within the context of changes in the island's political, economic, and social conditions since the 1950s, and yet not merely as a reflection of those transformations. Thanks to a great amount of testimonies, as well as a careful examination of music production, he manages to trace the ways in which musicians participate in the shaping of new styles and practices. Music is addressed here as a site for negotiating individual and collective concerns about the role of culture within a socialist society.

The book's introduction states its purpose – examining the relationship between socialist thought and cultural policies in socialist states, using Cuba as a case study (p. 2). The consideration of how Marx's ideas, Soviet social realism developed under Stalin's rule, or the Chinese Cultural Revolution influenced Cuban cultural policies is indeed an interesting subject, partially addressed in *Music and Revolution*. However, Cuban political and cultural history presents too many particularities, within the context of former Socialist states, to serve as a locus for answering such a far-reaching initial question. Throughout the book, Moore offers interesting references on cultural policies in the Soviet Union and other socialist contexts, but the book is clearly focused on Cuba and its specificities as a Caribbean and Latin American socialist society.

Even though *Music and Revolution* focuses on the decades following 1959, it provides substantial background information on Cuba's music environment before the Revolution. Actually, Moore devotes a whole chapter to a depiction of the musical scene of the 1950s. In subsequent chapters, while examining the trajectories of specific genres, he offers valuable references to the pre-Revolutionary period. This approach is worth noting, since it enables an analysis of cultural transformations in socialist Cuba that does not overemphasize a radical rupture. While addressing the impact of significant changes in the political and economic spheres on music-making, Moore also develops interesting explanations for musical transformations that take into account certain persistent practices and traits of Cuban cultural dynamics. For instance, a historical overview of dance music, allows him to suggest that the dance music genres, such as modern timba, continue to offer a place for the Afro-Cuban youth to affirm blackness in a society where racial prejudice defies political changes. It should be mentioned that Moore is also the author of an excellent book on Afro-Cuban culture in the prerevolutionary period (Moore 1997).

The impact of sudden transformations – due to new political situations – in music-making and the development of cultural policies under the socialist regime are the subjects of Chapters 2 and 3. Among the issues discussed here are: the early compositions praising the revolutionary triumph; the crisis of cabarets as a result of the sudden decrease in tourism and the closing of casinos; the nationalization of theaters and cultural spaces; the intellectual and literary effervescence during the first years following the Revolution; the inauguration of a massive literacy campaign; the promotion of an amateur's artistic movement; the establishment of significant cultural institutions such as Casa de las Américas and the ICAIC (Instituto Cubano de Artes e Industrias Cinematográficas); the initial abolition of copyright and its consequences to the music industry; the development of specialized music education; the centralization of music businesses under the state's control; and questions concerning artistic freedom.

Chapters 4 through 7, which develop analyses of dance music, *nueva trova*, Afro-Cuban folklore, and sacred music, constitute the core of the book. All of these case studies stand as great contributions to the history of music-making in socialist Cuba. The decision to encompass such a broad historical period and such a wide range of genres, however, limits the possibilities for deeper analyses. Even though Moore provides certain musical examples to sustain his views, none of the musicians or styles addressed in the book is the subject of a profound discussion.

*Music and Revolution* is a fundamental contribution to the understanding of cultural dynamics in contemporary Cuba. It is well written and supported by serious research. Readers who are not familiar with the Cuban Revolution will find a fascinating overview of political and social processes, through the lens of musical production. At the same time, connoisseurs of the Cuban process will discover new perspectives and insights into the multifaceted relationships of culture and politics in the island.

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*Cuba's Agricultural Sector*. JOSÉ ÁLVAREZ. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004. xxvi + 307 pp. (Cloth US\$ 75.00)

*Reinventing the Cuban Sugar Agroindustry*. JORGE PÉREZ-LÓPEZ & JOSÉ ÁLVAREZ (eds.). Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2005. xxv + 323 pp. (Paper US\$ 27.00)

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With all the recent talk of transition in Cuba, and the desperate need to address the longstanding crisis in living conditions, surprisingly little attention seems to be given these days, in the popular press, to the problems of Cuban agriculture. From a historical standpoint, after all, every period of significant economic prosperity in Cuba was dependent on a thriving agricultural sector. It seems quite unlikely that prosperity could be restored in the near future without it depending on agriculture. The two books under review here bring together the state of current academic knowledge about the performance and future prospects for Cuban agriculture, and thus represent absolutely essential reading.

*Cuba's Agricultural Sector*, by prominent expert in Cuban agricultural economics, José Alvarez, is a comprehensive treatment of the state of Cuban agriculture, tracing its development from before the Revolution of 1959 through the 1990s. It opens with a sobering reflection: "It is impossible to write a book on Cuba's agricultural sector without at least mentioning the waste of resources resulting from projects badly conceived and executed" (p. xii). The core of the analysis in the pages that follow does more than "mention the waste of resources," painstakingly studying the agricultural measures undertaken since 1959, and documenting and analyzing empirically the decline in the efficiency of Cuban agriculture through the 1990s.

Alvarez traces the development of Cuban agriculture from the beginning of the republican period to the end of the 1990s. Part 1 offers an insightful overview, summarizing the most significant events and developments prior to the Revolution, highlighting the transformation after 1959, and then focusing on the antecedents to the new agricultural policies adopted in the 1990s. Part 2 describes and assesses the principal policy changes of the 1990s. This part gives particular attention to the adoption and performance of Basic Units of Cooperative Production (UBPCs) which have been the major vehicle for partial (really marginal) privatization in agriculture, the reauthorization of

small private farmers' markets, and the limited role of foreign investment in agriculture. Part 3 examines problems of food security and environmental degradation. And Part 4 offers some valuable reflections on the future of Cuban agriculture.

One of the laudable aspects of the work is its broad focus on the agricultural sector as a whole, including export crops (sugar and tobacco) and the major food crops. The main proposition involves a comparison of changes in productivity after 1959 in state and nonstate sectors. Alvarez finds that from 1959 to 1993 state production was consistently less productive than nonstate production, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. This is in spite of the fact that nonstate agriculture faced disadvantaged access to factors of production. Furthermore, although the 1994 reforms introducing UBPCs were expected to improve productivity by providing stronger incentives, Alvarez concludes that they generated mixed results at best, and an apparent decline in the productivity of the nonstate sector, as they transferred the problems that were plaguing the state sector to the nonstate sector.

*Reinventing the Cuban Sugar Agroindustry* gathers an all-star cast of experts on Cuban sugar, including the editors, Jorge Pérez-López and José Alvarez, and reflects a remarkably forward outlook on recent developments, international context, and prospects for recovery of the Cuban sugar industry. Given limited space, it is impossible to assess the contribution of each of the outstanding essays in this extraordinary collection. Although collections of this nature usually display significant variability in quality and some significant gaps in coverage, this volume suffers from neither weakness. All the essays are of the highest quality and the coverage exceeds expectations, with some truly imaginative and brilliant contributions. As a whole, it is an invaluable collection of analyses of the utmost relevance to the current problems facing Cuban sugar today.

Part 1 consists of essays on four major dimensions of sugar agroindustrial development in historical perspective. The first, by Joseph Scarpaci and Armando Portela, explores how each of the major historical periods has shaped the natural and cultural landscape. The second, by Jorge Pérez-López, is an analysis of the state of Cuban sugar at the end of the 1990s, relative to the post-1959 decades, showing the veil of inefficiency that was lifted by the ending of Soviet subsidies. The third, by Brian Pollitt, is an examination of the adoption of new technology in Cuban sugar production, which demonstrates, among other things, that the technical changes toward mechanization also produce more import-intensive technology, with obvious implications for the adjustment to the post-1990 crisis. The fourth essay, by G.B. Hagelberg, chronicles Cuba's troubled history of international trade in sugar, leading to the decline of preferential purchases of sugar by the Soviet bloc and sugar-oil swaps in the 1990s. He shows that production targets are now no higher than those of the Great Depression.

Part 2 examines the current international environment, which sets the parameters for Cuban sugar exports in the near future. Sergey Gudoshnikow examines prospective growth in international demand for sugar to 2010. Tim Josling considers the outlook for liberalization of the sugar trade in WTO negotiations. Devry Boughner and Jonathan Coleman explore the legal possibilities for a reopening of the U.S. sugar market to Cuban sugar.

Part 3 examines the most pressing issues surrounding the uncertain but ongoing transition in Cuban sugar agroindustry. José Alvarez and Jorge Pérez-López outline how the restructuring of the Cuban sugar industry has proceeded from 2002 to 2004, an important extension to the analysis Alvarez offers in his book *Cuba's Agricultural Sector*. As an important complement, G.B. Hagelberg and José Alvarez assemble the available evidence on the costs of sugar production. On the assumption that capital requirements for the reconstruction of the Cuban sugar industry will pressure the Cuban government to privatize, Matías Travieso-Díaz examines the problems that will emerge from outstanding legal claims of expropriation of sugar mills and plantations by former owners. Undoubtedly, these matters would become of greater significance if the Cuban government, as part of the transitional plan, were to normalize international relations with major industrial leaders. Travieso-Díaz's essay gives a valuable examination of the issues and possible ways forward.

Part 4 considers possible paths of future improvement and product diversification of the Cuban sugar industry. Guilherme Rossi Machado, Jr. explores the age-old problem of putting more research energy into the development of new cane varieties. José Alvarez and George Snyder examine the possible benefits of the rice-sugar rotation program. Findlay Pate outlines the use of sugarcane by-products for cattle feed, discussing its advantages and limitations. Lindsay Jolly considers the possibilities for developing a market for organic sugar. Pedro de Assis examines the prospects for using sugarcane as a raw material for ethanol and electricity, as a possible way to reopen the seventy mills that have been closed, showing significant advantages that should be taken seriously if the forecasts for an international market for ethanol continue to develop. Sergio Trinidad extends this kind of analysis to discuss the revolutionary idea of a sugarcane biorefinery – a value chain that uses sugarcane to produce an entire range of products, including solid and gaseous fuels, stillage, fiber, sucrochemicals, and ethanol-derived chemicals, clearly in expectation of continuing declines in the demand for sugar exports. All in all it represents a remarkable program for transforming Cuban sugar agriculture into a modern, green, and diversified sugar agroindustry.

These two books are the most important works to appear on the range of proposals for a successful transition in Cuban agriculture. Critics may object to the continued focus on sugar when for decades economists have been recommending a more diversified industrial structure, but the extensive evidence in the pages reviewed here makes clear that sugar remains the sector in

which Cuba would have the greatest latent comparative advantage, if reforms could inject more capital for modernization, and the greatest depth of productive knowledge and skills. Reinvigorating those skills, then attending to their spillover into other sectors, is a more promising strategy than abandoning them in pursuit of a singular focus on tourism and other services. One of the most pronounced messages of these two books is that, to date, post-1959 state policies toward agriculture have ended in failure, but the prospects, if the right steps are taken, could reestablish Cuba as a leader in the global industry – a goal worthy of pursuing.

*Islands, Forests and Gardens in the Caribbean: Conservation and Conflict in Environmental History.* ROBERT S. ANDERSON, RICHARD GROVE & KARIS HIEBERT (eds.). Oxford: Macmillan Caribbean, 2006. xxii + 266 pp. (Cloth US\$ 22.35)

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The literature on environmental history in the Caribbean has been relatively limited compared to such research on other regions. Thus, *Islands, Forests and Gardens in the Caribbean* is a welcome addition. The collection had its origin in a 1991 environmental conference on the island of St. Vincent commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of the creation of the Kings Hill forest reserve on that island. It is regrettable that it took so long to appear.

As in any edited volume based on a conference, the chapters vary in quality, but overall the collection is a valuable resource for Caribbean researchers interested in history and environment. The major focus is on environmental institutions and legislation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although most chapters focus on the British Caribbean, useful comparative material on French colonial environmental initiatives helps broaden the book's appeal. The chapters excel in providing historical details and analysis, but little reference is made to broader debates in the literature on environmental history.

Robert S. Anderson, the conference organizer, provides the context for the other chapters by focusing on two hundred years of environmental institutions and asserts that there is a direct lineage between today's population and those

in the late eighteenth century who established the St. Vincent botanical garden and the Kings Hill forest reserve. Roughly half of the chapters are devoted to St. Vincent (those by Richard A. Howard, Adrian Fraser, Michael Kidston et al., and Hymie Rubenstein), while others highlight cases from Dominica (Lennox Honychurch), Barbados (David Watts), Saint Domingue (James E. McClellan III), and Martinique (Clarissa Kimber). Two chapters are more comparative in orientation – Richard Grove’s work on the origins of forest conservation in the Eastern Caribbean and Madeleine Ly-Tio-Fane’s discussion of plant transfers between the Indo-Pacific and Caribbean regions. Key themes throughout the chapters are the significance of early botanic gardens, attempts to control deforestation and soil loss, the impacts of settlement and plantation agriculture, and the cultural importance of gardens and forests.

The most impressive part of the volume focuses on early botanic gardens in the region and their linkages to emerging empire-wide scientific networks in which plants such as coffee, cocoa, clove, nutmeg, and peppers were redistributed throughout the world and provided the economic foundation for colonial enterprises. Readers obtain a clear and comprehensive understanding of the endeavors of botanic gardens, which involved varying combinations of knowledge-seeking, experimentation, cataloging, intrigue, theft, cooperation, and strategic planning. Madeleine Ly-Tio-Fane’s work is the most wide-ranging, discussing early Italian, Portuguese, and Dutch efforts at plant transfers and subsequent botanic initiatives by the British and French. Her insightful chapter portrays the importance of the search for medicinal plants as an initial inspiration for establishing botanic gardens, the resulting excitement generated in Europe by the introduction of exotic flora and fauna, and the geopolitical and economic significance of plant transfers for competing empires. James E. McClellan’s article on the French colony of St. Domingue is enlightening in its portrayal of the environmental hazards and constraints faced by early settlers and the environmental impacts of plantations. Clarissa Kimber’s chapter focusing on the first botanical garden in the French Antilles – *Le Jardin Colonial des Plantes de Saint-Pierre* on Martinique – is particularly well researched. She notes that the garden contributed to the accumulation of diversity within the gene pools of economic plants and to the island’s biodiversity. Richard H. Howard describes the early years of the St. Vincent botanical garden, which was established in 1765, with a particular focus on the remarkable career and contributions of Alexander Anderson, the second director of the gardens who was instrumental in developing the ordinance to protect the forests on Kings Hill.

The second strength of this volume is the analysis of scientific ideas about the environment and environmental legislation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Two chapters stand out in this regard. David Watts’s impressive discussion of environmental institutions and legislation on Barbados examines efforts by both successive government administrations

and individual planters to cope with environmental degradation. He attributes the lack of legislation directed toward preserving environmental quality on Barbados to political uncertainty during the period and the emphasis at the time on using colonial resources to spur economic growth in the empire. The longest and most substantive of the chapters in the collection is Grove's analysis of the origins of forest conservation in the East Caribbean during the eighteenth century, which carefully details early environmental initiatives on Tobago and St. Vincent and their relationship with intellectual currents within Britain. Grove's chapter reveals a complex set of influences on the development of environmental legislation, ranging from European conceptions about the relationship between forests and climate, initiatives of the London-based Society of Arts, and determined resistance by Caribs on St. Vincent.

This collection is not meant to be a comprehensive review of environmental history in the Caribbean. For example, it does not include any materials on the critical period of the second half of the nineteenth century during which the Colonial Office in London spurred empire-wide efforts at controlling deforestation. Nonetheless, it is an important and worthwhile addition to the limited literature on Caribbean environmental history.

The Kings Hill Enclosure Ordinance of 1791 – the inspiration for this volume – created a forest reserve on St. Vincent with the hope that it would attract clouds and rainfall. Hopefully, this volume will attract more interest in the environmental history of the Caribbean.

*The State and Small-Scale Fisheries in Puerto Rico.* RICARDO PÉREZ. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005. xx + 218 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95)

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In 1972 James C. Faris published his landmark ethnography, *Cat Harbour: A Newfoundland Settlement*, a book that inspired a number of young scholars to enter the field of maritime anthropology. Nevertheless *Cat Harbour* was not a book about fishing, but an extraordinary study of the complex social and historical processes that were transforming coastal communities in Canada.

Similarly, Ricardo Pérez's *The State and Small-Scale Fisheries in Puerto Rico* is not a book about fishing, but an excellent monograph on the plight of coastal communities in colonial and postcolonial contexts. Using an ethnographic and historical approach to study three communities in the municipalities of Peñuelas and Guayanilla in southern Puerto Rico, Pérez introduces readers to a riveting analysis of development and how that process was entrenched in the daily lives of coastal dwellers.

Pérez's meticulous examination of fisheries development provides a "human face" to the complexities of the colonial and postcolonial modernization projects. Through examination of a number of technical reports, unpublished materials, films, historical documents, and interviews with government officials and fishers, Pérez reconstructs the role of the "state" in fisheries development and describes the ways in which such actions were intertwined with agrarian reform and the industrialization strategies of the government of Puerto Rico.

Pérez concludes that fishing was the last item on the list of priorities, given the array of developmental alternatives available to the island throughout the twentieth century, including the legacy of the New Deal (under Franklin D. Roosevelt) in the reconstruction of the local economy and the industrialization program of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. In fact, fisheries development focused on the seemingly superficial aspects of the industry (the aesthetic and health conditions of the landing centers) while investing a dismal amount of funds in the buildup of the infrastructure needed for production growth.

In other words, the government of Puerto Rico retarded fisheries development, in a context dominated by the slow demise of agriculture, increased industrialization and modernization, and an always cheap supply of salted cod from Newfoundland. The "state" maintained the status quo in which the fishers and their communities remained a flexible source of labor for other, more important, sectors of the economy. Pérez's well-documented and elegant analysis of fisheries development is perhaps the most important contribution of his book. Indeed, recent debates on the local fisheries are using Pérez's findings to assess policies and build strategies for the future.

Coastal communities are at the epicenter of economic development, as they are located in landscapes characterized by high capital mobility and devastating transformations of nature imprinted in the "fragments of memory" of coastal peoples. The communities studied by Pérez are located at the margins of the largest petrochemical complex and refinery built on the island, now partially defunct. Sponsored by the government in the late 1950s, the Commonwealth Oil Refining Company (CORCO) became the site for capital investment and infrastructure development for many transnational companies. As a result, the coastal environment changed dramatically and the agricultural landscape disappeared. Such enormous capital investment, construction, and production processes altered the social and labor fabric of

the nearby towns, which attracted and forced many communities into wage labor in this new form of production or to migrate to other labor markets; a familiar process for many Caribbean islands, such as Trinidad and St. Croix. Pérez's ethnography is a powerful documentation of the perceptions and memories of the environmental disaster that CORCO brought upon the landscape and its coastal communities and habitats.

In that historical context, fishers, as "petty commodity producers," were an essential component of the "flexible communities" that restructured household production and labor strategies to adjust to new opportunities, threats, and constraints imposed by industrialization. Fishers engaged in production for the new markets and became operators of "small-scale commercial fisheries," as this type of fisheries required a "small capital commitment to sustain (or further) production" (p. 36). In this theoretical shuffle, Pérez eliminates the use of the terms "artisanal" and "traditional," often appearing interchangeably in the literature. Ironically, he uses the incomplete term of "small-scale fisheries" throughout the book, and even in the title.

Pérez covers plenty of ground in his book, as he criticizes "maritime anthropology" for its lack of a clear theoretical beacon. Instead, he argues, "maritime anthropology" must focus on the labor arrangements and diverse forms and relations of production into which coastal communities are inserted on a local, regional, and global scale. To underscore his point, Pérez presents short life histories of the complex trajectories of fishers-laborers on those scales. Although I should be the last person to critique such a point of view, I would argue that he brushes aside too quickly the value of a maritime anthropology interested in fisheries biology, ecological adaptations, and forms of knowledge. This is a minor concern, as Pérez's review of maritime anthropology is one of the best critiques available.

The book is a fundamental contribution to the anthropology of development, postdevelopment, and coastal communities. Its narrative is a conduit for the many and different voices that experienced this colossal social change and development (including technocrats) – voices gathered and organized from the "fragments of memory," which should have been the title of the book, as was the original title of his dissertation.

#### REFERENCE

FARIS, JAMES C., 1972. *Cat Harbour: A Newfoundland Fishing Settlement*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. [Newfoundland Social and Economic Studies No. 3.]

*Globalization and Race: Transformations in the Cultural Production of Blackness*. KAMARI MAXINE CLARKE & DEBORAH A. THOMAS (eds.). Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2006. 407 pp. (Paper US\$ 23.95)

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This edited volume, the fruit of a session at the 2001 American Anthropological Association meetings organized by Deborah Thomas, Kamari Clarke, and John Jackson, is a theoretically ambitious attempt to reframe globalization studies by placing blackness at the center. Clarke and Thomas seek to “recuperate the power of race as a central category of social analysis without either falling into essentialisms or forestalling the possibility of developing a critical analysis that overarches the specificities of location” (p. 3).

Consisting of an introduction and sixteen chapters that cover Canada, Cape Verde, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, England, Germany, Italy, Jamaica, Nigeria, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States, it is divided into three sections. The contributors address a compelling range of cultural sites, from dance classes, fashion, heritage industry, housing, geopolitics, and migrant labor to music, nationalism, religion, television, tourism, gentrification, and modernity. In the process, they map new theoretical approaches and empirical sites in their analyses of the consumption, production, translation, and negotiation of blackness.

The volume is conceptually bound together by three theoretical strands. First, there is analysis throughout on the meanings and limitations of the concept of diaspora. Several of the authors problematize the concept, formations, and racial logics of “diaspora” and diasporic communities as they have been imagined, institutionalized, and reproduced in the United States, Europe, and the Caribbean. There is also a sustained focus on capitalist markets, consumption, marketing, and the circulation of products and practices that present “authentic” blackness or Africanness. Commercialized versions of “blackness” are embedded in the negotiation of power and the meanings of “Africanness.” A third theoretical strand examines mobility, travel, and the spatial dimensions of racial and cultural production. Space, travel, and the racialization of specific neighborhoods, labor regimes, housing developments, and national narratives are examined in the chapters on Canada, Cape Verde, New York, and U.S./Nigerian relations.

Commentary on a few representative chapters from each section of this rich volume may serve to illustrate the range of empirical data and the theoretical breadth. Part One, "Diasporic Movements, Missions and Modernities," introduces the themes that "will animate the rest of the volume." In two theoretically compelling chapters, Tina Campt and Jacquelyn Nassy Brown problematize and interrogate the "limits and tensions of diasporic solidarity" (p. 108). Campt, a historian, argues that "diaspora does not constitute a historical given or universally applicable analytic model for explaining the cultural and historical trajectories of all black populations" (p. 108). She notes that what distinguishes black Germans from U.S. Blacks is "the lack of shared narratives of home, belonging, and community that sustain so many other black communities on which they draw as 'resources' in numerous ways. As a result, [she goes on] black Germans have never regarded a sense of relation and belonging among themselves or to other black communities as self-evident" (p. 95). Brown's analysis of the relationships between U.S. black soldiers and Blacks in Liverpool argues that gendered ideologies about locality "produced black Liverpool and black America as social spaces to be differently occupied" and that for black women in Liverpool, "black America represented a resource for attaining a form of self-respect that was unavailable locally" (p. 87).

Part Two, "Geographies of Racial Belonging," is organized around the theme of travel and spatial mobility. Kamari Maxine Clarke moves between South Carolina, Nigeria, and the U.S. academy to analyze the meaning, marketing, and consumption of "roots tourism" by U.S. Blacks actively constructing transnational black identities. She concludes that African nobility-redemption and slavery narratives that emerged in the United States in the 1960s are central to "conceptions of racial belonging embedded in a more aggressive form of capital institutionalism conducive to the marketing of black Americanness" (p. 135). Keshia Fikes analyzes migrant labor codes in Cape Verde, exploring how a "legal relationship to free or indentured travel" constituted "race" and racial ambiguity through "spatial" distribution of bodies, leaving residues on contemporary national debates.

In Part Three, "Popular Blackness, Authenticity and New Measures of Legitimacy," Ariana Hernandez-Reguant examines the popularity of timba music in Havana during "late socialism" and after the loss of Soviet support which generated an economic crisis in Cuba. As capitalist markets created new opportunities for disenfranchised Afro-Cubans, timba circulated on radio and television and in dance clubs and contested official national discourses by locating the "black experience at the heart of what it meant to be Cuban in a post-Soviet era caught between the imperatives of socialist morality and market expansion ... it naturalized blackness and along with it difference and inequality" (p. 251). Lena Sawyer analyzes the marketing, meanings, and consumption of African dance classes by white European women in Stockholm, where Swedish women constitute half of the instructors of African dance. Sawyer

argues that African dance classes are “a space where people *performed* ‘Africa’ to debate and negotiate racialized, gendered, and sexualized understandings of belonging and community in Stockholm ... in these particular spaces African dance was commodified and formed through the desires of middle-class white Swedish women and working class black African men” (p. 332). Oneka Labennet analyzes the cultural consumption of black New York girls of West Indian parentage in Brooklyn to understand their employment of food, fashion, music, and television to assert a transnational black identity.

The editors and contributors to this volume deliver what they promise. This is a theoretically breathtaking contribution to the study of globalization, nationalism, racism, late capitalism, late socialism, migration, and cultural production. With insights that will enrich interdisciplinary and international studies as well as African and black studies, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, European studies, and Latin American studies, it should be required readings in courses devoted to global capitalism, migration, race, and cultural studies, and not just to those dealing with Blacks or the African diaspora.

*Haitians in New York City: Transnationalism and Hometown Associations.*  
FRANÇOIS PIERRE-LOUIS, JR. Gainesville: University Press of Florida,  
2006. viii + 158 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

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This book is a tightly focused look at a single unit of organization – hometown associations – among Haitian immigrants in New York City. Through this focus, François Pierre-Louis, Jr. is able to contribute to the literature on ethnic identity formation, transnationalism, immigrant citizenship, and the role of the sending state in transnational processes. Those particularly interested in the Haitian case, or in comparing transnational social organizations, will find this an interesting work. It is most useful in its description of the particular political dynamics of hometown associations and the tensions they mediate within Haitian society in its various locales.

Hometown associations (which are never explicitly defined in this book) are voluntary clubs consisting of immigrants from a particular village (in this

case in Haiti) now living in a host society (in this case New York City). Pierre-Louis describes how they are at once social clubs, fund-raising groups for development projects back in the hometown, political platforms from which to forge coalitions with other groups in New York, and arenas for cultivating prestige and status. Drawing on the literature on transnational migration and ethnicity, he agrees with those who argue that Haitians have adopted a segmented assimilation pattern (in other words, maintaining cultural differences while at the same time seeking to incorporate themselves into the U.S. economic and political system). He sees hometown organizations as an arena within which to practice this strategy while simultaneously intensifying involvement in Haiti. "They have become the linkage institutions that maintain contact with Haiti while helping immigrants integrate in U.S. society" (p. 5).

Pierre-Louis explores the interesting and perhaps not self-evident dynamic whereby a person who becomes active as a political actor in Haiti through a hometown association in New York is likely, in turn, to become active in politics in the United States. For Haitian immigrants, building prestige, connections, and capital in one place translates readily into cultural capital in the other, and often politicians in New York will be expected to connect local issues with those in Haiti. Ironically, Haitians in New York have learned that when it comes to defending what they perceive as Haiti's best interests they can be more effective as U.S. citizens than as mere legal residents (p. 10).

Chapter 1 examines the differences between Haitian and Mexican realities. The Mexican state has been much more proactive in formalizing relationships with hometown associations as "fully fledged partners of the state," which has led to the associations prospering, while the Haitian government has been unable to coordinate any formal support, leaving the Haitian organizations independent and struggling (pp. 18-19). Haitian hometown organizations in turn became spaces for ethnic identity formation in the United States. Pierre-Louis also argues that U.S. Haitians who learn participatory democratic practices work to bring those values and practices to Haiti.

Chapter 2, "The Social Construction of New York's Haitian Community," examines the history of Haitian migration to that city and explores how earlier exile politics differed from more current, integration politics. Chapter 3 looks at hometown associations as a hedge against African-American status and as organizations that do the development work the Haitian government has failed to perform. Chapter 4 looks explicitly at the failure of the Haitian state to pass any legislation to incorporate diaspora Haitians – or hometown associations – into the political process, but for a few measures in 2002 that do not equal other countries' more effective policies. Pierre-Louis argues that hometown associations are more effective than foreign NGOs in addressing the needs of their region – a significant claim that unfortunately goes unsupported.

Chapter 5 focuses on New York City, and it presents data showing that Haitians involved in hometown associations are typically first-generation

immigrants who have maintained ties with Haiti, are U.S. citizens, and are also involved in other organizations such as churches, neighborhood groups, unions, and the PTA. Chapter 6, on race and religion, argues that Haitians disaffiliate with African Americans to some extent, and that “anything that has to do with the country [Haiti] becomes sacred and revered” (p. 102). Chapter 7 looks at the development, since the 1970s, of Haitians as a separate ethnic group – and political voting bloc – in New York, and demonstrates how Haitians have consistently organized separately from African Americans.

Theoretical weakness marks this otherwise valuable work. Pierre-Louis alternates between the terms “segmented assimilation,” “integration,” and “incorporation,” without engaging the theoretical implications of these differently freighted concepts. Likewise, no theory frames his discussion of the Haitian state’s relationship to hometown associations, especially in terms of long-standing systems of patronage (and corruption). Transnationalism theory is also underdeveloped. Pierre-Louis may be overly celebratory of hometown associations, which he says are democracy promoting and class leveling and contribute to the breaking down of historically oppressive social barriers between urban and rural Haitians. The celebratory tone contradicts many problems illustrated in the book, such as the ways the associations concentrate development projects in the hands of ex-patriot benefactors without professional training or state coordination, the duplication of projects by competing groups, the tensions between local and diaspora Haitians, and the sheer potential for corruption and mismanagement of funds raised in New York. Pierre-Louis does a nice job of self-reflexively describing his own social position as a first-generation immigrant to New York himself, as a Queens College political scientist who was also a cabinet member of former Haitian President Aristide, and as a member of a Haitian hometown association. His careful presentation of information on these interesting grass-roots transnational political and social organizations will be of great interest to many.

*Mobilizing India: Women, Music, and Migration between India and Trinidad.*  
 TEJASWINI NIRANJANA. Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2006. 272 pp.  
 (Paper US\$ 21.95)

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*Mobilizing India* is motivated by two central concerns. It represents Tejaswini Niranjana's encounter with Indo-Trinidadians and the ensuing questions about the construction of "Indian" identity that her own subcontinental subjectivity raised during visits to the West Indies. And it represents her desire to join the scholars who have sought to displace Western/metropolitan vantage points as the standard against which questions about modernity, nationalism, and gender in non-Western/nonmetropolitan contexts are measured and debated. In creating theoretical frameworks where comparative discussions among Global South countries can be undertaken, Niranjana's objective is to counter the conventional use of such concepts as gender and modernity and emphasize the different meanings they acquire in different contexts – for example, what it means to call oneself "Indian" in two Southern locations, India and Trinidad. Arguing that she is what she is "*because of who the East Indian woman in Trinidad is*" (p. 20, her italics), Niranjana discusses the ways female indentured laborers were defined, notably in terms of their gender and sexuality, by Indian nationalist agendas which constructed the modern Indian woman as the bourgeois antithesis of her independent, bold diasporic sister in the cane. Niranjana suggests a linkage between this history and the meaning of "Indian" represented in contemporary cultural practices such as calypso, and in Indo-Trinidadian women's subversive agency in chutney soca – the latter representing their "refusal ... to be 'translated'" into definitions of proper gender identities (p. 52). Ultimately, her project involves the search for alternative, non-Western/nonmetropolitan forms of consciousness about bases of solidarity that can emerge from popular culture.

With her "fellow South Asians" in mind (p. 3), Niranjana raises a number of questions having to do with the ways we might "learn to question the epistemological structures through which knowledges about Third World peoples are produced" (p. 14). Making a point that echoes calls by such internationalist thinkers as W.E.B. Du Bois (among others), Niranjana urges speaking "to each other across the South" (p. 13) in order to emphasize shared (colonial and neocolonial) histories and the similar stakes that multiple nationalities

have under particular historical conditions. Toward this end we are asked to consider what kinds of new significance might be given to old assumptions, for example, what happens when “a South Asian reads the West Indian Kamau Brathwaite” (p. 13). Yet this raises the issue of epistemological traditions and the subject positions emerging from them. Is there a possibility that such contrasts unwittingly sustain essentialized identities? Who is that South Asian, who is that West Indian? Also, while conversations between Southerners unmediated by the Global North are imperative, we must take care to approach all Global South locations as themselves hierarchically positioned – economically, geopolitically – and as objects in the Western/metropolitan gaze. The “spectacular international visibility of the ‘Indian’”(p. 6) today partly reflects a hierarchy within the Global South. While Niranjana rightly critiques “classical anthropology” for studying the Other largely to tell the West about itself (p. 9), the goal of Indians in India to learn about their own past (p. 19) from South Asian diasporas requires careful crafting to avoid being similarly motivated or interpretable in the same way.

This is not to suggest that comparative, revisionist efforts are not important or that they are unrealizable, but only that the mutual influence that Southern localities have on each other is a multilayered and complex kind of juxtaposition. For example, Niranjana suggests that it is important for “East Indians and India Indians not ... to disavow chutney-soca as derivative or hybrid,” but to term it “Indian,” since doing so underscores the continuity and discontinuity of this identity, making it simultaneously “Indian” and “Trinidadian” (p. 54). On-the-ground examination, however, makes this simultaneity unlikely to be consistent: in local cultural politics “Indian” and “Trinidadian” are commensurate only according to particular contexts. Moreover, raised again is the question of essential, and “Indian,” identities. What are the cultural boundaries around the subaltern? If chutney soca is multiply resonant and subversive, then it could also be so among grass-roots Afro- and other non-Indo-Trinidadians. Niranjana is clearly aware that the symbolic importance of India is put into play on the ground of Afro-Indo relations. Yet her interest in representations and the deployment of categories, such as “women,” for example, and disinterest in “simply talking about empirical women” (p. 218) requires that we steer our conceptual frameworks between the Scylla of overabstraction and the Charybdis of essentialism. Not only is empirical fieldwork never simple, but talking to (rather than merely about) “empirical women” allows them to contribute to any research project, especially ones that seek to de-center Western/metropolitan hierarchies and create alternative, ostensibly more just spaces for solidarity.

Based on secondary and primary archival sources and complemented by a number of interviews conducted between 1994 and 2004, the discussion in *Mobilizing India* covers ground that will be familiar to Caribbeanists, for example, the politics of calypso and chutney, indenture and diaspora,

Trinidadian history, contemporary racial tensions, and Third World scholars' relationship with the Other. But Niranjana is building on key works and themes in order to make a larger case for the value, nay, necessity, of comparative research agendas that displace an "inherent asymmetry" (p. 11), dislodging the West from its centrality. If *Mobilizing India* traverses familiar terrain, it focuses our attention on some key issues in the relationships among colonial and postcolonial identity formation, popular culture, and modernity. It also productively reminds us about the always crucial question of epistemological perspective that shadows efforts, even revisionist ones, to challenge hegemony and reconceptualize hierarchy. Finally, it reminds us that diasporas are shaping and mediating forces in themselves, rather than yet another manifestation of cultural shreds and patches.

*Afro-Central Americans in New York City: Garifuna Tales of Transnational Movements in Racialized Space.* SARAH ENGLAND. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006. xvi + 274 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95)

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While a number of scholars have conducted helpful work on the Garifuna in Central America (e.g., Taylor 1951; Gonzalez 1969; Kerns 1997; Roessingh 2001), with several notable exceptions (e.g., Palacio 2005) there has been a relative paucity of research on the transnational migration of the group. Sarah England who has conducted field work in Limon, Honduras, and New York City has written an important book on this issue, including much discussion of the impact of family relations, economic practices, and grass-roots social organizations.

The Garifuna are, as England aptly notes,

an Afro Indigenous people born out of the mixture of Africans and Caribs on the island of St. Vincent, exiled to Central America, and turned transnational migrants to the United States since the 1940s. They are thus members of three diasporas – the African diaspora, the Garifuna diaspora, and the Central American diaspora. They are simultaneously black, indig-

enous, and Latino; Honduras, Belizean, Guatemalan, Nicaraguan, and North American; part of Central America and part of the Caribbean. As an ethnic group they share a common language, history, and culture that unites them across national borders. (p. 1)

England estimates the total population of Central American Garifuna to be about 200,000, with the largest concentration (about 100,000) in Honduras. She argues that the population of Garifuna in the United States is about the same as the total population of Garifuna in Central America, with the highest concentrations in New York City, Los Angeles, and New Orleans.

The book is sensibly organized. In the first chapter, England surveys the intellectual terrain, noting that she does not intend to privilege either Limon or New York City but instead to treat both with equal weight. She reminds readers that for two hundred years the Garifuna have traversed national borders for work, family, and ritual reasons, and thus, in one powerful sense at least, migration to the United States is not as much of a break with tradition as a continuation of a way of life. Her next chapter is a concise yet helpful history of the Garifuna from the St. Vincent years to the present. Her third chapter examines matrifocal kinship as it is manifested transnationally. Chapter 4 focuses on the challenges of a division of labor when family members live in multiple nations. Finally, the last several chapters focus on the development of grass-roots organizations and on racial and ethnic identity politics in the Garifuna diaspora, especially given the realities of a Garifuna population that has been described as a “nation across borders” (Palacio 2005).

What has motivated the continued migration? Among a number of factors, England notes the impact of success stories of migrants that appear, Horatio Alger style, to fulfill the American Dream of rags-to-riches. She relates the story of one such migrant who arrived in the United States in the 1970s and, working as janitor, sent a monthly remittance of about one hundred dollars home to his mother in Honduras. Ultimately, he was able to build a nice cinderblock house in Limon for his mother, complete with stereo, television, a VCR, and an electric generator. While this migrant is seen as a model of a good native son, the Garifuna of modernity express a variety of views concerning migration. For some, it is viewed as progress; for others, it is the disintegration of economic autonomy for Garifuna villages. Indeed England notes that the Garifuna among whom she lived sometimes refer to remittance dependency as “Garifuna welfare.”

England also notes the dramatic impact of Hurricane Mitch in 1998 on Honduras and the Garifuna. The devastation from this disaster left approximately 22,000 dead and three million homeless, destroying homes, roads, and crops and dramatically impacting the GDP of the nation. Before the hurricane, the number of Hondurans migrating to the United States was surpassed by migrants seeking to avoid civil strife in El Salvador, Guatemala,

and Nicaragua, but after it the number of Hondurans migrating increased. Deportations from the United States have also increased, and England discusses the issue of the deportation of “tens of thousands of gang members to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras” (p. 58) who were reared mostly in the United States, many speaking no Spanish, whose “only prospects for survival are to continue gang activity in Central America” (p. 58). England attributes the fact that the murder rate in Central America has risen, even above Colombia’s notoriously high rate, to these deportations.

England’s discussions of transnational migrations and social movements are intriguing, and one finds it hard to resist making comparisons between the Garifuna of Limon and the Garifuna in other nations and other indigenous Central American groups, such as the Maya. For instance, how have the sociohistorical and cultural contexts of these other groups along lines of race, class, and gender impacted cultural survival? Detailing such comparisons is a tall order and perhaps England has sensibly left such work for future researchers. Nevertheless, she has outlined some important developments in a Pan-Garifuna identity, such as transnational Garifuna activist groups and cultural organizations.

England’s multisited ethnography represents a substantial contribution. It will undoubtedly be a book that both university libraries and scholars with interests in the Garifuna, migration patterns, and cultural survival will want to add to their collections.

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*Black Puerto Rican Identity and Religious Experience.* SAMIRI HERNÁNDEZ HIRALDO. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006. xxii + 292 pp. (Cloth US\$ 55.00)

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This book offers a welcome, timely history of religious pluralism in Loíza, characterized in the national imaginary as one of the most “African” (and seemingly poorest) towns in Puerto Rico. Focusing on a number of recently established religious transformations within Catholic and Protestant churches, Samiri Hernández Hiraldo suggests quite convincingly that contrary to popular assumptions not all Loízans find the revitalization of their African heritage, in general, and the practice of Afro-Puerto Rican religions (such as popular *espiritismo*, *brujería*, and *Santería*), in particular, the proper answer for their spiritual/cultural needs. I consider this to be the most valuable contribution of the book.

The centrality of religion in Loíza is evidenced by the presence of more than thirty-eight registered Protestant churches as well as several nonregistered small churches on every corner among a population of thirty thousand people. Also, Hernández Hiraldo notes the rapid growth of traditional and nontraditional Pentecostalism and the dramatic transformation of historical Protestant and Catholic churches toward more charismatic modes of worship. The vitality of various religious organizations (especially Pentecostal) is further evidenced by a growing access and control of the media and participation in national public debates and community services, as well as involvement in a thriving Christian-music industry.

Hernández Hiraldo claims that Loízans are primarily concerned about their identity – “individual, family, community, town, national, transnational, socioeconomic, religious, cultural, racial, generational and gender” (p. 4) – the religious management of their identity being “both the cause and the result of this central role of identity” (pp. 3-4). What remains unresolved throughout the book, however, is the empirical explanation for the mushrooming of religious institutions and the apparent obsession with identity of both religious leaders and churchgoers in Loíza.

Hernández Hiraldo decides instead to “focus on religion to explore identity” (p. 5), which in my view ends up limiting the methodological and theoretical import of this book, particularly in addressing the complex phenom-

enology of religious experience. For instance, even though a large part is dedicated to tracing in great detail the competition, development, rise, and fall of various religious leaders and institutions, as well as the *opinions* of residents *about* their identity, readers learn comparatively little about how issues of identity are actually elaborated during worship in these institutions and in the messages delivered by these leaders (except in the sermon of Pastor Correa [pp. 2-3]).

Perhaps my expectations based on the book's title explain my slight disappointment at the end when I realized that it focused less on the connection between "black identity" and "religious experience" than on the development of religious leadership and institutional dynamics, peppered with the opinions of religious and community leaders and residents as to the reasons for church attendance, and less (except the excellent discussions in chapters 6 and 9) on the actual religious experiences of those Loízas who perceive their blackness as a major aspect of their self-identification.

Hernández Hiraldo situates her research interests in Loíza and in religion as a native (white) anthropologist and practicing Baptist raised in a nearby town. Readers learn that this closed as well as opened many doors for her during twelve months of fieldwork, consisting of an unspecified number of visits spread over seven years, during which she conducted archival, textual, and some participatory research that included administering a census and interviewing.

The book reads well overall, except for a number of spelling errors, awkward wording, and editing problems (such as offering dates for the founding of organizations and explanations for new terms, after having already mentioned them earlier in the text). Also, some judgmental conclusions are unfortunate; for example, those that dismiss certain so-called "tangible" (i.e., expressive, emotional) aspects of charismatic Protestant worship and healing for gratifying "poor and uneducated" worshippers "much as a placebo" (pp. 84-85), and others that express the author's "hope" for more church activism in solving the problems of Loíza.

These misgivings aside, the book makes an important contribution to mapping the history, development, and internal dynamics of religious institutions in a highly competitive context, dispelling the public image of Loíza as a hub of primarily Afro-Latin cultural and religious practices.

*Post-Emancipation Race Relations in the Bahamas*. WHITTINGTON B. JOHNSON. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006. xii + 190 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95)

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In the book under review author Whittington Johnson selected the period 1834-1865 as these were formative years for a free society in the Bahamas. Since the Bahamas was a former slave-holding society Johnson focused his research mainly on persons of African descent. This included those who were freed by the 1833 Emancipation Act, those who were free before 1834, and those Africans who had been rescued from slave ships and resettled in the Bahamas after the slave trade was abolished. As this transition period was very unsettled in places such as Jamaica and the southern American states, Johnson is most interested in understanding the factors that contributed to a peaceful transition in the Bahamas.

Little research has been done on this period in Bahamian history so this book is a welcome addition to Bahamian historiography. Gail Saunders's *Bahamian Society after Emancipation* (1990) focuses more on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Johnson used an array of archival documents in examining the nature and extent of change to race relations in postemancipation Bahamian society. He examined the level of access black Bahamians had in politics, education, and the justice system as well as the role established religion played in this transformed Bahamian society.

His questions about political change centered on issues of whether the nonwhite electorate would vote only for nonwhite candidates and create a nonwhite majority in the assembly. He also wondered whether Mulattoes would form their own political group or whether they would ally with Whites. The Removal of Civil Disabilities Act of 1833 accorded Creole Blacks the same privileges as Whites but was not extended to African-born persons. This was based on the prevailing attitude that Africans were not sufficiently "civilized" to be able to appreciate these privileges.

Though Blacks were the overwhelming majority in the population only a handful were elected to parliament. On the Out Islands (those other than New Providence), white merchants easily manipulated the electorate because they controlled the supply of goods on which residents depended. In the public service nonwhites (the term Johnson prefers to use) were appointed to

a range of posts including a few top level ones. By the 1840s the colonial policy was to avoid using racial categorizations except in the case of African-born individuals.

The Bahamas was not a prosperous colony. Johnson considered what impact the addition of over ten thousand freed laborers had on the post-emancipation Bahamian economy. Most apprentices, as they were officially known, became sharecroppers or squatted on what was presumably government land since the purchase price was generally too high for many to afford. The majority of the populace lived on the Out Islands but New Providence had the most varied population with the largest percentage of Whites and the largest number of upper- and middle-class nonwhites.

With few opportunities for cash wages, apprentices preferred the perceived independence of small-scale production and maritime ventures as wrecking and collecting sponges. This had the greatest impact on the two main export products – salt and pineapples. As exports there was money to be earned in their production but the production process made for difficult working conditions. Efforts to bring in more workers all failed. Johnson's primary finding on the postemancipation economy was that although former slaves were free to choose how they made a living, wealthy Whites still controlled the colony's economy, so the substantial changes in their legal status did not translate into any equally significant economic changes.

Johnson laments that the Anglican Church in the Bahamas did not make a greater effort to proselytize Bahamians of African descent. They established several chapels on New Providence to accommodate apprentices and liberated Africans but little was done on the Out Islands where most people lived. Several Out Islands had no Anglican church and priests rarely visited. This opened the way for the Methodists and Baptists to win more converts throughout the Bahamas.

After emancipation the Anglican Church maintained a policy against racially segregating their worship services or schools. In the Anglican cathedral in Nassau seating set aside for the poor at the back of the cathedral and in the choir loft would have been filled by Blacks but middle- and upper-class nonwhites were not restricted to these areas. The Methodist Church had no such policies and they developed their largest congregations on the few Out Islands with substantial white populations. The Baptists, on the other hand were most popular among black Bahamians.

The Anglican Church was also very involved in public education in the Bahamas. However they focused mainly on elementary education. One attempt at establishing a college prep school failed because of disagreements between denominational groups. The colonial government gradually assumed more responsibility for education but this included no increased funding for facilities, staffing, or tertiary-level education. Wealthier families, regardless of color, were not affected by these policies. In the criminal justice system

the first black Bahamian lawyer was able to point out some of the inequities in a judicial system based on a highly stratified society.

Johnson did a thorough analysis of the institutional effects of the immediate postemancipation years on nonwhite Bahamians. However his research suggests that other factors, such as population demographics and social status, also served to limit access and stifle dissent. His point is well taken as the patterns that developed in this thirty-year period set the trends for the next century. For the Bahamas the hurdles to overcome were not just race but also social class.

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*Planning the Past: Heritage Tourism and Post-Colonial Politics at Port Royal*. ANITA M. WATERS. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006. x + 123 pp. (Paper US\$ 18.95)

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The history of Port Royal has something for everyone, points out Anita M. Waters about the plans for the renovation of one of Jamaica's most famous towns as a "heritage tourism site." That is part of the problem for Port Royal. It is also, perhaps, a problem for this interesting, well-researched if uneven piece of writing.

There is a great story here as Waters has uncovered. The historical associations of Port Royal, on the tip of the etiolated peninsula that frames Kingston's harbor, are rich and stimulating. Port Royal was once described as "the wickedest town in the western world"; nowadays, travel writers (and planners and tourist board bureaucrats) call it a "sleepy fishing village." Its history is multilayered and depends on your perspective. Take your pick: Arawaks, pirates, sailors, admirals, prostitutes, slaves, free people, herbalists, architects, fishermen, goldsmiths, inn-keepers, merchants, millionaires have all, at one time or another, peopled its community. Some characters, of

course, are more fascinating – and more problematic – than others, especially if you are planning a theme-park Disneyfication of history.

Proposals for the reconstruction of Port Royal's history as a tourist attraction is the rationale of this book. People interpret the past in different ways according to their own needs and imaginations and, of course, many people, especially the powerless, have their pasts "remembered" for them by others. This is particularly relevant, as Waters, points out in the context of Jamaica – and, indeed, the whole Caribbean.

For tourism developers, Port Royal has two key historical identities to draw on: as a rip-roaring, piratical, and fantastically wealthy trading port in the seventeenth century, and as a British colonial naval station in the eighteenth century, briefly visited by Lord Nelson. These two beams of colonial interest are chronologically separated by the earthquake of 1692 when Port Royal disappeared beneath the waves.

Plans for the restoration of what is now a small – and neglected – town as a tourist showcase have been in the pipeline since independence. None, to date, have materialized. The reasons for this, Waters argues, are as much about an ambivalence of identity and historical representation as they are about a failure to secure investment and the product of political will.

Waters documents the different proposals in some detail. All reflect changing trends in tourism thinking – from a concentration on white sand beaches (with imported sand) and resort hotels to a more nuanced package that includes "interactive street performers" (p. 40) and an underwater archaeological museum. More importantly, she analyzes how, over the years, a Eurocentric narrative has been replaced by a more inclusive one.

Even so, pirates – a very Eurocentric preoccupation – and Port Royal go together. Indeed, the pirate theme is popular throughout the Caribbean (Jolly Roger cruises in Barbados, a pirate museum in the Bahamas, for example) of the tourists' imagination: pirates represent freedom (cruising around the high seas, no government to tell you what to do, with wenches on each arm and doubloons in every pocket). What is interesting though is that this iconography does not extend to African-Caribbean populations and, in particular, to some African Jamaicans who view pirates as "common thieves."

Waters backs this up with evidence from a range of sources, including her own research among the contemporary community of Port Royal. Indeed, she finds pirates blamed for the crime rate in Jamaica. "Renowned buccaneers such as Henry Morgan are being labeled as great Jamaicans. It is therefore not surprising that the Jamaican society is so besieged with so many delinquencies," commented a group of students who had made their own proposals for the redevelopment of Port Royal (p. 56).

Beyond the developers, historians, tourists, archaeologists, and politicians who are engaged in putting Port Royal back on the map are the town's residents. Waters does not forget this group of 1,100 or so citizens – often

ignored in the design of tourism projects. While the developers sit on their hands, the environment of Port Royal suffers from neglect – buildings and infrastructure crumble. Residents wait for something to happen. They, too, have different views of development – some welcome it; some recognize how tourism brings negative impacts (“Anywhere the money is, men come with their violence .... Badness might come here, too” [p. 90].)

Meanwhile, Waters discovers that members of the Port Royal community know little of their own history; interestingly, they also identify with a colonial view of their town’s story. “What was unexpected was the extent to which Afro-Jamaican Port Royalists embrace the Anglocentric narrative. It seems to offer them a way of drawing distinctions between themselves and other Kingstonians” (p. 103). Such conflict of interests and narratives among the players is one reason why Port Royal is still living in the shadows of its past, its population the victims of their own – and other people’s – considerations of history.

Waters’s book is dogged by a style that suggests an anxious essay writer prone to throwing information at the reader for fear of leaving something out. It is also annoyingly repetitive; and there’s no map. Yet this is a book that addresses important themes: it does so with enthusiasm and uncovers some revealing insights central to the development of Jamaican (if not Caribbean) identity along the way.

*The American Discovery of Europe*. JACK D. FORBES. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007. xii + 251 pp. (Cloth US\$ 34.95)

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A departure from Jack Forbes’s earlier works on race and ethnic identity (e.g., Forbes 1993), this new book offers evidence of transatlantic voyages by native peoples of the Americas prior to 1492. *The American Discovery of Europe* is dedicated to challenging the historical interpretations of the intercontinental exchange between the Old and New Worlds, and indeed to questioning the concepts associated with “discovery” and defining the perspectival of “Old” and “New.” While it argues for revisions of accepted

historical canons, it is apt to remain, like Forbes's early studies of marginal peoples, on the periphery of academic discourse.

During a period when new ideas are continuing to surface and evidence mounts for a longer indigenous occupation of the Western Hemisphere, Forbes's book enters into the debate with a surprising amount of documentary and archaeological concurrence. From Caribbean maritime traditions to Greenlandic voyagers, it weaves nautical and botanical knowledge alongside recovered artifacts of seemingly bizarre placement. Translated obscure primary documents form testimonies of "Indians" visiting the coasts of Ireland, Norway, and France in boats made from either skin or dugout logs.

While engaging for the reader, Forbes's argument does little to address the wider impact of these Atlantic exchanges. More than likely, this absence is due to what most scholars have already concluded; occasional and intermittent contact did occur between the "Old" and "New" World, but these interactions had little lasting effect on culture and were not sustainable. Admittedly, Forbes acknowledges that the majority of American "discoveries" are the result of forced landings from Atlantic storm systems, captives of long-range European fishing excursions, and contact with sparse human settlements along the edges of the Arctic. He fails to consider the relative size of the world prior to the emergence of a global system. Communication across a half dozen European languages, the lack of general literacy among the populace, and the instability of feudal Europe did not provide a uniform understanding of the globe or the climate for exploration beyond the limits of the "known" Old World. Equally, the examples presented suggest that voyages by American Indians occurred in a single direction, thereby limiting the diffusion of knowledge from one side of the Atlantic to the other. In turn, the amount of "discovery" that could result in large-scale cultural change or reverse exploration from the Americas to Europe was equally limited. Simply put, there is evidence to indicate that there were multiple cross-Atlantic contacts between the Old and New World, but that testimony does little to alter our present understandings of human history or to reveal mechanisms that shaped cultures experiencing contact phenomena prior to the cataclysmic events surrounding 1492.

Forbes is far-reaching in his assertions and hypotheses of continental exchange, often overlooking more conventional explanations for the offered evidence of genetic variation and anomalous archaeological findings. One such example centers on the presence of several Inuit bone harpoon points found along the western beaches of Ireland and Scotland. Forbes views these rare occurrences as archaeological evidence for an Inuit presence in Western Europe prior to 1200 A.D., but neglects to consider the numerous ways in which this deposition may have taken place. Ignoring his earlier arguments about the power and force of eastwardly moving currents that placed botanical drift from America along the shores of Europe's Atlantic coast, Forbes

never considers the possibility of expired, beached, or wounded mammals from Inuit waters depositing both carcass and points at the edge of the Atlantic's eastern drift. While minor to the overall presentation, cases such as this, and far-reaching evidence for American Indian presence in Europe (i.e., Indians of the Roman or Medieval era) detract from *The American Discovery of Europe's* stronger arguments and cast an unfortunate shadow on an otherwise engaging ethnohistory.

In contrast to the focus on the possibility of American Indian "discovery" of Europe, the book's stronger suit deals with the relatively unknown nautical traditions of the Atlantic Americas. Forbes offers examples of primary documents describing the various forms of Caribbean, South American, and Northeastern vessel types and indigenous knowledge of wind and currents as well as an overview of native material culture associated with seamanship, actually filling a void in the current scholarship on hemispheric maritime practices.

More valuable are the references to numerous Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese primary documents. The book's strongest sections translate Columbian writings and obscure Scandinavian references, and they chronicle the movements of peoples through the waters of the Pre-Columbian Caribbean and among Newfoundland, Greenland, and Iceland in the North Atlantic.

Ultimately, Forbes hopes *The American Discovery of Europe* will "forever change the way history of the Americas is defined and taught" (Forbes 2007). He attempts to resituate the concept of "discovery," challenging readers to consider indigenous engagement and agency before and during the emergence of a global system. His book adds to the ongoing dialogue on the human experience and the events that foreground the beginning of colonial encounters. Unfortunately challenging notions of "discovery" will probably remain too unconventional and obscure to become the legacy that Forbes hopes.

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*Reading Erna Brodber: Uniting the Black Diaspora through Folk Culture and Religion.* JUNE E. ROBERTS. Westport CT: Praeger, 2006. xiv + 278 pp. (Cloth US\$ 94.95)

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In her recent *Twentieth-Century Caribbean Literature: Critical Moments in Anglophone Literary History*, Alison Donnell deplors the critical neglect of the writers “who retained an island base in terms of the focus of their work” (2006:86), Jamaican Erna Brodber among them. As the first book-length study of this major literary voice, June E. Roberts’s *Reading Erna Brodber* is a welcome addition to the field of Caribbean literary criticism. The purpose of this dense, occasionally abstruse volume is to demonstrate the aesthetic and ideological originality of a writer who is not only “engaged in the act of redefining the novel” (p. xii) but, as a radical “intellectual worker” (p. ix), has also developed her own folk-based approach to the Caribbean diasporic discourse.

This book is organized in two sections. The first one, made up of five chapters, is devoted to an extensive contextualization of Brodber’s work. It examines its revisionism in relation to the tradition of Caribbean literature as a whole, in particular that of women writers, and illuminates the interdisciplinary nature of Brodber’s writing by focusing on the movements that have shaped it, especially Rastafarianism, black nationalism, and African spirituality. The argument throughout is that Brodber’s unique, revolutionary aesthetic is informed by an indigenous folk culture which needs to be taken into account if one wants to fully understand the writer’s fictions. Nevertheless, insightful and well informed as it may be, Roberts’s attempt to depict Brodber’s intellectual background is only partly successful, for her account tends to be repetitive and to lack clarity, not only because of a refusal to simplify the Jamaican writer’s complex agenda. In addition, if *Reading Erna Brodber* provides an informative overview of Caribbean literature and of Brodber’s place in it, it also contains inaccuracies – for example, when it lists Caryl Phillips among women writers on p. 36 (while describing him as a male writer on p. 50) or when, on p. 52, it says that *Myal* won the “esteemed Booker Prize for literature” (it was the Caribbean and Canadian Regional Winner in the 1989 Commonwealth Writers’ Prize).

The second part of the book, comprising eight chapters, provides closer readings of Brodber’s fiction, *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* (1980),

*Myal* (1988), and *Louisiana* (1994), three nonlinear novels which “attempt to create a new social history of the Caribbean experience” (p. 126). The first one, originally meant as a case study for Jamaican social workers, dramatizes the spiritual healing of Nellie, a young middle-class Jamaican of mixed ancestry suffering from cultural schizophrenia, and celebrates the crucial role played by black vernacular culture, including orality, in the construction of “a healthy diasporan identity” (pp. 100-101). However, *Jane and Louisa* can also be read, Roberts points out, as a political allegory of a nation which needs to overcome its Manichean social system and as an engagement on Brodber’s part with the 1968 Walter Rodney affair. Roberts further surveys Brodber’s methodological choices, which are meant to “achieve communalism” (p. 90), and dwells in particular on the symbol of the *kumbla*, an ambiguous trope, both prison and cocoon, and on Brodber’s allusive prose which refers, as in the title, to a traditional ring game, but also to Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and to Zora Neale Hurston, a major influence on Brodber. Reading *Myal* requires a good knowledge of the Afro-based religious system that developed in Jamaica in the wake of slavery. Roberts therefore explains at length the “dialectical tension between good and evil” (p. 144), between Myalism and Obeah, that affects the spiritual awakening in the 1920s of Brodber’s heroine Ella, the victim of colonial and patriarchal “spirit thievery,” who is eventually rescued by a group of black and white Myalists who communicate telepathically. Roberts’s extensive discussion of the novel also includes a focus on its secondary plot, Anita’s story of rape and incest, on the functional role of this novel as an incentive to revise Jamaica’s educational system, and, interestingly if more marginally, on the similarities between Ella’s background and Bob Marley’s. If in *Myal* Brodber already brings the Caribbean and African-American diasporas together through its heroine’s experience of passing, it is in *Louisiana*, however, that she fully develops this fruitful parallelism, focusing this time on another aspect of African religiosity, spirit possession. This third novel focuses on a young anthropologist, first called Ella then Louisiana, who ends up a conduit for two dead Garveyites, Louise and Anna, two “cross-diasporic spirit sisters” (p. 238). Roberts reads *Louisiana* as an “allegorical revision” (p. 223) of the life of Zola Neale Hurston, both a writer and a researcher interested in African diasporic folklore, like Brodber herself, and she devotes many pages to arguing this comparison. She also demonstrates that the novel promotes a “decolonization of anthropology” (p. 264) at the same time as it operates a conciliatory reunification of various currents of diasporic thought, chiefly represented by Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois.

The strong point of this otherwise loosely argued study – which also contains several irritating typos – is the way in which it illuminates the “cultural tapestry” (p. 212) woven by Brodber’s fiction. *Reading Erna Brodber* is also impressively wide-ranging. Yet it is to be regretted that it does not include

Brodber's 2003 collection of lectures, *The Continent of Black Consciousness*, a book that constitutes an interesting complement to the fiction of a truly remarkable writer.

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*Race, Culture, and Identity: Francophone West African and Caribbean Literature and Theory from Négritude to Créolité*. SHIREEN K. LEWIS. New York: Lexington Books, 2006. xx + 167 pp. (Paper US\$ 25.95)

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*Race, Culture, and Identity: Francophone West African and Caribbean Literature and Theory from Négritude to Créolité* is an ambitious endeavor. As Shireen K. Lewis indicates, her book is “the first comprehensive study to date to map literary and theoretical discourse by Francophone intellectuals associated with Négritude (Léon Damas, Léopold Senghor, Aimé Césaire, Paulette Nardal), Antillanité (Edouard Glissant), Créolité (Jean Bernabé, Raphaël Confiant, Patrick Chamoiseau)” (p. xii). She situates her diachronic analysis in the larger debate around modernism and postmodernism in order to trace the varying identitarian shifts within French West Indian literature. Lewis examines these shifts as they evolve from a concern with African origins and racial and cultural purity toward a preoccupation with creolization, hybridity, and fragmentation, arguing for the inclusion of female Martiniquan intellectuals as significant participants in the birth of modern black Francophone and Caribbean literature. Doing so, she claims that she is “the first scholar to conceptualize black women’s relationship to Négritude” (p. xv).

Chapter 1 presents the sole issue of *légitime défense* as the guiding manifesto for nine young Marxist-Leninist and surrealist Martiniquans and argues that it represents a flawed precursor to Césaire's *Négritude*. Lewis contextualizes their cultural project within French modernism and argues that Martiniquan students of the time, despite their anticolonial stance and attack against the mimetic writing of most French West Indians, did not themselves create a poetry that was rooted in black experience or Creole culture. Ironically, while engaging in their own type of imitation, they merely reproduced the surrealist genre.

In Chapter 2, Lewis reads *Négritude* not only as an attempt to assert a modern black subjectivity, but also as the expression of modernism itself by black subjects in a colonized world. She argues that modernism influenced the *Négritude* poets who in turn contributed to its development. Lewis provides a close reading of several poems from Damas, Senghor, and Césaire in order to present "alienation, fragmentation, and disintegration" as modernist themes that pervade *Négritude* poetry during the interwar period (p. 30). And she emphasizes that while *Négritude* encompassed the Francophone black world as a whole, much of the creative force at play in this project came from the French Caribbean.

Chapter 3 explores a biography of Paulette Nardal in order to examine the ways in which gender shaped the *Négritude* movement. Presenting a substantial historical contextualization of the French Caribbean community in Paris, Lewis affirms that Nardal and her sister Jane blazed the trail for Senghor and Césaire. Indeed, she argues, Nardal's essays and translations of Harlem Renaissance writers introduced Césaire and Senghor to ideas they would later develop in their movement.

In Chapter 4, Lewis explores the work of Edouard Glissant and the theoretical models he developed, which influenced the creolists, particularly the questioning of historical knowledge. In doing so, she perceives Glissant's notion of *Antillanité* as a bridge between *Négritude* and *Créolité*. In her attempt to historicize the local and the peripheral and to acknowledge the fragmentation of past events in her examination of Glissant's postmodernist concerns, she glosses over his concepts of creolization and chaos-world.

In Chapter 5, Lewis contends that in using *Négritude* as the foil for their own aesthetics of *Créolité*, the *créolistes* inadvertently contribute to the relevance and revival of the declining *Négritude* project. She provides a historical contextualization of the *créolistes'* movement, which she dates from the creation of the GEREK (*Groupe d'Etudes et de Recherche en Espace Créolophone*) in the 1970s, foregrounding the role of Jean Bernabé in the cultural and political debates concerning the creole language.

The broad scope of Lewis's study might disappoint some readers, particularly African specialists. Indeed, despite its title, it mainly deals with French Caribbean theory. Additionally, although she discusses *Négritude*

and *Créolité* as two antithetical movements, she does not delve into the differences between the approaches of Césaire and Senghor, nor does she contextualize the backgrounds of these two writers. These authors share a desire to construct an Afrocentric identity within a French colonial field, but they are rooted in radically different sociopolitical contexts. The political and cultural stakes of the *Négritude* project in an African society are very different from those in a French overseas department. Equally problematic is Lewis's lack of attention to the political and racial complexity of the French Antilles, which leads to a simplification of key concepts such as Glissant's notion of creolization. This prevents the nonspecialist reader from realizing how this sociopolitical context influences French Caribbean writers. Although Lewis does a thorough job of framing them within the context of France, she glosses over the context of their homeland. Finally, her survey of the field of French Caribbean literature is spotty. Striking examples of this include the omission of Suzanne Césaire among Lewis's "women of *Négritude*" and the lack of engagement with important scholarship by Brent Hayes Edwards (2003) and Denean Sharpley-Whiting (2002).

Despite some debatable claims and omissions (which are inherent to a project of this scale), Lewis's book contributes to a rethinking of traditional concepts within Francophone literature. In a predominantly Anglocentric field, her project is successful in its goal of moving away from "treating Francophone literature as introductory or presenting it in terms of a survey" (p. xiii) by introducing French Caribbean intellectuals as key agents in the development of a black modern subjectivity. And it makes an important contribution to the literature on *Négritude* by highlighting the contributions of female writers such as Martiniquan Paulette Nardal.

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*Autofiction and Advocacy in the Francophone Caribbean*. RENÉE LARRIER. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2006. x + 186 pp. (Cloth US\$ 59.95)

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*Autofiction and Advocacy in the Francophone Caribbean* utilizes *Danmyé*, the Martiniquan tradition of dance combat, as a leitmotif structuring a discussion on Caribbean subjectivity in novels by Joseph Zobel, Patrick Chamoiseau, Gisèle Pineau, Edwidge Danticat, and Maryse Condé. Renée Larrier reproduces the aesthetics of this simulated fight between two men as she wrestles with the role of advocacy in the genre of Caribbean autobiographical fiction she calls “autofiction,” following on work by Serge Doubrovsky. Bridging the gap between literary and dance criticism, she studies how the careful discursive choreography of these Caribbean novels can be understood through “the combat dance’s principles of narration, initiation, resistance, confrontation, interaction, surprise, anticipation, improvisation, resistance, positionality, displacement, balance, and negotiation” (p. 6). The two combatants and the ring of clapping and drumming spectators that surround them provide Larrier with a rich metanarrative to understand the vigorous and often contestatory nature of cultural production and reception in the Caribbean.

Chapter 1 looks at the way in which the character of José in Zobel’s *La Rue Cases-Nègres* challenges the silences of master narratives that refuse to acknowledge the brutality of French colonization in the Antilles. Like a *Danmyé* master, José – as author and protagonist of the text – “lands on his feet” as he succeeds at establishing this counter-discourse. Larrier then moves on, in Chapter 2, to explore the collective ethos of the *Danmyé* through the interaction of author, narrators, and protagonists in seven novels by Patrick Chamoiseau. Here, she studies how the role of the encircling chanting chorus of the fight, the *répondé*, help to advance and define the course of the narration in *Chronique des sept misères*, *Antan d’enfance*, *Chemin-d’école*, *Solibo Magnifique*, *Texaco*, *A bout d’enfance*, and *Biblique des derniers gestes*.

The remaining three chapters explore novels by women from Guadeloupe and Haiti. The role of female resistance to patriarchal oppression in Gisèle Pineau’s autofiction is the subject of Chapter 3. Larrier interprets the role of the encircling spectators of the fight as the community of characters surrounding the main protagonists in *Délivrance*, *L’Exil selon Julia*, and *L’Espérance*.

*macadam*. In this last novel, the tragedy engendered by Rosette's inability to believe that her husband abused their teenage daughter Angela speaks to the need of those surrounding the colonial and gendered struggle to support the oppressed warrior. In Chapter 4, Larrier analyzes the character of Amabelle Désir in Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of the Bones* as a *Danmyé* fighter who overcomes obstacles, crosses borders, and builds new communities, reinscribing the diasporic odysseys of many Caribbean writers. As refreshing as it is to see Haitian literature studied as Francophone, one wonders how this paradigm limits the possibilities of analyzing relevant works written in Haitian Creole. With respect to Martiniquan Creole, Larrier displays great inconsistency and frequently defers to French terminology. For example, she chooses *répondeurs* over *répondé* and *Laghia de la Mort* over *Ladjialamò*. Chapter 5 deploys the metaphor of the *Danmyé* to understand the multiple narrative positionalities in the work of Maryse Condé. By cataloguing Condé's novels as first-person novels (*Moi, Tituba* and *La Vie sclérelate*), third-person novels (*Ségou* and *La Belle Créole*), and multivoiced texts (*Traversée de la mangrove*, *Histoire de la femme cannibale*), Larrier constructs a shifting meta-critical narrator in the midst of an entourage of onlookers who provide competing, and often questionable, interpretations of the narrative struggle.

Throughout the elegantly interlaced chapters, Larrier stitches the provocative, yet ultimately undeveloped notion of *Collages text[iles]* in an attempt to present how the reappraisal of Caribbean identity in the novels she examines is founded on the deep commitment and advocacy that their authors have for their respective Caribbean homelands. While Larrier successfully underscores several of the authors' activist roles in favor of education, freedom of expression, and other social justice causes, the full deployment of *Collages Text[iles]* remains unexplored. As a term borrowed from Guadeloupean painter Franceline Dawkins, whose work graces the cover of Gisèle Pineau's *L'Espérance-macadam*, *Collages Text[iles]* embodies a strong sense of female solidarity across artistic media that could redefine traditional women's work into a form of gendered agency capable of effectively overcoming patriarchal oppression in the literary realm. More importantly, Larrier misses the opportunity to deploy the Caribbean feminist discursive needlework of *Collages Text[iles]* to counterbalance the strong masculinism of the *Danmyé* fight.

Larrier's broad knowledge of Caribbean popular culture and critical theory enables her to foresee how projecting First World theoretical paradigms onto the area would add to an already long list of political, military, and cultural impositions. Believing that Caribbean cultural products can break open their own shell from within, she re-interprets performativity as a creolized Caribbean aesthetic. This exempts her from the need to cite the work of Judith Butler, Joseph Roach, Victor Turner, and Richard Schechner, leading North American academics in the field of performance studies. Her critical boldness brilliantly re-enacts the very resistance of the Martiniquan dance combat leitmotif.

While Larrier's critical understanding of Francophone Caribbean autobiographical fiction is superb and ensures a well-focused argument, one wonders how the argument could have been strengthened through a sustained engagement with literary, choreographical, and pugilistic traditions in other territories and linguistic traditions of the greater Caribbean. As it is, Larrier's newest work marks a bold step in the development of a truly interdisciplinary and comparative understanding of life-narration and performance in the Caribbean.

*Patrick Chamoiseau: Espaces d'une écriture antillaise.* LORNA MILNE. Amsterdam & New York: Rodopi, 2006. 226 pp. (Paper US\$ 62.00)

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Martiniquan writer and essayist Patrick Chamoiseau gained international recognition with the bilingual edition of *Eloge de la Créolité/ In Praise of Creoleness*, cowritten with Jean Bernabé and Raphaël Confiant. This essay gave a prominent place to the Creole language of the French Antilles in the construction and definition of the islands' cultural identity and made two of its authors, Confiant and Chamoiseau, figureheads of the Créolité movement. Given the strong emphasis placed on Creole by the *créolistes* writers (which also includes Gisèle Pineau), critical assessments of Chamoiseau's work have interpreted his writing in the light of his own essays on language and identity. Lorna Milne's monograph seeks to redress the balance and rests on the valid observation that the geographic and topographic elements understood to both symbolize and contribute to the formation of Antillean identity have so far been overlooked. Milne's study is then an exploration of the symbolic value of space in the development of identity and history in Chamoiseau's narrative fiction. The monograph looks at how imagined representations of real, tangible spaces are transformed into imaginary literary spaces, a process through which, she argues, aesthetic representation and lived experience can converge.

Three main strands – space, history, and identity – run through Milne's analysis, and these are linked ultimately to a fourth idea: the question of the role of the writer and of the creative process in the construction of identity in

a postcolonial context. The starting point lies in Chamoiseau's own critical writing, and in particular his essay *Ecrire en pays dominé*, which presents the island of Martinique as a subordinated space under French economic, political, and cultural domination. Opening with a chapter that outlines the role of space in the forging of the community's identity, the analysis places Chamoiseau's representation of Martiniquan identity within the wider context of Caribbean discourses on cultural identity, mainly through the essays of Antonio Benítez-Rojo and Edouard Glissant. In *Ecrire en pays dominé*, Chamoiseau underscores the need for Martiniquans to differentiate themselves from a dominating French identity and develop community through a foundational event, which Milne identifies as the Middle Passage.

Chapters 2-5 look at the affirmation of identity through an in-depth analysis of four key spaces in Chamoiseau's imaginary which are embedded in the history of Martinique: the hold of slave ships, the market, the Creole habitat, and the forest. The hold of the slave ship is seen as the site of origin (or *espace d'origine*) (p. 37) in Chamoiseau's writing. Milne demonstrates how it serves as communal site of experience not only for descendents of slaves but also for other Caribbean ethnic and racial groups. Displacement is viewed as an initiation, a passage from one place, one history, and one identity to another. The originality of Milne's analysis of the symbolism of the hold lies in her perception of this particular space as a dual sign in Chamoiseau's fiction: a void which strips those who traverse it from their origin – and by extension their original history and identity – yet also a uterine space which serves as the catalyst for the construction of a new history and identity. Chapter 3 explores the aesthetic representation of the traditional Creole market which in the contemporary Caribbean is gradually losing its social function as a place of communication and exchange. Although Chamoiseau's portrayal of the market could be interpreted as distorted and nostalgic, Milne argues that his imagery of the market space contributes to the transmission of the past to a new generation of readers. It then becomes a model for future generations and helps them to relate to the space they inhabit. The following chapters focus on constructed spaces (the Creole habitat) and natural places (the woods). Chapter 4 discusses how the Creole habitat, and in particular the *quartier*, a fragile Creole entity in *Texaco*, is also a place of physical and cultural struggle between (post)colonial authorities and the ordinary people. Chapter 5 looks at quest and transformation through the trope of the woods, *les bois*, a liminal space beyond the plantation's domination. The forest symbolizes the rejection of slavery and allows for the transformation and affirmation of a Creole identity. At the same time, Milne shows that Chamoiseau's images of the woods highlight their function as a site of encounter and *rapprochement* between békés and Creoles, especially in her reading of *L'esclave vieil homme et le molosse*.

Important aspects of Milne's analysis are, on the one hand, the constant links made between Chamoiseau's critical writing and his fiction, and, on the

other hand, the attention given to his reflections on the creative process and the role of the writer. She concludes that Chamoiseau's own novels illustrate both the creative and political limits and the possibilities of fiction. Writing has what Milne terms *nature mortifère*, a deadly nature that suppresses orality and crystallizes the representation of a world otherwise too unpredictable and subject to change to be fully grasped symbolically. But writing also has a political and aesthetic function: it promotes one's own values and recognizes the existence of alternative values.

Milne's book includes a useful glossary of Creole words and expressions. It also provides an exhaustive and detailed examination of both Chamoiseau's critical and creative writing by looking at the development of the themes of identity and history through the symbolic representation of space. The book shows the evolution of Chamoiseau's poetics in his fiction which, despite being labeled "magic realist," has received little scrutiny.

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