

*IN ANOTHER PLACE, NOT HERE: A REAPPROPRIATION OF CARIBBEAN  
NATIONALISM*

By

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To Voltran: I'm coming home

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School  
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In the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Anglophone Caribbean began creating forms of cultural nationalism that were to take hold in movements for self-government in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with the colonies gaining independence beginning in 1962. These forms of nationalism were uniquely Caribbean; while they were a response to European nationalisms, they still contained many of the same ideas. Maurice Bishop, Prime Minister of Grenada (1979-1983), staged a coup that toppled Eric Gairy's government. Bishop's nationalism drew upon the rhetoric of other leaders in the Caribbean, including Eric Williams of Trinidad, Michael Manley of Jamaica and, most significantly, Fidel Castro of Cuba. Many of Bishop's speeches indicate that he framed his government and his nationalist rhetoric around these prominent figures in the Caribbean. Bishop articulates his form of Grenadian nationalism in hetero-patriarchal terms

whose origins are in European nationalism and its concepts of masculinity. George Mosse, critic of modern forms of European nationalisms, shows that European forms of nationalism defined masculinity as maintaining control over one's body and desires and is based in the assumption that only heterosexual, natural-born males can be masculine. This category of citizenship cannot encompass women, male homosexuals, and the men who do not fit this code of masculinity. Dionne Brand's novel *In Another Place, Not Here* attempts to retheorize Bishop's nationalism by redefining the traditional, masculinist relationships between gender and land; land and nation; and nation and history. By setting the novel in an island that is very much like Grenada, Brand directly responds to nationalism as articulated by Caribbean leaders represented by Bishop. Both Bishop and Brand redefine the nation by using the Grenada Revolution; however, in contrast to Bishop's nationalist rhetoric which marginalized lesbians or rendered them invisible, Brand places lesbians at the center of the revolution.

*In Another Place, Not Here* follows Anne McClintock's feminist revisioning of the nation in that it investigates the gendered formation of sanctioned male theories, makes women's place within the nation visible, brings national institutions in relation to other social structures and institutions, and it pays attention to the plays of power that plague privileged forms of feminism.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In her essays, poetry and novels, Dionne Brand rethinks the ways that nationalism is understood in an increasingly heterogeneous world and pays particular attention to the significance of migration, race, and sexuality. *In Another Place, Not Here*, her first novel and the focus of this thesis, works to create a feminist re-visioning of Caribbean nationalism articulated leaders such as Maurice Bishop, Michael Manley, Eric Williams and Fidel Castro in the 1970s. Brand's reappropriation of elements of masculinist nationalist discourse, in fact, conforms closely to Anne McClintock's definition of a feminist theory of nationalism.

Brand's work does not create a feminine construction of nationalism by simply reversing masculine forms of nationalism; she creates a new form of nationalism altogether. Hers is one that steps outside of traditional gendered binaries. Anne McClintock, a theorist of nationalism, argues that a feminist re-visioning is necessary and must challenge existing forms of the nation. She says:

A feminist theory of nationalism might thus be strategically fourfold: (1) investigating the gendered formation of sanctioned male theories; (2) bringing into historical visibility women's active cultural and political participation in national formations; (3) bringing nationalist institutions into critical relation with other social structures and institutions; and (4) at the same time paying scrupulous attention to the structures of racial, ethnic and class power that continue to bedevil privileged forms of feminism. (357)

Dionne Brand takes into account these steps in understanding nationalism as is indicated through her novel's dialogue with the existing forms of nationalism and its continual reference to

alternative forms of history and nationalism that could be available. She uses the form of fiction to theorize the ways the Caribbean can change and the forms that nationalism can take. Fiction is also necessary because of the current homophobic atmosphere in the Caribbean, and the use of lesbian characters show the dramatic changes that Brand envisions.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Anglophone Caribbean began creating forms of cultural nationalism that were to take hold in movements for self-government in the early 20<sup>th</sup> with the colonies gaining independence beginning in 1962. These forms of nationalism were uniquely Caribbean; while they were a response to European nationalisms, they still contained many of the same ideas. The newly self-governed countries soon found that independence from the colonizer did not mean freedom from imperialism or from the corrupted governments that were in place after Independence. In Trinidad in 1970 an unsuccessful coup was staged to overthrow the government. In 1980 in Jamaica, the JLP and the CIA orchestrated political violence in an attempt to unseat Michael Manley from power. Maurice Bishop, Prime Minister of Grenada (1979-1983) staged a revolution that toppled Eric Gairy's government. Bishop's nationalism drew upon the rhetoric of other leaders in the Caribbean, including Eric Williams of Trinidad, Michael Manley of Jamaica and, most significantly, Fidel Castro of Cuba. Many of Bishop's speeches indicate that he framed his government and his nationalist rhetoric around these prominent figures in the Caribbean.

Bishop articulates his form of Grenadian nationalism in hetero-patriarchal terms whose origins are in European nationalism and its concepts of masculinity. George Mosse, critic of modern forms of European nationalisms, shows that European forms of nationalism defined



masculinity as maintaining control over one's body and desires and is based in the assumption that only heterosexual, natural-born males can be masculine. This category of citizenship cannot encompass women, male homosexuals, and the men who do not fit this code of masculinity.

Dionne Brand's novel *In Another Place, Not Here* attempts to retheorize Bishop's nationalism by redefining the traditional, masculinist relationships between gender and land; land and nation; and nation and history. By setting the novel in an island that is very much like Grenada, Brand directly responds to nationalism as articulated by Caribbean leaders represented by Bishop. Both Bishop and Brand redefine the nation by using the Grenada Revolution; however, in contrast to Bishop's nationalist rhetoric which marginalized lesbians or rendered them invisible, Brand places lesbians at the center of the revolution.

## CHAPTER 2 DISCUSSION

Brand's *In Another Place, Not Here* is a text split into two parts in which two women, Verlia and Elizete, tell the story of revolution in Grenada and of their separate migrations. The text works to construct an alternate vision of nationalism that is more inclusive than Bishop's masculine constructions. Elizete was born in the Caribbean and says, "Nobody here can remember when they wasn't here" (8). Elizete cannot conceive of a place other than "here" – the Caribbean. The text also implies that nobody can remember their origins in Africa. While Verlia was also born in the Caribbean, she has no desire but to leave. She leaves the Caribbean for Toronto where she discovers the "Movement"<sup>1</sup> and her desire for women. Her journey comes full circle when she later returns to Grenada to pursue the revolution. Verlia meets Elizete in Grenada and they become lovers. After Verlia dies for the revolution, Elizete journeys to Toronto to seek out Verlia in the places where she once lived, assuming that the factors that shaped Verlia can be found in a geographical location. This is indicated in the title to part one: "Elizete, beckoned." The use of the word "beckoned" indicates that Elizete is called to Toronto; that there is still some piece of Verlia to be found there. The idea of beckoning also calls up another important element of the story – migration. Both Elizete and Verlia travel to other lands, and it is important to note that Brand's reformulations of nationalism emerge in sections of the

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<sup>1</sup>The Black Liberation Movement

text set outside of the Caribbean. The characters' displacement in Canada, a "foreign" country, forces them to confront their displacement from their "home" and thus envision a place where they can belong. In Brand's text, these insights into nationalism are caused by displacement and distance from the physical borders of the country in which they were born. This forces the characters to imagine a nation where they can belong. However necessary the displacement is in these imaginings, it proves to be insufficient in the end as Verlia must return to the Caribbean to physically create this new nation.

Conforming to European nationalisms, Bishop constructs the nation's land and history in such a way that excludes women from full citizenship. Both Brand and Bishop are influenced by traditional European nationalism in defining the land as female as they both construct the land as mother. While Bishop constructs the land in terms of possession, Brand's construction is more feminist in that it calls for a relationship with the land. In Bishop's call to fight for the revolution he says, "This land is ours, every square inch of its soil is ours, every grain of sand is ours, every nutmeg pod is ours, every beautiful young pioneer who walks on this land is ours, it is our responsibility – and ours alone – to fight to defend our homeland" (224). He names not only the elements that grow naturally on the land, but the people who walk the land as well. His relationship between the nation and the land is characterized by possession and protection. This is further emphasized in discussing that Grenadians abroad have "deep aspirations – patriotic aspirations – to own a piece of their mother land" (70). Not only does he articulate the land as the mother, but he also calls it an act of patriotism to possess that mother – a piece of Grenada.

This act is something that not only Grenadians in Grenada aspire to, but a desire that patriots abroad possess as well.

Bishop further excludes women from the nation-forming experience of the revolution. He denied women full access to the Grenada Revolution because he conceived of men as the only full combatants and citizens – because they protect the land and its women. The revolution is to protect the nation and the land of Grenada from penetration of imperialist objectives into the nation, a penetration which would feminize both the revolution and the nation. Bishop says, "we would sooner give up our lives before we compromise, sell out, or betray our sovereignty, our independence, our integrity, our *manhood* and the right of our people to national self-determination and social progress" (italics added, 14). This again forces women to the periphery – the use of the word "our" assumes that all citizens have manhood. Women, however have no "manhood" to give up in the name of the nation. They are denied full participation in the revolution because they are not allowed to protect, only to provide for, the nation.

Bishop's anti-colonial nationalist conception of black history focuses exclusively on black male political figures as a means of refuting colonial discourse's denial of Caribbean political legitimacy and history. Both Brand and Bishop reclaim their history that has been denied to them by the colonizers. They rewrite the ways that colonial history has pushed them to the margins. Benedict Anderson argues that "new emerging nations imagined themselves antique" (xiv). To create a new nation, the necessary fiction of antiquity must exist to bind the people together. Both Brand and Bishop reclaim the history of Africa and the African diaspora.

They both use the history that has been denied them through colonial powers and show the ways that their people have been oppressed in the past and how the new emerging nation will not only be based in this shared experience but will use it to protect themselves from erasure. They are both interested in giving voice to a past that has been silenced. Both Brand and Bishop speak to what Paul Gilroy calls the "playful diasporic intimacy that has been a marked feature of transnational black Atlantic creativity" (16). Gilroy argues that the culture of the diaspora is more binding than the singular experience of one nation. Brand's work repeatedly speaks to the ways that the Black experience has been silenced by colonial aggressors – such as with Verlia's preoccupation with those who reclaim the Black experience, both political and popular, such as Patrice Lumumba, Frantz Fanon, *The Last Poets* and Nikki Giovanni. Bishop also reclaims historical figures throughout the diaspora who have been silenced and reinstates them within the educational system. T.A. Marryshow is an early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Grenadian journalist and statesman who wrote against the disenfranchisement of the Caribbean and of African descendants around the world. He fought for representative government in Grenada, established the Grenada Representative Association in 1917, and was elected to the legislative council in 1925 once elections were established in 1924. He served nine terms in the legislature. Bishop gave a speech entitled "Heirs of Marryshow" that invokes the history revolution in the region. He says:

He [Marryshow] grew from the earth of Fedon, a great revolutionary who fused the humanism and hatred of tyranny sweeping from the French masses in 1789 by way of the great Haitian upsurge, with the fury of the rebel slave ground down in his own island by slavery and British colonialism. The huge courage of Fedon and his comrades in 1795 gave birth to Marryshow in 1887, and perhaps we should note that almost a

century divided them, and that Marryshow's birth in 1887 was in fact almost the mid-point in time between Fedon's Revolution and our Revolution. So in every sense, comrades, he was also a continuer, a link, a great bridge between two massive blows at imperialism. (168)

Bishop reclaims historical events and figures and connects them to his own revolution. By reinstating and reclaiming historical figures, both Brand and Bishop give a collective experience to Grenadians – an experience which creates a nation for them.

Like Bishop, Brand constructs the land as mother, but her construction indicates that the people must have an equal and reciprocal relationship with that mother land. In contrast to the relationship of possession Bishop imagines, Brand constructs a nurturing relationship between the land and the people. This is explicitly shown throughout the text with the image of birth and mothering. Elizete's relationship with the samaan tree is the most frequent. Elizete says "the samaan<sup>2</sup> was my mother" (4). Elizete creates a relationship with the land by calling it her mother. The samaan tree protects Elizete and nurtures her. In turn, Elizete forms a complicated relationship with the land. At points, Elizete represents the land at the same time that the land is her mother. They forge a relationship, which is ultimately what Brand argues for. The land is to be more than a mere possession to be protected, but a relationship that should be protected.

In contrast to Bishop, who relegates women to traditional and subservient roles, Brand places women at the center of the revolutionary government and of its resistance to the U.S. invasion. In making women central to these nation-forming experiences, Brand "bring[s] into

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<sup>2</sup>Ironically, the samaan tree is indigenous to India and brought to the Caribbean in the 19th century by the British as part of the colonial project.

historical visibility women's active cultural and political participation" in Grenada's national formation.

Brand challenges Bishop's role for women by placing Verlia not only within the revolution, but as a leader who calls Grenadians to action and dies for the revolution. Her participation destabilizes the placement of women on the periphery of the revolution by showing women as an integral part of the revolution. Brand's new nation cannot exist without the full participation of women within the revolution to create a new nation.

Brand further challenges Bishop's construction of women as weak by giving women combatant roles within the revolution. Bishop's wording again relegates women to the level of children and the weak. Bishop says, "our Revolution is for the poor in our country, for the working people in our country, for the youths and women in our country, for the middle classes in our country, for the fishermen in our country. . .this revolution has room for all of us, once we are patriotic, once we are prepared to end our exploited days" (36). Bishop's rhetoric is insidious because it tells women that they have a place within the revolution, but the place that he assigns them is not one of equality. He groups women with the youth, thus assuming that they are not on the same level as the adult men. Through the wording, women are again relegated to the level of children and the weak. They become property that needs protection rather than people willing to protect; Bishop excludes women from the concept of citizen. Again, Brand challenges this discourse by placing Verlia at the center of the revolution. Through Verlia's death, she actually works to protect the revolution and the men of her country. She says, "Comrades, comrades, comrades, let's go. I'm not dying in this fucking cemetery today." She

woke them up to the fire in their own bodies, the dreaminess of dying in the cemetery" (244).

Verlia wakes up the revolutionaries and leads them toward safety. She protects her comrades and the revolution with her body by jumping off the cliff and dying for them. Verlia's "protection" further challenges Bishop's notion of who can protect the nation.

Both Bishop and Brand use women as symbols in the revolution, but for different purposes. Brand uses Verlia and her participation to show the purpose of the revolution – to create a new, inclusive nation. Bishop uses symbolic women as a way to reify assumptions of masculinity. Bishop's formulation draws upon concepts of the female's role within European nationalism as articulated by George Mosse. Mosse sees nationalisms as deploying women as symbols of "both respectability and the collective sense of national purpose" (90). The women who represent the nation in Europe were to be tamed, and she is to represent nationalism, and thus the society identified with it, as chaste and modest. He continues that "in the midst of the wars of liberation, nationalism and respectability were thus linked, and the restricted, passive role of women legitimized" (96). The revolutionary woman was despised in modern Europe, thus Bishop's denial of women full participation within the revolution. In order to make the revolution respectable, i.e. acceptable to those that might resist, the women must fulfill traditionally female roles.

Bishop often calls upon the women to participate in traditionally female roles: increasing the morale, educating, and healing the revolutionaries. Women come to represent the private sphere of the revolution. They participate, but only at the level in which they are allowed; they are not encouraged to fight for their own independence and that of their comrades. In his



speech to the National Women's Organization, Bishop discusses the role of women in role in fighting oppression and he states their role in the success of the revolution:

If the women of our country had not come out in their tens of thousands on Revolution morn, if they had not brought water and food to the revolutionary troops, the new troops freshly created from the youth and unemployed in our country, if they had not come out and cooked the food and joined their menfolk in going to the police stations to ensure that the white flags of surrender were put up, maybe March 13<sup>th</sup> could have had a different meaning.(208)

Women, in this passage, have very set boundaries. They are to nourish the troops, who are assumed to be men, and fulfill traditionally female roles. Not only are they placed in traditional female roles, but in very heterosexually female roles. Bishop assumes heterosexuality as the norm, because he places these women as coming to join their "menfolk." They become one part of the pair, just as they are only one part of the revolution.

Brand, however, uses women in her text as active agents of nation formation rather than passive recipients of the nation. Verlia theorizes in Toronto about the place for women within the nation and espouses her politics to Elizete and the others once in Grenada. Elizete describes Verlia's activism and the response to her: "She was walking in that heat and we was all in the shed eating. . .she reach and start busy busy giving out papers. She look like the transport drop she by the junction and she walk in. People get up and start going but the old ones listen to she" (7). Brand depicts Verlia as an active agent in the revolution – she passes out the flyers, the old people listen to what she has to say, and she later takes up arms. Her role breaches traditional gendered binaries to take a new place not only within the revolution, but within the nation that will follow.

Brand, like Bishop, genders the land, but her gendering of the land is in fact a feminist reappropriation of Bishop's nationalism. Not only do Bishop and Brand gender the land, they also make land a necessary element of the nation. The nation-state is constructed through tying the land to a form of nationalism. Land is used to create the idea of borders and history, and both forms of nationalism are predicated on reclaiming history and land from a colonial past. Bishop's revolution is strictly tied into the idea that the land of Grenada is Grenada's and must be used in a new way. The nation is tied up in every "square inch of soil" and "every grain of sand, every nutmeg pod" (224). Each grain has its own purpose and identity. These ideas of place, land, and home are especially important in understanding the Grenadian revolution and its resistance to US imperialism, where Grenadians took to arms to keep the US from influencing their politics. Bishop invokes the land and its elements in his speeches to emphasize the importance of resisting the penetration of US forces. He emphasizes that the land belongs to the Grenadians and will not be dominated by imperialism. Two of his speech titles imply the importance of land: "In Nobody's Backyard," and "Every Grain of Sand is Ours!." These speeches are a call to nationalism and resistance of imperialism, especially US imperialism, by recognizing their geographical location in relation to the US and the danger of that location. Brand also portrays the fight against imperialism as necessary to the new nation. While Bishop focuses on subjugation based on vulnerability to the US, Brand furthers this to include the fight against the hetero-sexism that is present in the current constructions of nation.

Bishop's construction of land in his speeches attempts to create a nation that generates a sense of belonging and home, but Brand critiques Bishop's construction of nation as

exclusionary of those who don't fit with his masculine citizen. Benedict Anderson argues that nationalism is an imagined construct that consists of a community based on common interests and goals, an idea that the nation is "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (6). Bishop's imagined community differs from Brand's in its vision of who gets to imagine the community and whose "common interest and goals" it is based in whose common interests it expresses. For Bishop, the revolutionaries, the men, form the community, while Brand formulates the community as more inclusive.

Brand's novel constitutes feminist theory in Anne McClintock's terms. Her novel challenges the idea of a masculinist nation through the use of lesbian bodies. The text also works as a feminist reinterpretation in that it makes visible women's active role within the revolution and the construction of the new nation. Verlia does not remain on the domestic front of the revolution. "She [Verlia] bet all of she life on this revolution. She had no place else to go, no other countries, no other revolution, none of we either" (114-5). Her actions show the way that women pay for the revolution – in many of the same ways as men.

Brand also works to establish a nation that is both male and female, where the land and the nation converge. This illustrates Brand's attempt to bring "nationalist institutions into critical relation with other social structures and institutions" (McClintock 357). She illustrates the false split between the nation and the land; between man and woman: "but it was as if the world divided, people were not joined to it but divided and what they did was inconsequential to the earth, the sky, the river, the air dense with its own business. Not even the earth sided with them and that in the end was unbearable" (116). The split between the nation and the land is in the

end what kills Verlia. That the two are not joined shows that there is no place for her, a person who is between both the masculine and the feminine because of her acceptance of lesbian desire and her participation in the revolution. The idea that the revolution is to protect Bishop's "manhood" is shown through the dichotomous chasm between the land and the revolution because they have been falsely divided. Bishop's articulation does not allow for a relationship between the nation and the land – his articulation of the revolution and its goals does not allow for the two to be joined. And, in turn, Bishop's revolution cannot protect Verlia who works to protect a relationship that he has denied.

Another Caribbean feminist writer, Audre Lorde, similarly illustrates this need for a feminist reading of the land in her prologue to *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*. Through the idea of transgenering, Lorde envisions a land where neither the female nor the male become the dominant feature. She says: "I have always wanted to be both man and woman, to incorporate the strongest and richest parts of my mother and father within/into me – to share valleys and mountains upon my body the way the earth does in hills and peaks. I would like to enter a woman the way any man can, and to be entered" (7). In this passage, Lorde calls upon traditional traditional rhetoric which feminizes the land by equating it to the body. By claiming this equation and transforming it to encompass both male and female parts, Lorde constructs a transgendered concept of land, proving that the two can exist simultaneously, not separately. She insists that a new understanding of the relationship to the land can neither strictly be man nor woman – it must be both.

Brand's feminist revisioning of nationalism works to be more inclusive, not of just women, but of those of different class origins -- without erasing the differences. Brand also creates a new understanding of history and women's role within both the nation and the nation's history. Brand takes the traditional masculine nationalist discourse of connecting the land to the female body and subverts it by claiming that body as a lesbian body. This is shown through Elizete and Verlia's relationship. Elizete says of Verlia "I would not mistake she and think the flesh I lay down next to is all I hate. Not simple at all. Tell me what colour was the ground there, where you from, tell me what your mother's face look like, tell me what colour was the stones, but tell me what colour was the ground" (76). Elizete is closely connected to the land, and she does not mistake "the flesh I lay down to is all I hate." This reminds her that her desire is not accepted, but it is not something that feels wrong to her. It is a complicated relationship -- "Not simple at all." She furthers the complicated nature of their relationship by commenting and creating their history. by blending elements of the old. By specifically questioning where Verlia is from and her history, Elizete is able to blend elements of her history and of Verlia's history together to form something new, a history that they define for themselves. By asking about the mother and the color of the ground, Elizete formulates desire in her lover -- a lover that she wants to know more about. She desires the flesh that she is next to, but she also wants to know its history. Because Elizete is born under the samaan tree, she questions the color of the ground and the land in order to understand Verlia and their desire.

Brand physically links Elizete to the land throughout the text, but she is often described in relation to the land in the context of her desire. She says, "I was like a child for her love. I

was greedy for she. So greedy I'm not sure if that cliff wasn't my mouth swallowing Verlia up" (83). The image of Verlia's death is also one of desire and consumption, an allusion to oral sex. While it is literally the land that has swallowed Verlia, Elizete questions if it is her desire that consumed Verlia in the end. Elizete is so closely linked to the land throughout the text that this almost seems possible. Elizete not only seems to be the daughter of the land, but at points in the texts, Brand appears to equate her to the land. Even Verlia, one who wishes to deny her own corporeality, says of Elizete that "she needed a woman so earthbound that she would rename every plant she came upon" (202). Elizete's renaming the land becomes an act of reclamation, one where she reclaims the relationship of the people to the land. She becomes the one that defines the land and her desire.

Elizete's relationship with the land is that of mother/daughter, which plays off of the traditional conception of the land as mother. This relationship is a key element in Brand's reconstruction of nation. Bishop constructs land as a feminine; it is to be preserved and fought for. Brand takes this notion of land as feminine and reappropriates it in order to create a new vision of nation. Verlia says, "we navel string bury here, she say, and we mother and we father and everybody before them. Oliviere use it up like manure for the cane, and what we get, one barrack room and credit in he store until we owe he more than he owe we. . . Is not just people navel string bury here is their shame and their body" (14-15). Verlia gives voice to a history and tradition of the land and the people that have traditionally been silenced by colonial structures. The tradition of the navel string is feminine, in that the mothers generally bury the string to tie the child to the land and allow them to know where home is. A figurative reading of the navel string

shows the connection that Grenadians have to the land that Oliviere, an overseer, does not.

This relationship is advantageous to him in that it ties the women to the land and it fertilizes his crops. Brand emphasizes women's connection with the land; their connection makes them the first step to the revolution and protection of their relationship to land and history. This is unlike Bishop, in that they stress the importance of protecting the relationship rather than the land on its own. By emphasizing that their connection to the land is being desecrated by colonial structures, women are called upon to protect their children's heritage: their history and home through revolution.

Brand directly calls the land mother, which is a further understanding of the navel string, in that the navel string is what connects the child to the mother in the womb. By burying the navel string within the land, the connection of the children to the land is reinforced. Even though the land is conceived of in terms of the "mother," colonialist structures strip the land of its ability to mother and nurture. Elizete, who is an orphan, often refers to the land in mothering language. She says, "A samaan is a tree with majesty and I think of this samaan as my mother" (17). The samaan tree becomes Elizete's mother when her own mother abandons her. Appropriately, the samaan tree becomes representative of the Caribbean landscape and history even though it is not indigenous to the Caribbean. The samaan tree was brought to the Caribbean by the British to see what plants can endure in different climates across the empire (Cudjoe). The same is true of the people of the Caribbean. They were brought to the Caribbean for the benefit of the British. This shows that the relationship that the people have with the land, just as they have with the samaan is not a natural one. Brand uses the samaan tree to mother Elizete to show the

ruptured relationship people have with the land ‘ a land they were brought to against their will. The people’s relationship to the land is one that was forced upon them, but it is one that they have reclaimed for themselves. Ironically, the samaan tree becomes an image of protection in Elizete’s mind, not one of violence. Elizete’s real mother drops her off under the samaan tree because she is unable to care/mother her. The samaan tree becomes Elizete’s mother.

*In Another Place, Not Here* furthers the image of the land as mother through the image of the land actually birthing the children. Brand uses natural imagery to show Grenadians as crops of the land. Grenadians are the crop of the land, and this offers an immediate connection with the people to the land from which they were "harvested." Brand presents this idea of the land as complicating the concept of belonging:

There was a valley and hillsides and crops, and crops of children, crops enough to bury and plant and grow again because really there is no ending, ending is only something we hope for like darkness, and bush trails and blood trails . . . blood trees. . .Places where someone was hung, places that didn’t need description or writing down. Certainly not owning. And belonging? . . .Belonging was too small, too small for their magnificent rage. They had surpassed the pettiness of their oppressors who measured origins by speaking of a great patriarch and property marked out by violence, a rope, some iron; who measured time in the future only and who discarded memory like useless news. . .They were not interested in belonging. It could not suffice. Not now. It could not stanch the gushing ocean, it could not bandage the streaming land. They saw with the bloodful clarity of rage. (42-43)

While the land is able to give birth to the children, it is unable to nurture them. The landscape is presented as one which is unable to nurture because of its tragic history. The land is a bad mother, a mother who is detached from herself and her history. This is also a mother who is detached from her children, leaving them with no sense of belonging. This is a symptom of the enforcement of colonial history. The children are unable to "belong" as their oppressors are,



because their mother, the land, cannot heal itself and allow others to connect to it. This leaves angry, abandoned children who see this disconnection with "the bloodful clarity of rage." The children of the land see the ways that they are denied their history, their land, and their selves. They are no longer "interested in belonging" because the issue is too small for their rage. They are interested in reclaiming the land and healing the "streaming land."

The land is unable to nurture its children, therefore the children must mother and heal the land. Similarly, the inability to nurture because of the rage and streaming land is illustrated in the parental relationships in the text. Elizete and Abena's relationships with their mothers illustrate the ways in which women are unable to nurture their children. Verlia's aunt and uncle's are also unable to nurture her. She says that she "cannot see how they think this is love, how they think that she should live with them quietly dying in acceptance, asking permission and begging pardon, cutting herself off from any growing, solidifying when she wants to liquefy, to make fluid, grow into her Black self . . . They must have decided to cut themselves out in this way to avoid the trouble of their skin" (149). Because of the colonial structures, Verlia's aunt and uncle are unable to "stanch the gushing ocean"; instead they cut themselves off from themselves. Brand depicts the aunt and uncle and mothers to show the devastating consequences of acceptance of the colonial structures ' an interest in "belonging." Verlia's aunt and uncle deny their race, and Verlia sees this as not only a betrayal of themselves but as a betrayal of her. They see Verlia as helping them "conform to some part of the puzzle, they are convinced that they will be rewarded with acceptance. Ordinariness. Man, woman, husband, wife, couple, parents, Black. They are counting on the first six words. They think her addition

will fill out some of the rest somehow, make them white in this white town" (141). By willing themselves to fit into the "puzzle," in the end, they deny parts of themselves. The parts that Verlia wishes to reclaim. The parts that she can see with her own "bloodful clarity of rage" and the parts that eventually send her back to the Caribbean to fight.

The literal abandonment from the mother is continued with Elizete and Abena and the effects that this has upon their understandings of who they are and where they belong. Abena, Verlia's previous lover in Toronto, discusses her alienation from her own mother, "They sent for us, sent for us daughters then washed our faces in their self-hatred. Self-hatred they learned from the white people whose toilets they had scrubbed whose asses they had wiped, whose kitchens they had scrubbed, whose hatred they had swallowed, and when they sent for us they hated us because they saw their reflection" (231). The land and the mother mirror each other in this relationship, in that their histories have made them unable to nurture their children. They are unable to nurture their children, because they are unable to nurture their selves. They, like the aunt and uncle, have begun to speak in terms of "belonging" like the colonizers; like the white people. Because they cannot "bandage the streaming land," it becomes too much for them to bear. The mothers, like the land, cannot heal their selves, and as a consequence can only inflict damage upon their children.

Because of the ways that the children have been denied mothers, they are able to see with the "bloodful clarity of rage," which gives them the desire for reconnection with the land and healing their selves. The text searches for reconnecting through revolution and the reconstruction of a nation that allows them to live undivided. This concept recalls Anderson's

idea of the "imagined community." They imagine a nation where they can be whole. The text works to heal the mother, the land, and give it back to her children. It does this by offering the relationship to the land that colonial structures stripped from the people. It also shows the necessity of the children taking on the mothering role to heal and make whole the land.

Elizete and Verlia attempt to heal the land, at the same time they attempt to heal themselves, through revolution as well as through migration. They need to escape the land in order to understand the ways to return to it to heal. Verlia returns to the land to heal herself, and in turn works to heal the land. Elizete, who has worked the land her whole life, leaves Grenada and finds her connection to Grenada in Canada. Through their rage, they work to create a revolution that will protect the land and give it back its history and role as nurturer. The revolution is to create a new nation that values the relationships between land, history and its people. Verlia and Elizete leave in the search for beginnings instead of endings. The revolution works to help create these beginnings.

Through forced migration from the land, presented as a mother figure to the female characters, the characters go through further fragmentation from their selves; this fragmentation is also evident in the fragmentation of the collective nation. Even though these women are geographically displaced, the notion of a whole "self" is also one that is in exile; they are forced to privilege one identity over the rest ' they are immigrants first and foremost while in Canada. This speaks to Boyce Davies notion of nation as a place of exile. Davies furthers her argument by saying that "the rewriting of home becomes a critical link in the articulation of identity. It is a play of resistance to the domination which identifies where we come from, but also locates

home in its many transgressive and disjunctive experiences" (115). The migration of Elizete and Verlia shows these forms of resistance as well as the ways in which they are alienated from the self. Elizete says of women in Canada "At first she'd thought these women always foreign, always distant. They had a way of looking and not looking, of never being known" (56).

Looking at other women from the Caribbean, Elizete becomes distrustful and sees them as foreign both to herself and to Canada, a country which denies her her body by "looking and not looking." They do not see her. She says, "Heavy as hell. Her body. She doesn't want a sense of it while she's living on the street" (54). Her corporeality holds her back while she is on the street, so she wants no sense of it.

By insisting upon the mind/body split, Elizete continues the gendered binary relationship of the body and the mind. By severing herself from her body, it is just as she has severed herself from the land by leaving for Toronto. Paul Gilroy argues that "the themes of nationality, exile, and cultural affiliation accentuate the inescapable fragmentation and differentiation of the black subject" (35). The oppressive nature of the nation and all that it encompasses forces a migration not only from the nation itself, but the nation that has been internalized in the body. This is shown in the text where the history becomes too oppressive for both characters and must be shed, a forced fragmentation which in the end becomes too much for the women. By denying their history, they deny parts of their identity. Thus they must imagine a nation that will help fuse the fragments and make them whole.

Women's bodies seem to be the locus of the re-connection with the land and history. While they are able to bridge history and land, its destination, the final outcome, is ambiguous.

Elizete says "A woman can be a bridge, limber and living, breathless, because she don't know where the bridge might lead, she don't need no assurance except that it would lead out with certainty, no assurance except the arch and disappearance. At the end it might be the uptake of air, the chasm of what she don't know, the sweep and soar of sheself unhandled, making sheself a way to cross over" (16). Women's bodies become the locus of migration and fragmentation. By "crossing over," women move between both the North American and the Caribbean worlds, and are at home in neither. Teresa Zackodnik argues that "this gap [between Canada and the Caribbean] highlights both the othering involved in the racist assumption that she is not a Canadian but an alien who belongs elsewhere, and her resulting dialogic identity consisting of self and the other within 'one silent, the other vocal' (198). Racist assumptions make the women invisible in Canada and masculine nationalist ideals isolate the women in Caribbean society. The women internalize these ideas and they become fragmented from their notions of self. The new form of nation that these women work to create implies that the women's body can become a bridge which speaks to both sides, thus fusing the fragments of their identity. The idea of the woman's body being a bridge implies reconnecting, as a bridge connects two locations. Though Verlia implies that the final destination is uncertain, it is unimportant. The only certainty is the "arch and disappearance" of the body. Women are only able to reconnect with their body through reconnecting with their selves.

Because of the forced fragmentation and denial of history, Verlia returns to the Caribbean calling for the revolution. Verlia is homeless and nationless and seeks to rectify this situation through a revolution that would allow her to reconnect with her history, with her land,

with her desire, and with her body. Separation from the land has forced this disjuncture within her; but merely returning home is insufficient. Verlia says, "My body is consuming me when I need it to run" (227). The history starts to take her over, forcing an end to her migration.

### CHAPTER 3 CONCLUSIONS

Brand uses the framework of traditionally masculine Caribbean discourses of nationalism to rewrite nationalism and reappropriate many of its terms in a feminist context. Through her trope of land as the mother and her role of women within the nation and the revolution, Brand articulates a form of nationalism that is more inclusive of the groups that are marginalized by Bishop's (and other Caribbean nationalists) forms of nationalism. Her nationalism reclaims land, history and nation and the relationship between the terms in order to create a new nationalist framework. Dionne Brand's text works to rewrite forms of nationalism that she feels leave out women and their experiences within nation formation. To do this, she illustrates Anne McClintock's theories of feminine nationalism. She investigates the gendered formation of sanctioned male theories by calling into question the ways in which women's role within the revolution and nation formation have been marginalized. While Bishop calls for traditionally female roles within the nation, such as to care for the "menfolk," Brand creates the characters of Verlia and Elizete to show alternative roles that women can play both within the revolution and the nation that is to follow. By giving them active roles, outside traditionally male-sanctioned roles, she gives women and their history visibility, thus illustrating McClintock's point to bring into visibility women's roles within nation formation.

Brand uses McClintock's point three, "bringing nationalist institutions into critical relation with other social structures and institutions" indirectly, in that she focuses on the failures of the social structures and institutions in the masculine nation – not only in the Caribbean, but in Canada as well. This is shown through Elizete's abandonment by her mother who leaves her because she knows that "this was how people lived here, passing children and food and necessity and word onto each other. Here, there was no belonging that was singular, no need to store up lineage or count it; all this blood was washed thick and thin, rinsed and rubbed and licked and stained" (39). Brand writes the idea of children being passed along with food and necessity to show the ways that the government institutions have failed, and thus have become replaced with a social system of necessity. This system requires a connection that relies on more than "belonging," but on a shared history that relies on blood, thus implying the middle passage as part of that shared history. Brand also critiques social structures in the way that the community allows Elizete to be abused by her husband. It becomes not only a critique on the community, but on heterosexual relationships. Elizete dreams of "a place where a woman can live after she done take the neck of a man" in order to show her unhappiness in her relationship with Isaiah, her husband (12). After Isaiah finds her making love to Verlia, he goes crazy, and she is finally free of him. She is able to find the land where she can live after taking the "neck of a man." Her relationship with Isaiah leaves her unhappy and dead inside, whereas her relationship with Verlia feels natural to her. It becomes her "grace" and even the "sure killing in him [Isaiah] couldn't sweep me away from the sweetness of her. I didn't even raise my head. I finished loving Verlia taking she face and she skin black as water in my hand" (5). Brand



critiques the heterosexual relationships as unnatural for Elizete by showing her desire and her need for Verlia.

Finally, Brand illustrates McClintock's point four that a feminist revisioning should take into account the structures of race, class, and ethnicity as part of a power structure through her focus on Black women's history and desire in the formation of the nation. Verlia and Elizete are the central figures within the text and the ones to create the new version of nationhood within the text. That they are lesbians illustrates the ways that Brand intends to pay attention to the issues that "continue to bedevil privileged forms of feminism" (357). Brand does bring into visibility communities which have been rendered invisible by challenging the notion of nationalism as belonging to the middle-class. This is shown throughout her text with her references to intellectuals such as Frantz Fanon and Nikki Giovanni, to political leaders such as Patrice Lumumba and Ernesto Che Guevara, to popular artists such as The Last Poets and Nina Simone. By crumbling the categories that differentiate these thinkers, Verlia constructs her own ideas of nationalism. She collects these ideas from "rumours of some set of coloured people somewhere beating some colonial power down" (161). She recognizes that resistance can occur with anybody and, with that recognition, she comes up with forms of nationalism that are more representative of the people rather than just the intellectual. Brand uses Verlia's vision to illustrate how nationalism is only viable when it is something useful to the people it is supposed to encompass.

Brand uses the framework of traditionally masculine Caribbean discourses of nationalism to rewrite nationalism and reappropriate many of its terms in a feminist context.

Through her trope of land as the mother and her role of women within the nation and the revolution, Brand articulates a form of nationalism that is more inclusive of the groups that are marginalized by Bishop's (and other Caribbean nationalists) forms of nationalism. Her nationalism reclaims land, history and nation and the relationship between the terms in order to create a new nationalist framework.

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