As one might expect from David Brion Davis, a foremost historian of slavery whose works have always been characterized by enormous erudition and a capacious awareness of the varieties of slavery over space and time, *Inhuman Bondage* is a superb summary of a vast body of literature in one of the most dynamic fields in all of historical scholarship. Beginning with slavery in antiquity, Davis adeptly summarizes principal trends in the historiography of slavery and antislavery (the abolition of slavery forms almost as important a theme in this work as the operations of slavery itself) until the end of the American Civil War.

Readers of his previous works will not be surprised at his particular emphases. He stresses the cultural origins of slavery as beginning in ancient attempts to consider some categories of people not fully human. He takes issue with Orlando Patterson’s idea of slavery as a form of social death insofar as Davis considers that defining people as property, akin to how animals are defined as property, is of central rather than secondary importance in what makes slavery a distinctive social and legal institution. The dehumanization of slaves and the ensuing equation of slaves with property is thus a consequence of enslavement more than a cause. Throughout this book, Davis insists upon the close relationship between bestialization and enslavement. For Davis, what is central about slaves is not that they are people without honor but that they are people whose humanity is never recognized fully. In this respect, he takes an Aristotelian view of the constitution of enslavement. He locates much of the ideological justification for slavery within religion, paying more attention than one might expect to the curious story of the curse of Ham and to the role both Judaism and Islam played in the ideological jus-
tification of slavery. Culture rather than economics is at the forefront of his explanations for how enslavement in the Americas came to be in its historically recognizable form.

The origins of this book lie in a summer lecture series Davis gave to New York secondary teachers. Its gestation explains the organization of the book and its purpose. Davis is concerned throughout Inhuman Bondage not only with providing teachers and general readers with a first-rate survey of slavery but also with means whereby teachers can show students the continuing relevance of the history of slavery for understanding contemporary issues, mainly in the United States. Davis’s linkages between past enslavement and contemporary concerns is adroit and well balanced but does give a somewhat didactic tone to the work, which is not surprising given that each chapter is clearly an expanded written-down version of a spoken lecture. Occasionally, for example, Davis takes readers aside for the sort of digression, drawn from his own experiences from 1945 onwards, common in the classroom but not often employed in academic writing. These digressions, however, are extremely effective in placing slavery in a global perspective.

The origins of the book also explain the disproportionate focus in the book that is given to slavery in colonial North America and the United States. Davis is concerned with the way in which slavery became a problem, and remains a problem, in that country. For readers of this journal, the attention given to slavery and its abolition in the United States makes the subtitle of the book somewhat misleading. Slavery in the West Indies is hardly ignored (it takes up half of two chapters, with the Haitian Revolution getting due prominence) and Davis is at pains to insist that slavery not only has deep roots in antiquity, making it important to evaluate the variety of slavery over time, but was also crucial in the development of Atlantic societies, making it vital to examine slavery over space. But the heart of the book is concerned with slavery in the United States and the references to the West Indies tend to point up either ways in which slavery in the United States was similar to slavery elsewhere or, more often, to demonstrate the exceptional nature of American enslavement. The purpose is less to treat slavery in the New World in its entirety (which would necessitate both more attention to the British and French West Indies and also more material on slavery in its distinctly African phase) than to place slavery in the mid-nineteenth-century South in larger context. The book is temporally and spatially limited, with the slave culture of the antebellum South treated as normative and West Indian slave culture as largely exceptional rather than, as we might have it, the other way around.

One can see why this approach would work as a text for upper-level high school and freshman university students in the United States – indeed, Inhuman Bondage is a perfect text for introductory classes on North American slavery. But the American focus of the book makes it not work so well as a
textbook on slavery in general and on slavery in the West Indies in particular. Certainly, the French and Haitian revolutions and Latin American independence might get more attention than the American Revolution as transformative events in the history of New World slavery if all areas of the New World were treated equally. The political implosion of Cuba in the 1860s which helped precipitate abolition in that island might also draw the sort of attention that Davis devotes to the American Civil War. Finally, more attention to the West Indies and especially to slave revolts in the region would draw attention away from the nineteenth century, where slaves were Creoles and Christian, to the eighteenth century, when enslaved people were African and seldom Christian. Tackey’s revolt in Jamaica in 1760 is not mentioned in the text, despite being far more serious in its implications than any revolt in the United States, and the bloody Berbice rebellion of 1762-1764, the first instance of a slave rebellion in the New World meeting with any degree of success, is noted only in passing. In short, while this is, as one would expect, an indispensable guide to American slavery, it is not quite the survey of slavery in the New World, especially the West Indies, that we need.


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In the United States, the Civil War, Jim Crow segregation, and a lengthy Civil Rights movement ensured race and slavery a prominent place in historical investigation. This was not so for France, where geographic separation from its slave plantations and the silencing effect of French republicanism on race more generally, coupled with a narrow conception of the boundaries of French history, rendered these issues out of sight and out of mind. French historians looking beyond the Hexagon have given far greater attention to France’s Second Empire and the trauma of decolonization than to its slave-holding past (Sepinwall forthcoming). Since the 1990s, a modest but grow-
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ing literature on race and slavery has begun to disrupt the silence on these issues in the French national narrative.¹

In the wake of France’s 1989 bicentennial, political philosopher Louis Sala-Molins, a Catalanian-born professor emeritus at the University of Toulouse and Paris-Sorbonne, was one of a small number of French scholars to challenge the narrow perspective on the Revolution and Enlightenment that informed commemorations in France and abroad. His 1992 book, Les Misères des lumières: Sous la raison, l’outrage, now translated into English as The Dark Side of the Light: Slavery and the French Enlightenment, is the sequel to his better-known work on the French slave code, published in 1987 as Le Code noir, ou le calvaire de Canaan. Repealed only during the Second Republic, the Code noir remained the institutional basis of French slavery for some 163 years, and few scholars have examined its provisions as deeply as Sala-Molins.

Compared to this earlier book, The Dark Side of the Light is less a traditional work of scholarship than a riposte in the public struggle over the substance, meaning, and memory of the French past. A product of its historical moment, it is a biting critique of the refusal of the bicentennial’s organizers to confront the legacies of slavery and colonialism in France and its former colonies or to recognize existing knowledge about the philosophes and their Colonial Enlightenment. Here Sala-Molins begins with the work of Michèle Duchet (1971), though he might have pointed to the same willful dismissal that William Cohen’s 1980 French Encounter with Africans received when it was translated into French the following year and contemptuously reviewed in Le Monde.

In delivering this volley, Sala-Molins’s presentist narrative devices may jar some readers upon first reading. At their core, however, the three essays pose basic questions that have yet to be adequately addressed by French scholars.

“Condorcet, ‘Lamenting’” is simultaneously a critique of the marquis de Condorcet’s Réflexions de l’esclavage des nègres (1788) and a protest of Condorcet’s “Pantheonization” in December 1989. The argument is clearly put: all of France’s Enlightenment thinkers, “the major as well as the minor ones, Raynal and Diderot included – failed to interrogate colonial conquest and domination” (p. 11). Adopting the voice of the enslaved, Sala-Molins asks what, in the end, did the “rhetoric and anathemas” of Condorcet or Raynal yield? Whereas celebrants pointed to the philosophes’ laudable and numerous condemnations of slavery, Sala-Molins saw only lamenting, for none of the philosophes had proposed significant modifications to or abrogation of the Code noir as a legal institution. In the end, he concludes, the

philosophes’ “struggle for the Negro as a human being […] smacks too much of sugar” (p. 52).

In “The Market of Equals,” Sala-Molins reads the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen “with the Code noir in hand” and notices another basic truth hidden in the bicentennial’s misremembering. As the words “All French men” became “All men,” and “free and equal in rights” became “free and equal” in the bicentennial’s reading of Article 1, public memory invested the Declaration with a universalism wholly absent from the original. Yet, as Sala-Molins explains, the slave did not become the citizen of the Republic, because the slave was never a subject of the king, but only what the Code noir had stipulated a century before – chattel. Slaves were indeed present in the Declaration – in Articles 2 and 17, as the property of the colonists. Through the voice of the slave, Sala-Molins concedes that Condorcet at least conceived of Africans in the Caribbean as once “a people.” Yet, wondering just how long it will take “to recover our capacity to exercise political sovereignty,” the slave adds, “nobody wants this experiment” (p. 109).

The final essay, “Of Men and (Under) Dogs,” returns to the core issue: the refusal of bicentennial organizers to investigate the Revolution’s colonialist assumptions. How could it be otherwise, Sala-Molins suggests, when this so-called “universalist” philosophy equivocated and dithered as it did – and “thinks it has examined the problem when it has dealt with the imperial interests of a metropole that has since become a republic.” French scholars were also to blame – especially those who continued to quote Condorcet denouncing slavery or Raynal “predicting” the emergence of a Toussaint-Louverture – as if, without them, Toussaint could not have thought to free himself: “How did he manage to snatch from the Enlightenment what the Enlightenment never dreamt of?” (p. 124). Similarly at issue was the uncritical presentation of the Friends of Blacks (Société des Amis des Noirs), whose members included Condorcet, the Abbé Grégoire, and the free-colored planter, Julien Raimond, as sentinels of a liberationist Enlightenment. In the bicentennial narrative (to the degree that France’s outre-mer entered bicentennial discussions at all), these were the “good guys,” even though, as Sala-Molins reminds us, their mission always presumed control of the slaves and colonial domination. Above all, failing to acknowledge the slaves’ revolution of 1793-94 in Saint-Domingue, the bicentennial “simply erased revolution from the Revolution.” For Sala-Molins, surveying the landscape of French public memory in 1989, it seemed the colonialist assumptions embedded in the Declaration of 1789 had changed but little: Then it was the “negroes.” Now it was the immigrants: “They need to wait; their day will come” (p. 138).

As one expression of France’s contested bicentennial commemoration, it is too early to judge what impact The Dark Side of the Light will have on future examinations of French public memory. But through his writings and public activities, Sala-Molins has earned a place in that history. He was, for
example, the only academic to give testimony before the French Senate in the passage of the Taubira-Delannon law of May 2001 by the French National Assembly, which declared French involvement in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean slave trade and slavery a crime against humanity.

The narratives told in national commemorations reveal much about ongoing struggles over the limits of the possible in the present and future. The uneasy relationship between public or “official” memory and pressing issues in contemporary French society that impelled Sala-Molins to write has not abated. The debates over undocumented immigrants that culminated in the sans-papiers movement of the 1990s, the short-lived Article 4 of the February 23, 2005 French law on colonialism (repealed in 2006) that mandated high school (lycée) curricula to address the “positive” role of French colonialism, especially in North Africa, and the riots of November 2005, all suggest what is at stake in France’s struggle to view its past more fully. In his concluding epilogue, Sala-Molins ends with a vision and a question. The year is 2089, and it is the Pantheonization of Toussaint-Louverture. The question is: will 100 years be enough?

REFERENCES


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In the early years of this century publishers eagerly sought monographs to publish to coincide with the 2007 anniversary of the abolition of the British and U.S. slave trades. One such work was Stephanie Smallwood’s 1999 Duke University Ph.D. dissertation, “Saltwater Slavery,” now rewritten partially by Smallwood and published by Harvard University Press. The book contains an introduction, seven chapters (the last functioning as a conclusion), three frontispiece maps, and four photographs of slave trade documents. There is no bibliography. It studies the British slave trade ca.1675-1725 and makes extensive use of Royal African Company (RAC) documents housed in the National Archives, London and the Rawlinson manuscripts kept at the Bodleian Library, Oxford University.

Whereas the dissertation focused on 1660-1700 and spotlighted slaving voyages from the Gold Coast to the British West Indies, *Saltwater Slavery* begins with a story from York River, Virginia in 1721, when twelve British slaving vessels arrived between April 6 and October 30. On these Guineamen were “1,735 people whose lives, having eventuated in voyages of captivity from Senegambia, the Gold Coast, Calabar and Madagascar, converged in Virginia, where they were funneled into the burgeoning institution of chattel slavery” (pp. 2-3). Smallwood’s aim is to bring “the people aboard slave ships to life as subjects in American social history” (p. 3), and readers learn that in upcoming pages they will be following “the tributary representing the forced dispersal of some 300,000 captives who departed from the Gold
Coast (present-day Ghana) between 1675 and 1725 aboard ships bound for the English American colonies” (p. 3).

Unfortunately, readers do not learn much about the lives of enslaved Africans forced on board British Guineamen. The problem, of course, is that extant source material, written by Europeans interested only in Africans as slaves, reveals little about their history in Africa, on the Middle Passage, or in the Americas. The four representative RAC slave-trading documents included in the book – two from the Gold Coast (1677, 1712), one on the Passage (1675-76), and one in Barbados (1676) – illustrate the problem: all four enumerate Africans as men, women, boys, or girls. Thus we read: “We cannot know how communities made sense of the loss of family members to the slave trade” (p. 61), “the anonymous thousands who came aboard slave ships” (p. 109), or the flowery “on the ocean’s horizon the captives encountered only the social world of the slave ship, a similarly mutilated assemblage that was not a functioning whole but rather an arbitrary collective of isolated and alienated persons” (p. 121).

The book also includes very little that is not already known about the British or other transatlantic slave trades. It is not a major insight to inform readers that European slaving traders transformed Africans into “commodities” (pp. 6, 8, 33-35, 43, 61-63, 82, 101, 153, 157, 204) or that there were “stages in the commodification of African captives” (p. 156). It is no surprise that African peoples were displaced by their forced migration (p. 131, 134) or that they suffered “social death” (p. 52, 59-61, 196) – a well-traveled idea. Specialist readers already know that most American planters preferred creole slaves to those from Africa – the “saltwater slaves” of the book’s title.

The information about the British slave trade that is new is not placed fully in historical or historiographical context. Citing Captain Peter Blake’s journal from 1676, Smallwood finds evidence that the RAC used wooden platforms to decrease between-deck space and hence increase the number of enslaved Africans imprisoned (p. 74). This grim innovation enabled the British to load more captives than French or Dutch rivals (p. 71). Readers do not learn that Blake’s January 8, 1676 journal entry2 is the earliest evidence about platforms or that the first scholar to use Blake does not transcribe this information (Donnan 1930:202). Similarly, we find out that in 1706 the RAC paid captains a gratuity of four slaves out of each 104 people transported alive (p. 70). Is this the first evidence of the standard four percent coast commission (£4 in £104 or 3.85 percent) paid captains later in the eighteenth century?

One questions the decision to broaden the time frame to include 1701-1725. It seems that the press wanted the book, marketed in the United States,
to contain material on Virginia and indeed to launch the book with a story about slaving vessels arriving in the colony. This narrative from York River in 1721 does not work, though, since readers will assume that its importance is to demonstrate the heterogeneity of African peoples forced into Virginian slavery, and hence that Smallwood will engage the historiographical debate about African cultural carryovers. The “plurality of ethnicities” forced into the slave trade is mentioned later (p. 104), but the fact that Africans from Senegambia, the Gold Coast, Calabar, and Madagascar arrived in Virginia is irrelevant to the book. In the last chapter we learn that only in 1720s tidewater Virginia “did a population of American-born descendants of saltwater slaves finally win the battle to put down stable roots to anchor a sustainable web of community and kinship” (p. 199). One suspects that some manuscript readers wanted more from the term “saltwater slaves.”

To my mind, the main value of Saltwater Slavery is that it includes transcriptions of lengthier extracts from slaving captains’ journals than did Donnan seventy-nine years ago. Captain Blake’s journal, 1675-76 (Donnan 1930:199-209; Saltwater Slavery, pp. 40, 72-76, 137-47, 169), is particularly important. The cited Rawlinson material (eighty-six notes in Chapters 2 and 3) is less valuable, as it now may be found in Robin Law’s three-volume set (Law 1997-2006). Surprisingly, Smallwood’s Ph.D. dissertation includes more useful historical information than that contained in this published monograph. Saltwater Slavery is for general readers who want to contemplate the horrors of transatlantic slavery.

REFERENCES


Ruben Gowricharn’s edited collection comes out of a conference entitled “Globalisation, Diaspora and Identity Formation,” and is divided into four sections: conceptual issues, regional transnational communities, global transnationalism, and transnationalism and social cohesion.

In the first of these, Michelle Reis sets the stage for the case-studies by making a clear argument for considering the Caribbean’s contribution to theoretical discussions of transnational and diasporic processes. Kelvin Santiago-Valles highlights circuits of globalization and transnational networks that supply both context and impetus for two organizational efforts in Trinidad and Guyana in a chapter that would probably have worked better in the section on global transnationalism. Fernando Rosa Ribeiro’s attempt to demarcate the Guianas as a coherent conceptual space is most compelling, for he notes that scholarly discussions of the Caribbean have failed to keep up with the complexity and fluidity of hinterland border spaces that connect French Guiana, Suriname, Guyana, Brazil, and Venezuela. (This point is even more significant if we consider that it allows us to bring indigenous populations, long absent from such discussions, into the frame of transnationalism.) Ribeiro’s discussion is given empirical explication in several of the later chapters that assess Brazilian migrants in French Guiana and Paramaribo. (Interestingly, in Chapters 7 and 10 there appear to be different opinions on the degree to which Brazilians have “taken their place in Suriname” or continue to be set apart by language and continuing ties and desires to return to Brazil.) Discussions of Caribbean diaspora and transnationalism seem predominantly obsessed with extraregional migration flows (but see Puri 2003). What is therefore most refreshing about this collection is a discussion of Caribbean transnationalism that is geographically situated in the region itself. It also decenters the usual Anglophone Caribbean focus, in the process bringing into clear view some elements that tend not to be considered in other studies, such as navigating questions of language and multilingualism as part of Caribbean migrant experiences in the region or...
thinking about cross-border interactions when territorial boundaries are so clearly permeable (see especially Chapters 6 and 7).

The second section, on regional transnationalism, is the most tightly integrated and comes at the question of transnationalism in a number of ways. Chapter 5, for example, addresses the transnational underpinnings of national identity through a discussion of the effect of migration of its own nationals on the evolution of what it means to be Curaçaoan. Chapter 7 looks at investing in a transnational public sphere as a way of making claims on the host society. And in Chapters 6 and 7 we are shown the varying levels of vulnerability that not only set migrants apart from “citizens” but that differentiate migrant communities themselves.

In the section on global transnationalism, the contributions of Brinsley Samaroo, on Mahatma in the Caribbean, and Alex van Stipriaan, on the commemoration of Afro-Surinamese Emancipation Day, complement each other nicely, offering rich historical and ethnographic insight into the transnational processes through which identifications and practices are forged. Suggestive too – and explored more fully in van Stipriaan’s account of the changing symbolic significance of Emancipation Day – are the ways in which diasporic affiliations enter and alter a local terrain where a variety of other interlocutors exist, stabilizing notions of cultural differentiation in response to felt exclusion or offering routes to forms of solidarity that cut across divisions.

In the final section, on social cohesion, Krishna Seunarinesingh looks at the way in which a national identity for Trinidad and Tobago is constituted and imagined through an internet newsletter. It is not clear in his discussions of a diasporic public sphere that all of the contributors are indeed living “outside their homeland,” or even what such a difference might make, and while we see what is emphasized (homogeneity and creolization), there is little discussion of the significance of what is left out for this discursive consistency to be maintained. Wim Hoogbergen and Dirk Kruijt, in keeping with the book’s theme, center movement and resettlement and consider the role of the state in their discussion of social cohesion and group relations between Maroons and garimpeiros in western French Guiana and eastern Suriname. Contemporary migrations and transnational social relations somehow elude Gowricharn’s attempts to fruitfully recast plural society debates in the region (a division that is also reproduced in his opening chapter, where the question of social cohesion seems more interested in addressing pluralism than in considering the relevance of contemporary flows), producing an unfortunate omission given some of the tensions that were made so evident in the second section of this book.

A somewhat surprising omission is the question of gender (with the exception of a (few references to male and female migration streams), particularly given the wealth of feminist scholarship now available that discusses the centrality of women in maintaining transnational networks and in remittance
flows. The discussions of pluralism and social cohesion would also have benefited from some consideration of the ways in which women and men are positioned in relation to questions of difference, including how these are negotiated in diasporic settings. Santiago Valles’s chapter stands out in its discussion of Elma Francois and the NWCSA and Andaiye and Red Thread, but even here the significance of women playing such a central organizing role, and the analytical purchase that gender might offer to our understanding of social change, seem almost incidental to Gowricharn’s conceptual frame.

Overall, this is a very useful book, with some excellent case-studies for students of the region interested in the ways in which transnational social fields operate in the Caribbean itself. Especially welcome is the emphasis on South-South (intraregional) movement and connections that displace the usual preoccupation with extraregional links as the singular defining feature of Caribbean transnationalism.

REFERENCE


Survival of the Knitted: Immigrant Social Networks in a Stratified World.

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Migrations into, out of, and within the Caribbean region have been going on since the first Amerindians entered the Greater Antilles about six thousand years ago. That is to be expected in a string of islands that link Florida, the Yucatan Peninsula, and the northeast coast of South America. As the varieties, origins, and numbers of peoples entering the islands grew after 1492, migration became part of Caribbean ecologies and cultures. A history of the region can be shaped around the movement of peoples. Whether physically coerced, environmentally and economically necessitated, culturally encour-
-aged, or in some degree voluntary, migration in and out has always been part of Caribbean adaptations and Caribbean societies.

Contemporary migration continues the outward movement that picked up after nineteenth-century slave emancipations, as freed people sought to escape plantocratic exploitation and to seek expanded opportunities in lands less constricted, less densely peopled, and less environmentally degraded. International emigration intensified in the twentieth century, especially after World War II, and by the twenty-first century it had become global, as employment opportunities lagged far behind population growth in the sending societies.

Studies of Caribbean migration and emigration have proliferated at least since the mid-1950s. They have moved from considerations of economic push and pull factors to a twenty-first-century focus on sprawling transnational kin and social networks, migrant identities, and individual and family experiences and narratives. Migration research since the 1990s has sought to understand individual identities and cultural allegiances in a period of mobility, globalization, and relationships across diasporas. Migration studies explore whether and how the individual sense of rootedness and home are related to transnational mobility and global dispersion. This emphasis replaces earlier research focused on integration and incorporation in migrants’ new homes, mostly from the point of view of receiving locations, and presents the migration phenomenon from the perspective of migrants.

Survival of the Knitted contributes to the literature on migrants’ social networks, emphasizing their role in individual migration decisions and analyzing how networks actually work. Bashi attempts a methodology that integrates a sociological understanding of the network as a set of relationships with a study of the way that individual persons in the network help individual migrants. As a person born and raised in a West Indian family in New York, she had personal experience of the phenomena she investigates. (She claims, though I find this hard to believe, that her graduate professors thought only of nuclear families and so did not understand her references to her “family” in the context of her research proposal.)

Bashi conducted her research both in the Caribbean and in two migrant destinations, London and the greater New York City region. She began in New York with two people, one from St. Vincent-Grenadines and one from Trinidad-Tobago, and followed the links of these two unrelated networks, interviewing ninety persons in all. Questions she investigates include the way in which migrants choose destinations, what structures of inequality they face when they arrive, how they come to fit into their new location despite the barriers of inequality, how they deal with housing and labor systems, and how the network helps them succeed. Every issue she discusses includes a review of the diverse theories that bear on it, exposition of the empirical ethnographic material she gained through her interviews, quota-
tions from immigrant narratives, and application of her own research to new analysis of the issue.

Bashi is particularly concerned with showing the operation and effects of anti-Black racism in the Caribbean migrant experience of racial hierarchy in receiving societies (Chapter 7). Migrants experience racial stereotyping and discrimination in jobs and housing. She rightly rejects cultural explanations of the differences in the way migrants cope with racism, and rightly emphasizes the organized inequality of political, economic, and racial structures in the societies they enter. Thus immigrant networks can assist migrants in handling the organized inequality they encounter, whereas, for example, native-born African-Americans in the United States do not have the immigrant experience and insulating networks to help them.

Bashi develops a model of Caribbean immigrant networks to explain exactly how migrants manage to escape from the economic limitations of their home islands, overcome the physical and economic challenges of migrating over distances, surmount the purposive barriers that receiving societies keep in place despite their need for immigrant labor, and find the jobs and housing they need within a discriminatory racial system (Chapter 3). This Hub-and-Spoke Module is wholly based on empirical research and is generally applicable to transnational migration from regions beyond the Caribbean. One experienced migrant becomes a central “hub” whose function is to aid migrants in entering the country and getting through the barriers to resettlement. The “spokes” are those who get the necessary help from the hub. Hubs help with travel arrangements and paperwork. When immigrants arrive, hubs offer immediate shelter and use their own networks to help them find housing and jobs. Importantly, show the newcomer how to become part of the support system in the immigrant community.

This ethnography of Caribbean migrants, their networks, their identity, and their ties to their place of origin is grounded in knowledge of theory and good empirical work. Like Olwig 2007, it is a fine example of multiple-sited transnational field research that links the individual and social in global migration.

REFERENCE

“The themes of travel, departure and return define much of Caribbean history and literature,” we are told in the foreword of this book (p. ix), and for this reason it is necessary to view migration – and with it return migration – as integral aspects of Caribbean life. The main purpose of *Returning to the Source* is therefore “to develop a broader and more encompassing approach to the study of return migration” (p. 19). The eleven chapters begin with Plaza and Henry’s introductory review of the literature on return migration to the English-speaking Caribbean and Dennis Brown’s overview of the history of Caribbean migration since the emancipation of the slaves, and continue with case studies of return migration, primarily from the United Kingdom and/or the United States, to various Caribbean islands. Seven of the chapters focus on return migration to individual islands – Trinidad (Roger-Mark De Souza), Tobago (Godfrey C. St. Bernard), St. Lucia (Francis K. Abenaty), Jamaica (Heather A. Horst, Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, John Small), and Barbados (George Gmelch). Two compare Jamaican and Barbadian return migration (Dwaine E. Plaza and Harry Goulbourne).

While the editors state that the book’s aim is to examine return migration by “locating it in the context of the transnational pursuit of mobility, happiness and success,” in the end the primary focus is on the difficulties experienced by migrants when they return to their place of origin. This seeming contradiction is illuminated by De Souza’s interesting insight that while many migrants manage to obtain the economic and/or educational resources necessary to return as successful migrants to the place of origin where they have a strong social attachment, it is this very social attachment that presents the returnees with the greatest problems (p. 75). De Souza notes that return migration traditionally has played a central role as a means of upward mobility in the Caribbean and that returnees, generally speaking, have been esteemed and respected in the local societies. To reinforce the impression of their success abroad return migrants are expected to “demonstrate foreign values and mannerisms,” thus giving the impression that they have had a “luxurious life abroad” (p. 79). This image of the easy life as a migrant is
far from the actual experiences of most, however, and those who return with limited economic resources find it stressful to live up to the local images of the successful returnee. At the same time, many returnees experience difficulty re-establishing social relationships because their notions of social conventions and proper interpersonal behavior have changed while abroad. Furthermore, those who think that their experiences abroad will lead to jobs and respect in the local community may be met with an “attitude of ‘returnee fatigue’” by local people who have come to resent the increasing numbers of returnees expecting to be favored because they have been abroad. As a result, returnees begin to view local people as jealous of their success, while local people start to question whether the returnees really belong in the local society. What should have been a glorious return back home becomes a cool reception in what migrants experience as an alien place.

Gmelch states that returnees’ disappointment wears off with time. Thus, whereas 53 percent in the sample of returnees he interviewed in Barbados expressed dissatisfaction during the first year of their return and believed that they would have been better off if they had stayed away, only 17 percent had this negative view of their return three years later. He concludes that the change occurs as “the dreams and fantasies of most returnees fade and they learn to cope with the inefficiency and petty annoyances of life at home” (p. 62). The chapters of Returning to the Source provide interesting insights into just what contributes to this adaptation. Thus several of the authors note that a common way of coping is to avoid the local stay-behinds and seek the company of other returnees with similar migration experiences who share the same social norms and ideas. The British returnees are especially apt to join returnee associations where they can socialize with like-minded people. Small shows that such associations may serve as pressure groups working to improve the condition of returnees in the island societies. Many returnees also opt to settle in returnee enclaves such as Mandeville, Jamaica, where, as Horst demonstrates, they can build “concrete castles” that both demonstrate their success abroad and shelter them from poverty, envy, violence, and crime in the surrounding society.

Another way of coping with life as a returnee involves adopting a transnational lifestyle. According to Thomas-Hope, the well-educated returnees that she studied in Jamaica were “working in one place and context, maintaining their families in another, and socializing, making purchases of goods and services, investing, and engaging in leisure pursuits that spanned at least two countries” (p. 169). This transnational lifestyle allowed for a “maximization of the return” (p. 171), meaning that the migrants could make the best of the social, economic, and cultural opportunities available to them in the different places involved. The second-generation returnees studied by Plaza expressed similar understandings and practices of return. Indeed, most of them were “making long-term plans to live a transnational lifestyle” (p. 164).
In sharp contrast to these privileged transnational returnees are the deportees who have returned involuntarily, primarily from the United States, because of criminal activity or the lack of legal documents. They rival the voluntary returnees in number, at least in Jamaica as Small shows (p. 227), yet they have been subject to little study and are mentioned only in passing in this book. Because their unplanned return is very far from “the dreams and fantasies” of return that many Caribbean migrants nourish, they constitute an aspect of Caribbean migration experiences that merits further exploration.

*Returning to the Source* is a useful presentation of the current state of research on return migration, an area of investigation that is still in its infancy. With its fascinating data on the complex notions and practices of return, it opens up new lines of investigation that can shed important light on migratory processes as well as Caribbean culture and society.


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In the historiography of Dutch colonial expansion there is traditionally a dichotomy between Asia and the Atlantic region. One group of historians concentrates on the sphere of influence of the former Dutch East India Company, which included the Cape Colony in South Africa, and another studies the settlements and commercial activities of the Dutch in West Africa and in the Americas. For a long time this latter group consisted of a handful of historians dividing the settlements in Africa, the Caribbean, and North and South America between them, and in most cases acquiring expertise on only a limited geographical area. Only recently has an all-encompassing Atlantic approach been developed. A first attempt at a comparative study including both the Eastern and Western hemisphere and concentrating on forced and
voluntary migratory patterns within the Dutch colonial empire appeared just last year (Oostindie 2008).

The publication of a book on the Netherlands and its settlements in Africa, Asia, and the Americas by a hitherto unknown author in this field comes, then, as a surprise. Who is Howard J. Wiarda? He is the Dean Rusk Professor of International Relations, founding head of the Department of International Affairs at the University of Georgia, and a senior scholar at the Center of Strategic and International Studies in Washington D.C. But more important for the subject of the book is that he is a third-generation Dutch immigrant to the United States. He grew up in a Dutch enclave in western Michigan which treasured its Dutch Calvinist heritage. An already existent interest in his roots increased during visits to Europe where he conducted various research projects and had an opportunity to travel to “the old country” (the Netherlands), and meet distant relatives living in the province of Friesland. His research travels also took him to various countries outside Europe where the Dutch had established settlements beginning in the seventeenth century. This combination of background, historical interest, and travel experiences inspired a project that was to be a scholarly analysis of the Dutch and their “Dutch-ness,” and their scattered fragments around the world— all enriched by autobiographical passages focused on his upbringing and travel experiences.

As a take-off point Wiarda introduces the so-called Hartz thesis, formulated by Harvard historian and political scientist Louis Hartz some fifty years ago, which sought to explain differences between the various colonial settlements overseas by pointing at specific institutional and cultural characteristics in the mother country at the time that each colony was founded. According to this approach, these characteristics became determinant in the social and cultural character of the colonial offshoot. In successive chapters Wiarda discusses the Dutch and their colonial empire in general, his own youth in western Michigan, the old (seventeenth-century) and more recent (nineteenth-century) Dutch settlements in North America, the present-day Netherlands, and various former Dutch settlements in South America, Asia, and Africa, pairing personal experiences during visits with historical information. In the end, Wiarda concludes that the Hartz thesis is inadequate for explaining the differences between the various Dutch offshoots. The relations between mother country and colony and the evolution of the colonies themselves are far more complicated and varied than Hartz’s approach would predict.

Wiarda is a political scientist, but he is clearly not a historian with expertise in the history of the Netherlands and its colonial past. The book is littered with mistakes and inaccuracies. For example, the Haarlem painter Frans Hals was never brought to Dutch Brazil by Governor Johan Maurits van Nassau-
Siegen (p. 90), he probably never travelled any further than Antwerp, and the creole language spoken in Suriname is not Papiamento (p. 106).

But it would not be fair to judge his work by such errors, for the book is less a serious study of the Netherlands and its former Dutch colonial settlements than a presentation of Howard J. Wiarda himself – his background, his experiences, his worldview, and most of all his Calvinist religion. For the actual leitmotiv of the book is Calvinism, which Wiarda takes as almost synonymous with Dutch culture and the original driving force behind the important role of the Dutch on the world stage in early modern times. That is why he also added a chapter on Geneva, John Calvin’s residence and the center from which this creed was spread, and another chapter on the struggling Protestant churches in the territories of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. In all the countries he visited Wiarda looked for a Protestant, preferably Calvinist church where he could attend the Sunday service. Wiarda observes that wherever the Calvinist religion survived, as in western Michigan and in some Protestant enclaves in Hungary, society is characterized by neatness, absence of crime, and work ethics. Wherever it disappeared, as in most of the modern Netherlands and present-day Geneva, these social characteristics also disappear, leading to a danger (he argues) that drug abuse, prostitution, euthanasia, and the like come to dominate society. Geneva, once his favorite city, lost its “Michelin star” since large numbers of immigrants (mainly Arabs according to Wiarda) settled in the old center: “Headscarves are everywhere; it’s mostly Arab women, smoking, drinking, and semi-liberated (including from their husbands) in the open culture of Geneva. Even the restaurants and sidewalk cafés here, we learn, are now owned by Arabs. That also helps account for the greater seediness of the city: Arabs have a different sense of the public space (it’s for trash disposal) than did those Calvinistic Genevans” (p. 180).

REFERENCE


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Sleeping Rough in Port-au-Prince is an original contribution to the anthropology of Haiti. It is one of the few ethnographies that focus on Port-au-Prince. J. Christopher Kovats-Bernat completed his research during 1994-2004, one of the most politically violent periods in the country’s history when few social scientists were conducting fieldwork in Haiti. The book, which provides one of the very few descriptions of the most recent developments in Haitian political life, is framed in the context of contemporary state violence, international aid, and worldwide structural inequalities. It provides a rare detailed analysis of the competition for power among the state, the remnants of the military shut down by President Aristide in 1995, and civilian groups, within the context of international peace missions and U.S. and French interventions. Children’s trajectories from rural homes to the streets of the capital are part of the broader context of rural migrations to the city in the late 1980s due to the impoverishment of rural families under the pressure of structural adjustment policies and worldwide economic inequalities initiated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Kovats-Bernat argues against the common psychological approach to the life of street children, which tends to essentialize them as intrinsically isolated from their families and as being violent, lazy, and asocial. This approach denies their social interactions and ignores their economic activities, political awareness, and activism. The book is composed of six children’s biographies, each introducing an analytical chapter. Readers might regret not hearing more of the voices of the children, but Kovats-Bernat explains how difficult it was to take notes, make recordings, and meet with the children on a regular basis.

The book describes the social conditions that led the children to live in the streets of Port-au-Prince as well as their social organization once there. They had been sent to the streets by their families, who could not support them but expected them to send home their earnings. Street children belong to a broader category of poor children who survive through economic activities: prostitution, domestic work, or street work (watching cars, washing cars, car-
rying bags, and so on). Actually, they do visit their relatives from time to time and provide them with financial support. They all engage in different types of legal activities. Begging is rarely practiced, as it is considered by the older children to be humiliating. According to Kovats-Bernat, these street children are among the hardest working citizens of Haiti. They often earn three times the minimum wage of many Haitians. They define themselves in contrast to schooled children; many have schooled siblings who have the opportunity to learn to read and write and do not have to work to support themselves.

The book is an anthropology of urban space as it shows how the streets define the children’s personal and collective identities. Kovats-Bernat emphasizes the fact that the Creole term *timoun lari* (children in/of the streets) refers to an ontological understanding of the children’s identities and not merely a place that all poverty-stricken urban Haitians use for work, sleep, or socializing. Building upon the work of sociologists and Victor Turner’s analysis of rites of passage, Kovats-Bernat argues that the streets of Port-au-Prince are liminal spaces for the street children who manage to survive and to move on to other places (going back to their families, getting a shelter).

Port-au-Prince is an overpopulated city whose streets are contested spaces for people to live, work, or market. As both individuals and members of social groups, street children have to struggle to maintain their own space for work. During the day, work activities define territoriality, and groups are classified according to age, gender, and work, as well as social lifestyles such as sexuality or drug use. The groups offer support in terms of food sharing and protection against the street violence that breaks out in the competition for work territory and the settlement of disputes. The most dreaded aggressions are the so-called “sleeping wars” that occur at night: rocks thrown or plastic burns inflicted on a sleeping victim. The goal is to incapacitate the victim temporarily and make it clear that they could be killed if the dispute in question is not resolved in the aggressor’s favor. Kovats-Bernat analyzes these actions as ritualized ways of settling devastating long-term conflicts in a quick and efficient manner.

This book belongs to the anthropology of child-centered research that considers children as “actively involved in the construction of their lives and their worlds,” a perspective that Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Carolyn Sargent (1999) called for a decade ago. Kovats-Bernat offers not only a convincing analysis of children’s economic agency in the streets but also of their political agency. *Lafanmi selavi*, an orphanage created by Aristide in 1995, was a place where street children became human rights activists until it turned into a “nightmarish slum of childhood and adolescence” (p. 156) that Aristide closed in a violent way in 1999 after the children rebelled against the degradation of the place. The development of a political identity among street children is actually grounded in their genealogies, which consist of activist parents and grandparents. As such, the street children are political and moral
agents whose struggles for human dignity have been, as in the case of previous generations of Haitians, defeated by all Haitian governments.

This ethnography is an original addition to the anthropology of Haiti that is recommended to anyone interested in issues of social inequality, political agency, human development, and urbanism in the Caribbean. It provides insight into an important, and relatively unknown, aspect of current Haitian existence.

REFERENCE


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In this book, Ginetta E.B. Candelario examines the negotiation of a Dominican identity in four related sites of representation: travel narratives, the museum, the beauty shop, and the female body. Based on extensive ethnographic and historical research, the book offers a comprehensive analysis of the way in which an Indo-Hispanic identity is constructed, represented, and contested against the backdrop of Dominican national building projects, a troubled relationship with Haiti, the impact of U.S. imperialism, and the glorification of the Hispanic heritage. Since Dominicans participate in their own construction, through words, images, icons, and body techniques, such representations are left open to interpretation. Indeed, for Candelario the issue is not whether Dominicans are “in fact” black, but rather the multiple strategies they deploy when confronted with the black behind the face of Dominican national politics (p. 2). To this end, she focuses on how ethno-
racial discourses are narrated, internalized, and displayed by actors and institutions in three historically connected geographic locations: Santo Domingo, Washington D.C., and New York City.

Candelario is aware that identities can be “situational, equivocal and ambiguous,” mediated by power relations and the ever-shifting boundaries of the nation (p. 7). Yet, in order to understand an ideological code that celebrates Hispanicity of a different hue and hair texture, she first delves into the racial politics of colonial bondage. In particular, she explores the role played by travel narratives in the construction of an imaginary “Indio.” Travel narratives of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries highlight the fact that European whiteness was always associated with social, political, and economic privilege, and blackness with both subordination and physical and moral inferiority. When confronted with this discourse, freedmen fought to distance themselves from slaves, for them the only “real” blacks. In the same vein, Creole intellectuals and the local elite engaged the narratives of an exotic other that fueled the ideological, economic, and political project of the empire, producing a counternarrative in which they portrayed themselves as indigenous and non-Black (pp. 49-60). After the failure of the Haitian unification effort, Dominicans invested all their efforts in proclaiming an Indian heritage. Indeed, Haiti would be then represented as “the other” of the nascent Dominican nation.

Candelario’s contribution lies in her close examination of how this ideological discourse became “the meta-narrative of Dominicanidad as fundamentally and historically non-black and Indo-Hispanic” (p. 83). Throughout the book, she pursues the permutations of this “Indio” myth in popular music, a variety of genres of fiction and non-fiction, and official identity discourses, from Trujillo to Balaguer. As examples of institutional displays of Dominican identity, she offers an analysis of two museum settings: the Museo del hombre dominicano in the Dominican Republic and an exhibition entitled Black Mosaic in Washington D.C. To illustrate how this Dominicanidad is embodied in the flesh as well as in social practice, she conducted an ethnographic study of a beauty shop in Washington Heights, a New York City neighborhood.

Given the complexity of the methodologies engaged – interviews, photo elicitation, ethnography, spatial, textual, and visual analysis – and the multiple sites of investigation, one can argue that Candelario has succeeded in proving that Dominican ethno-racial identities are constructed in partial collaboration with negrophobic and anti-Haitian ideologies. She demonstrates that objects and texts at the Museo del Hombre Dominicano do not innocently reflect “reality,” but conform to a system of meanings that naturalizes an Indio-Taíno identity (pp. 119-20). The myth works because it casts as innocent what is profoundly motivated. This is also true of the Black Mosaic exhibition in the Anacostia Museum in Washington D.C., except that what is
naturalized is an Afro-American identity. Dominicans in New York choose a different path. They identify themselves as Hispanic and non-Black.

The ethnography conducted at a beauty shop offers a clearer connection with the title of the book. Candelario’s insights on the contested nature of gender and racial identities complements the more mechanical analysis of previous chapters. Here she focuses on women’s hair culture to illustrate that Dominican indigenism is reliant on bodily techniques and practices. Since hair is at the root of a somatic norm that values features deemed “white,” clients and beauticians at Salon Lamadas make subtle distinctions among themselves (pp. 196-203). I find it fascinating how these women draw on ambiguous markers of blackness to contest both beauty and antibeauty ideologies. The negotiated nature of perceived racial types is more evident in photo-elicitation, an exercise that suggests that “the visible” is only so “in a given cultural and ideological context” (p. 263). Images and illustrations are critical in this part of the book.

Candelario values her informants’ strategic use of ambiguity, but is also aware that certain representations render Dominican women exotic and invisible. This last issue, however, is not pursued further. Readers are left to wonder in which ways Dominican racial identities are affected by the Hispanic marketing industry in the United States and its role in the making of new notions of belonging and entitlement (see Dávila 2001).

In spite of the fact that the book ignores the experiences of Dominicans living in Puerto Rico, Candelario succeeds in proving the central tenet of the book – that identities are neither natural nor accidental, but rather cultural constructs that rely on discourses and practices legitimated by diverse interest groups and institutions. These constructs are inscribed in the body and continue to feed the racialized politics of our time. But as with any regime of representation, meaning can never be fixed. Women at the beauty shop work with the shifting, unstable character of meaning, quite aware that there can never be any final victory.

**Reference**

Anthropologists have long been fascinated with Garifuna syncretic religious and cultural practices stemming from their African and Carib origins. Early ethnographers documented diverse Garifuna practices, often trying to determine whether their origins were African, Carib, or European. Douglas Taylor (1951), for example, made the oft-cited statement that the Garifuna are “a negro cake made of Amerindian ingredients,” while Mary Helms (1979) and Nancie Gonzalez (Solien 1959) debated about the Carib or West Indian origins of their kinship system. Whatever the origins of their cultural and religious practices may be, scholars have most recently noted the propensity of the Garifuna themselves to emphasize their African heritage over all others (Anderson & England 2004).

In *Diaspora Conversions* Paul Christopher Johnson provides a fascinating analysis of how this process of “Africanization” is proceeding in Garifuna religious practices. Already a syncretic mix, Garifuna religion is further transforming as Garifuna migrate to New York City where they encounter other religions of the African Diaspora such as Santeria and Palo Monte. He shows how the *buyeis* (shamans) in New York are adopting many of the elements of those Caribbean religions in an effort to authenticate their place in the African Diaspora and to deepen their Africanness. Rather than seeing this as an inevitable “recovery” of “repressed” African elements (despite the phrasing of the book title) he argues that it is the conscious articulation of specific elements of “traditional” Garifuna religion with specific elements of certain Afro-Caribbean religions that the Garifuna encounter in New York City, and that together these produce performances of collective memory which are edited to fit their present circumstances and locations.

Johnson describes Garifuna religion as a type of “diasporic religion ... memory performances of place, staged in a space.” Rather than repeating “tradition,” he argues, “they create new identifications and social affiliations because the memory of the homeland is transformed as it is rebuilt, through bricolage, in the spaces of emigration” (p. 14). In the case of the Garifuna, there are three “diasporic horizons” to be remembered: Africa, St. Vincent,
and Central America. Through a comparison of buyei life histories and rituals in Honduras and New York City, Johnson shows how these homelands are recalled differently depending on the context. For example the dügü, a month-long ceremony performed in Honduras to appease and communicate with an ancestor spirit (gubida), primarily performs the memory of the crossing of the Garifuna from St. Vincent to Honduras and connects them to the original ancestors. The ritual is indexical. That is, it refers to aspects of Garifuna culture that are ancestral and still a part of Garifuna lived experience in Honduras. The main audience for this ritual is the large extended family of the ancestor, the village as a whole, and the visiting buyeis and family members from New York. Thus its main function is to index tradition and to construct “a dense ancestral presence” through the artifacts associated with St. Vincent, spirit possessions by the ancestors, and physical proximity of the family members during the ritual.

Rituals performed in New York City, on the other hand, are carried out differently due to the logistics of having to rent a space for only a certain amount of time, and the needs of a diasporic population in a heavily multicultural environment. In New York City buyeis carry out rituals that include many of the same artifacts and symbolism of the dügü, recalling both St. Vincent and Honduras as homelands. However, they also include some elements of Santeria and Palo Monte that New York buyeis have learned through relations with Afro-Cuban and Afro-Puerto Rican practitioners. Johnson argues that this mix makes sense in that there are already similarities between these three religious traditions, but that it is also a conscious choice on the part of the buyeis to emphasize these Yoruba-based religions over other possibilities due to their reputation as more authentically African. Thus the purpose of these rituals is not simply to recall and reconnect with the Honduran homeland but also to extend Garifuna religion and racial/ethnic identity to an even more obvious connection with the African Diaspora. This can be seen in that the rituals performed in New York City are heavily symbolic, theatrical, and doctrinal, and the audience includes Garifuna from all villages and sometimes non-Garifuna.

Aside from being a rich ethnographic description of Garifuna ritual, this book makes a valuable contribution to our thinking about diasporic cultures. Despite his ample use of binary oppositions such as indigenous/cosmopolitan, homeland/diaspora, and nostalgia/futurity, Johnson is careful to show that these tropes are not restricted to particular spaces but rather together “constitute a single diasporic religious system” (p. 6) where there is constant mutual influence, and that the binaries are not fixed in space or limited to certain practitioners. There is one binary, however, that seems to me is insufficiently problematized. That is the idea that Garifunaness is more of a given in Honduras and does not need to be actively asserted whereas in New York it must be more forcefully asserted in a sea of ethnic others. This distinction
may be exaggerated, as Garifuna in Honduras also have a great deal at stake in asserting connections to Africanness. Though the dügü may still be largely a family affair, many other aspects of Garifuna culture are carefully staged and Africanized in order to authenticate their status as an unassimilated “autochthonous” ethnic group. Thus the “racial reduction” to blackness that Garifuna encounter in New York also has its counterpart in Honduras. This does not take away from the value of the book but rather reinforces Johnson’s point that diasporic religions are highly creative and serve a crucial role in the construction of spacialized representations of peoplehood.

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As revealed in the first lines of the acknowledgments, *Just Below South* emerges from a 1995 graduate seminar taught at Tulane University by Joseph Roach when he was preparing the manuscript of his *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (1996). Most of the contributors were then either graduate students and/or early-career instructors at Tulane or in other New Orleans-area universities.

In a recent article, Karla Slocum and Deborah Thomas argued for a kind of Caribbean exceptionalism that would justify the maintenance of the Caribbean as an area of study to be defended against the growing influence of global studies which tend to displace or supersede area studies. They assert that “an analysis of the Caribbean and Caribbeanist anthropology allows [scholars] to trace the global in the local, thus illustrating the benefits of local area analyses for understanding global dynamics” (Slocum & Thomas 2003:553). The approach adopted by the editors of *Just Below South*, explained in Jessica Adams’s introduction, takes distance from Slocum and Thomas’s argument in that it interrogates the notion of region. The collection attempts to generate conversations and interactions among scholars working from different perspectives within what they see as being a cross-national, multilingual, regional “interculture of the circum-Caribbean.” They identify the latter following the exploration of material aspects of transhistorical and intergeographic relationships between what is usually understood to be the U.S. South and the Caribbean (“just below South”). Between them is a multiplicitous, decentered circulation of cultural elements that defines the “interculture,” “not so much by a shared set of geographical boundaries or by a single, common culture as by the weave of performances and identities moving across and throughout it” (p. 6). Indeed, “performance” and “formativity” are an important aspect of the collection’s project, particularly when the contributors discuss individuals’ negotiations of identities or when they write about social performances (theater, ritual, historical re-enactment, carnival, dance, and music). Circum-Caribbean performances complicate...
generally held assumptions about cultural imperialism, neocolonialism, and creolization since they can “illuminate both the imposition and the subversion of dominance” (p. 7).

The eleven essays have been regrouped in three sections. The limited space of this review allows commentary on only a few of them. In “Impersonating the Creole: The American Family and its Lines of Flight,” Carolyn Vellenga Berman focuses on theatrical adaptations of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* which were quite popular in the nineteenth-century United States. In her study of the novel and its adaptation, Berman shows how certain characters, those who were associated with interracial sex (particularly Cassy) and who therefore existed outside of easily identifiable categories, defy uncomplicated analysis. She argues that Louisiana and its Creoles (French and Spanish gray areas) were represented as problematic outside areas in relation to the intact American nation and its racial binary, which Stowe worked hard (but unsuccessfully) to engrave.

In “Louisiana’s Translated Selves: The Poetry of Deborah Clifton and Sybil Kein,” Anne Malena discusses present-day representations of Creoles in Louisiana, where the definition of “Creole” and the decision about who is included in its scope and who is not has been at the center of passionate debates always informed by white supremacist claims of white superiority and black savagery. This was particularly the case during and after Reconstruction, when white Creoles (Whites of self-proclaimed French and Spanish descent) were preoccupied by the challenge of holding on to social power while facing accusations of not being “true Whites.” Creoles of color who had also been benefiting from the color-cast system struggled to maintain privilege while the Anglo-American binary racial dichotomy was becoming the rule of the day. Malena shows how Kein and Clifton embrace a Creole identity and celebrate the value they see as inherent to ambiguous origins.

Cécile Accilien discusses her experience as a teacher of Haitian Créole at Tulane University, establishing the historical links between Louisiana and Haiti and contrasting the different meaning each context gives to “Créole.” Her main argument illuminates how colonialism continues to give shape to many Haitians’ not-so-proud self-understanding despite Haiti’s notorious independence more than 200 years ago.

Don Wlicek writes about the descendants of a group of freed slaves and free Blacks who migrated in the 1820s from the American South to Samaná, in the Dominican Republic. This migration followed the instigation of Jean-Pierre Boyer, who was then president of Haiti, which occupied at the time the entire island of Hispaniola, and reflected a feeling in the United States that descendants of slaves should not be incorporated within the body politic of the nation.
Julian Gerstl uncovers the critical influence that white colonial observers have had on twentieth-century dance and music history, and particularly on contemporary Martinican performance. He underscores the fact that distorting colonial descriptions of the kalenda dance made both in the U.S. South and in Martinique in terms of an homogeneous eroticism are taken today as authentic accounts of “the real thing” by Afro-Martinican dancers who perform for American and other tourists.

There are other essays on Trinidadian carnival and its connections to the U.S. South (Rawle Gibbons and Kathleen Gough) and on literary texts by Zora Neale Hurston, Truman Capote, Édouard Glissant, and Jamaica Kincaid, and their contributions to the circum-Caribbean interculture (Shirley Toland-Dix, Michael Bibler, and Jana Evans Braziel). This is an excellent collection that should be of interest to instructors of courses in a variety of fields of inquiry.

REFERENCES


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In her new book, Tina Ramnarine looks at the role that music, dance, and public spectacle play in the formation of diasporic consciousness. The opening section, “Memories,” begins with a poignant vignette about being on board a docked ship moored on the Thames River in London to celebrate the “Windrush Years,” referring to the SS Empire Windrush, “the ship that has become a sym-
bol of post-Second World War Caribbean migration to the motherland” (p. 1). Along with some of her Caribbean friends, she is listening to the comedienne Angie le Mar’s sketch about her mother returning to Jamaica after twenty-five years. Le Mar is speaking with her mother from England and wishes to inform the mother of her upcoming performance commemorating the Windrush Years. The mother responds “Oh, memories!” (p. 2).

With this opening narrative, Ramnarine frames the theoretical angle that sets the tone for the rest of the book. Memories, she contends, are central to constructing and expressing the movements of people around the globe who are now classified as diasporic. Where is home, after all, when one leaves one’s place of birth at a young age, grows up elsewhere, and raises a family born in the newly adopted home? By posing this important question at the outset, she aims at challenging the traditional and much belabored notion that “diaspora” signifies a space of non-belonging. Instead, she argues that the movement back and forth from the place of origin to a newly adopted home becomes in and of itself a mode of dwelling, the very practice of which transforms both sites as well as the individual’s sense of self. It also implies a particular consciousness that is actively engaged in the politics of identity and belonging, since it suggests that the diasporic citizen who possesses multiple subjectivities can claim to belong to both the place left behind and the place inhabited. Both, insists Ramnarine, are “homelands” in the truest sense of the term, distinct yet inextricably interconnected.

By taking this particular stance, Ramnarine moves beyond numerous polarities, such as the opposition of “homeland” and “diaspora,” that have come to characterize much of the discourse on diasporas in both popular and academic literature. Instead of thinking about diaspora as a cause of dislocation, she urges us to think of it as having the capability to establish a home that may be multi-sited. Hence, there is no contradiction in being an inhabitant of more than one country. While not exactly a novel concept, the “diaspora as home” (p. 21) model serves Ramnarine’s purposes quite well.

To make her shared One World argument, Ramnarine provides an ethnography of musical performance forms rooted in the Caribbean but enacted around the globe, not only in such well-known diasporic cosmopolitan locations as New York, Toronto, and London, but also in less expected ones such as Helsinki and Dar es Salaam. Genres like calypso, reggae, and salsa may originate in the Caribbean and continue to be associated primarily with the region, but they have the capacity to transcend geographic location and challenge musical canons by creating new performance spaces that connect diaspora and nation. In Chapter 2, Ramnarine argues that calypso creates new relationships between diasporic, national, and postcolonial sensibilities. Using the recollections of a prominent British Calypsonian, she demonstrates how the genre has been historically transformed into a kind of British folk music, even while maintaining close ties to its Caribbean points of origin.
Chapter 3 explores musical fusion by looking at how steelband ensembles have become integral components of multicultural musical education, thus challenging the idea of discrete and tidy cultural groups living in isolated clusters within a given society. Here is where the book’s title, “beautiful cosmos,” comes into play, where the world becomes holistic, a fusion of forms and practices impossible to unravel completely.

Ramnarine then continues to explore and question hybridity discourses – basing her reflections on participant observation at dance clubs on salsa nights in Chapter 4 and on “chatting” on the impact of Bob Marley’s lyrics on the formation of global reggae around the world in Chapter 5. She shows how hybridity does not necessarily suggest a random collage of expressive traditions, but opens up the possibility for complex and contentious discussions of difference and sameness, self and other. Finally, in Chapter 6, she delves into musical spectacle by looking at the development and commoditization of carnival traditions in England and Canada, arguing that contestation naturally occurs when a geographically distinct tradition is grafted onto two new landscapes.

In her concluding chapter, Ramnarine summarizes by arguing for a move toward a “beautiful cosmos,” one in which the emphasis is on similarity instead of difference, but not by ignoring contradiction, which is inevitable in a rapidly moving world where remembering always involves forgetting and solidarity is reinforced by conflict. Her ethnography is not a romanticized rendering of a holistic world free of strife. Instead she is actively engaged in the political dimension of her subject – namely, the ways in which people bridge the gap between home and diaspora and make the periphery an unassailable part of the center.


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Structured by the history of the West Indies from colonialism to nationhood to present-day postcolonialism, this study concentrates on the representation of black female identity in the imaginative works of several male and
female authors and the extent to which this representation conforms to reality. In particular, it explores the ways in which race, class, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender intersect with migration, exile, and repatriation. Though the book is not long, the scope of the discussion is vast as it rapidly moves from one era and one country to another. Readers looking for a large array of literary examples supporting the concepts put forth will be disappointed.

On the other hand, references to postcolonial critics abound, Saunders working side-by-side with the critics as she guides readers into her selection of appropriate(d) texts.

Saunders begins with the Trinidad literary awakening, focusing on two short stories published in 1929 in one of the magazines that were so important to the development of local literature and nationhood: C.L.R. James’s “Triumph” and Alfred Mendes’s “Her Chinaman’s Way.” Like their counterparts in Guyana, Barbados, and Jamaica, these magazines went “against the grain of colonial culture,” creating “new yardsticks for defining aesthetics and politics” (p. 27). James’s and Mendes’s stories, among other “alter/native narratives,” “appropriated women’s sexuality as a trope for national resistance” (p. 29). Realistically portraying the lives of black barrack-yard (James) and mixed-minority storefront (Mendes) women, they offered metaphors for the larger society of colonized Trinidadians awakening to its own power. Saunders argues that as the nationalistic spirit grew, as evidenced in the 1937 riots, literature shifted from short stories depicting working-class women to novels depicting middle-class men, “the march toward independence necessitat[ing] the marginalization of these women in order to construct the image of a colonial subject more conventionally and institutionally suited for the responsibilities that self-government and national independence would bring” (p. 50).

Shifting from the genre of the short story to that of the novel, from Trinidad of the 1930s to England and the imaginary island of San Cristobal of the 1960s, and from literary history to literary myth, Saunders discusses George Lamming’s Water With Berries (1971). She begins with remarks on his nonfiction The Pleasures of Exile (1960a), which, she suggests, exemplified the pleasures of privilege for West Indian males. But Lamming’s novel of migration and exile depicts only misery. Saunders’s main focus is on Lamming’s use of Shakespeare’s The Tempest. Pointing out the “privilege of location for white female subjects” (p. 70) in both works, Saunders is left with the silent, self-sacrificing Randa as her subaltern subject. She rightly notes the scholarly neglect of Water With Berries, one of the most profound (and puzzling) fictional studies of the psychology of colonialism, and the rest of her book is to a great extent a study of the rejection of the idea of the absent or silent black female. But, given her emphasis on black female identity, she might have found another novel by Lamming more fruitful – Season
of Adventure (1960b), whose central character, Fola, is vocal, self-fulfilling, and fully involved in her search for identity.

The rest of Saunders’s study focuses on female authors and their ways of treating identity, home, and nation, beginning with M. NourbeSe Philip, whose migration from Trinidad to Canada came about twenty years after Lamming’s journey to England. She presents Philip as an innovator who has completely broken with the past, even as she tries to reconstruct it. In “Dis Place – The Space Between” (1997), an image to which Saunders repeatedly returns, Philip rejects the genres and language of previous discourse and creates a new kind of writing appropriate to the liberation of black women’s lives from the violent oppression of the past. In her examination of She Tries Her Tongue, Her Silence Softly Breaks (1989), Saunders shows how in “pressing back the boundaries that restrain genre, structure, form, and voice” (p. 109) Philip negates the silence on the historical reality of black women’s lives.

With Erna Brodber’s Louisiana (1995), Saunders moves back to the genre of the novel, guiding the reader “to consider the precarious nature of those ‘unhoused’ (nearly selved) subjects of the Caribbean literary landscapes imagined by women writers,” who “tell very different stories about the conditions and possibilities of existence for black female subjects whose ‘unhomeliness,’ or alienation from ‘home,’ is the condition of a new generation for whom the experience of exile is lived in demonstrably different ways than their male counterparts” (p. 114). Saunders suggests that Brodber’s novel “proposes that we reconstruct how we exist and understand existence, the ‘real’ and history” (p. 115). Skeptical about science as an avenue to truth, Ella, the main character (who bears some resemblance to Zora Neale Hurston) turns to studying the psychic knowledge of females in the black diaspora and in the process finds her self at home, finds her own identity. Indeed, Saunders suggests, “both the reader and the novel’s protagonist are ... simultaneously transformed through their reading practices” (p. 124).

From Brodber’s 1995 novel on 1930s Louisiana, Saunders moves to Paule Marshall’s 1959 novel on 1940s Barbadian Brooklyn, which she compares with Elizabeth Nunez’s 1998 novel which begins in 1940s Trinidad and moves on to the 1960s United States. Both of these tales of migration and exile illustrate the struggle of a young woman to find or create home and identity within the context of race, class, and gender. Saunders suggests that, if anything, the anxiety produced by this effort rises even higher as time goes by. She notes that Marshall’s Brown Girl, Brownstones ends with her American-born protagonist independently rejecting a scholarship and freely leaving for the land of her parents’ birth with the possibility of finding home and identity, while Nunez’s Beyond the Limbo Silence concludes with her Trinidadian student in Wisconsin aborting a pregnancy, suffering in a psychiatric ward, and hanging on to both her visa and her St. Lucian friend’s voodoo dolls.
This idea of a downward spiral is further developed in Saunders’s conclusion, in which she looks at current conditions of aliens and repatriates and suggests that the focus on identity in West Indian literature is taking a new turn as it is confronted with the experiences of people returning to the nations from which they came. West Indian writers’ obsession with identity will continue, but displacement may now mean something different: “Current trends, especially the growing backlash against ‘male marginalization,’ suggest that a retrenchment of colonial ideologies about black female subjectivity is poised to force itself into the literary and political landscapes of the Caribbean region” (p. 155).

The book would have profited from the services of a careful editor, not only for such details as Ralph de Boissière’s migrating to England instead of Australia or the absence of original dates and even page numbers for some references, but also for clarity of sentence structure, as in “Silla’s struggle to acquire property is aimed at proving the limitations of ‘home’ prevented her from ‘making it’ in Barbados” (p. 137). Especially as part of Lexington Books’ Caribbean Studies Series, this volume deserved better care. Saunders set for herself an almost impossible task of weaving this collection of readings into a coherent narrative within the framework of both literary and political history and postcolonial discourse. Given the difficulty of the job she took on, she did amazingly well.

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Exploring space and place as metaphors of identity quest, Mildred Mortimer maps the process of empowerment in African and Caribbean women’s fiction. While initially proposing to determine whether “the structures that contain women [are] shelters or prisons” (p. 1) she ultimately tackles a more significant issue. Indeed, if women are “empowered by entering public space from which patriarchy and colonization have excluded her, is this the only path? Can private space, her home, serve the same purpose?” (p. 187). Through the lens of spatial poetics, Mortimer follows female characters negotiating complex and ambiguous relationships between domestic, public, and imaginative space in the achievement of self-realization.

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction to the work and stands as a valuable contribution to the field of gender studies. In this closely argued review of her interdisciplinary methodology, she analyzes concepts deriving from feminist geography and theory pertinent to the examination of public and private space. Drawing inspiration from “phenomenologist Gaston Bachelard” (p. 31), “humanist geographer Yi-Fu Tuan” (p. 31), “French historian Michel Foucault” (p. 2), and feminist geographers Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose (p. 5), Mortimer illuminates the distinct and intricate gender relationships in former French colonies of Africa and the Caribbean.

Chapter 2 juxtaposes Aoua Kéita’s autobiography, *Femme d’Afrique, La vie d’Aoua Kétta racontée par elle-même* and Maryse Condé’s “fictional autobiography of an African slave” (p. 53), *Moi, Tituba sorcière . . . noire de Salem*. Mortimer claims that escaping restrictive spaces and societal constraints allows protagonists Aoua and Tituba to secure their place in history. She explores how Kéita and Condé, both advocates for liberating women from the oppressions of patriarchy and colonialism, intertwine political activism and resistance with a promotion of the well-being of the individual and the community. This idea is particularly prominent in the well-contextualized historical study of Kéita’s book viewed as an “historical document” (p. 37) that Condé’s work complements.
Chapter 3 explores, in Mariama Bâ’s *Une si longue lettre* and Simone Schwarz-Bart’s *Pluie et vent sur Télumée-Miracle*, the nurturing home or hearth, both the real and the imagined, as an integral element in the process of empowerment. Mortimer argues that domestic space does not always symbolize a prison. She links ownership of a home to rooting, a concept particularly vital to a diasporic community seeking a sense of place. Her study of Télumé’s garden is an interesting example of this. Moreover, Mortimer discusses the danger of “unhousing,” which she defines as “the physical and psychological dissolution of one house [that] allows women ... to disengage from the house of patriarchy; a process which may cause exile and uprooting” (p. 166). Ultimately, her argument promotes varied conceptions of internal and intimate space.

Chapter 4 focuses on the lethal effects of not having a nurturing hearth in Calixthe Beyala’s *C’est le soleil qui m’a brûlée* and *La petite fille du réverbère* and Marie Chauvet’s *Amour, colère, folie*. The walls of unwelcoming homes narrow down on the female body and transform it into a prison and a place of abuse. Mortimer reveals how female violence is unleashed when protagonists are pushed to their physical and emotional limits because they have no place to call home. Their hope for survival rests in finding an alternative space in the inner world of their imagination, which then becomes a site of resistance.

Chapter 5 reveals, in Aminata Sow Fall’s *Douceurs du bercaill* and Edwidge Danticat’s *Breath, Eyes, Memory*, the often-beneficial yet perilous aspects of migration. This study of traveling bodies damaged by domestic abuse and rape under the patriarchal and colonial order reaffirms the positive aspects of “unhousing.” In Danticat’s novel, Martine, as the mother of a child born of rape, invades her daughter’s private space and thereby reenacts her own sexual aggression. Through an examination of the ways in which female protagonists navigate between old places and new spaces, particularly imaginary ones, Mortimer carefully maps migratory characters’ successes and failures in dealing with abuse and in the reconstruction of self.

The stimulating introduction sets up great expectations, leading readers to anticipate a nuanced and well-balanced discussion of patriarchal/colonial order, gender roles, and space in the societies under study. However, ideas that pose challenges to such a discussion, such as male input in the political and social activism of female protagonists, the oppression of women by women, or the ways in which colonial power damages differently the relationships between colonized men and women in Africa and the Caribbean, are frequently dealt with too swiftly. Consequently, African and Caribbean women often appear as victims, rarely agents of their own life, and their men as their aggressors. Arranging the texts on an equal footing in an analytical dialogue rather than juxtaposing them would have revealed more critical and diverse notions of space and gender. A thorough historical and anthropo-
logical contextualization of fictions set in the Americas would have enlightened the distinct significance of spatial topoi. For example, Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1998) discusses the importance of the *jardin creole* as the cradle of creolization and as a site of resistance for slaves.

Mortimer has demonstrated that “home is where the hearth is.” By studying the ways that story-telling, often through imaginative expansion, liberates restricted space, Mortimer reveals that women’s marginal position in society emerges as a source of power. Her theoretical approach insists on the significance of space in social discourse, and each chapter successfully moves from different types of spaces and places and women’s relationships to them in validating her methodology. Her thought-provoking book makes a case for further study of the relationship of gender, space, and power.

**REFERENCE**


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“This book tells the story of the Golden Age of Piracy though the lives of four of its leading figures” (p. 7). Its focus is on Samuel Bellamy (known as Black Sam), Edward Thatch (better known as Blackbeard), Charles Vane, and Woodes Rogers (presented in this book as a hero, although this opinion wasn’t shared, especially by the victims of his depredations in the South Sea).

“The romantic myth of piracy didn’t follow the Golden Age, it helped create it” (p. 9). Woodard addresses the piracy myths as fabricated situations entangled in real historical events – myths that obscure the true history of
piracy in the so called “Golden Age” (1715-25). He criticizes representations of pirates that reinforced the romantic view of them as rebels and heroes, victims of marginalization, men and marines, persecuted by their own nations and almost forced to become pirates.

Samuel Bellamy called himself “the Robin Hood of the seas.” And there’s the “chivalrous behavior” of Henry Avery, a man forced to become a pirate, whose life story resembles more the story of Peter Blood (the protagonist of Captain Blood, the famous Hollywood creation). Woodes Roger is presented as an official charged with wiping out pirates in the Caribbean, but no mention is made of the fact that he was a pirate himself.

The book mainly focuses on the actions and some facts about individuals, myths, and legends. The story of these individuals, and the connecting ideas of a Republic of pirates or democracy among pirates’ ships, or maybe the perspective of piracy as almost an institution of rebellious fighters result in an extremely narrow analysis, lacking attention to the global context of the struggle among maritime and commercial powers during those centuries. Focusing on the actions of particular individuals fails to present a totally accurate historical view of the global context in which these actions developed.

There are many facts throughout the book, maybe too many, that from time to time drive the reader away from the main idea. Furthermore it would be much more accurate if Woodard had cited his research sources. Although there are some endnotes there are no reference numbers that connect quotes with their sources. For example, the list of prices and weights for the early eighteenth century on page 34 lacks a reference source.

This book is full of constructed, juicy details about the lives of certain individuals and their presence in the Caribbean. It should not be considered a history of piracy. As an historian, I believe that mixing fiction with historical facts will, in the end, confuse readers. If an author wishes to write a fictional narrative about pirates, it would have been better to use fictitious names and make clear from the beginning that the story is based only loosely upon historical fact.
Barbados has a rich pre-Columbian Amerindian past that has often been overlooked in broader studies of Caribbean prehistory. In recent years, the professional archaeological research efforts of Peter L. Drewett and Mary Hill Harris have begun to shed new light on Barbados’s dynamic prehistory and elevate its Amerindian narrative to a prominent place in Caribbean archaeology. In Above Sweet Waters, they examine archaeological remains from the Port St. Charles site (formerly Heywoods Plantation) on the northwest coast of the island.

For many years it was believed that Archaic Age foragers had bypassed Barbados along their route from the South American mainland through the Lesser Antilles. The presence of characteristic conch lip adzes at Port St. Charles, however, challenges that view and suggests that the earliest human occupation of the site began in the Archaic Age. One adze produced a radiocarbon date of nearly 4,000 years, which lends further support to this theory. Port St. Charles therefore provides some of the best evidence to date that Barbados had an Archaic Age population. Rising sea levels have probably
covered Archaic Age settlements and features at Port St. Charles, and this has limited our understanding of the island’s first inhabitants.

While the evidence for Archaic Age peoples is scant, Port St. Charles has provided a wealth of information about Barbados’s Ceramic Age populations. Radiocarbon dates indicate the possibility that ceramic-using horticulturalists, known to archaeologists as Saladoid, inhabited this area of Barbados’s northwest shoreline as early as AD 200. However, most of the evidence points to a Late Saladoid presence beginning around AD 600. The Saladoid evidence includes at least one human burial, an oval-shaped post structure, and numerous wood-lined and pot-lined waterholes. Pottery types also indicate a sizeable Late Saladoid presence. Dating and identifying pottery types is based largely on the measurement of wall thickness from various ceramic vessels, a method that Drewett and Harris helped advance.

The Saladoid tradition in the Lesser Antilles is followed by the Troumassoid, which is also well represented at Port St. Charles. In fact, the majority of archaeological materials recovered from Port St. Charles seem to reflect a concentrated settlement during the transitional phase from Late Saladoid to Troumassoid. The evidence includes at least three round house structures and numerous ceramic vessel forms, including incense burners, shallow bowls, and cassava griddles. In addition, there is clear evidence of Suazoid settlement, which began around AD 1,000 and continued perhaps as late as the time of European presence in the Caribbean. Drewett and Harris discuss historic period materials found at the site as well. They discovered, for example, a substantial post-in-ground structure dating to the late seventeenth century. The structure, which may have been a barn or cart shed, represents one of the few historic-period post-in-ground structures identified archaeologically in Barbados. Finally, a nineteenth-century burial was discovered, and the presence of an Amerindian grave good situated with the historic-period skeleton raises questions about the ethnic identity of the individual buried in that context.

Perhaps the most interesting discovery made at Port St. Charles was the presence of waterholes and the large bottomless ceramic pots used to line them. Drewett and Harris found numerous pot-lined wells. Such wells were necessary on coral islands, like Barbados, which lacked sizeable rivers and easily accessible fresh water sources. The bottomless pots used to line the wells, known as stack pots, date primarily to the late Saladoid / Troumassoid phase of settlement. Drewett and Harris speculate that the elaborate designs on some of the pots represent the spiritual importance of water in pre-Columbian Amerindian societies in the Caribbean and the ritualized nature of constructing waterholes. Human skeletal remains representing the burials of at least 32 Amerindians were also recovered from the site. Drewett and Harris speculate that one “special” burial containing grave goods may represent the remains of a village cacique.
Above Sweet Waters is, for the most part, a highly technical report that outlines the field methodologies and key discoveries made at Port St. Charles. The book will no doubt be a valuable resource for Caribbean archaeologists. Perhaps its greatest contribution is that it serves as a model for collaborative research between developers, Caribbean scholars, and foreign researchers. The success of the Port St. Charles archaeological project highlights the cooperative spirit of archaeological research and the knowledge that can be gained when various groups with shared interests in preserving and protecting national and cultural resources work together for a common goal.

From Rainforest to Cane Field in Cuba: An Environmental History since 1492. REINALDO FUNES MONZOTE. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008. xv + 357 pp. (Cloth US$ 65.00)

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Several colonial botanical gardens were established in the British West Indies in the late 1800s. Founded in 1872, the garden in Trinidad housed early forestry reports written by the island’s former Spanish rulers, men thought to be more environmentally responsible than their British or French peers. Accordingly, Trinidadians at the turn of the century considered themselves blessed by a Spanish-influenced environmental sensitivity absent in neighboring islands. Yet this historically induced smugness would have been hard to justify in light of the environmental transformation in Cuba at the time where forests were giving way to sugar cane. Of course these changes had little to do with Cuba’s Spanish heritage and much to do with its becoming an economic appendage of the United States.

The American-influenced deforestation of the Cuban countryside marks the culmination of the fine environmental history written by Cuban historian Reinaldo Funes Monzote and translated by Alex Martin. Originally published in Mexico in 2004, the study received a UNESCO book prize. Funes Monzote has since reworked his material for the English edition, adding a glossary and conclusion. His primary source material is from Cuban and Spanish archives, and he has augmented this archival material with secondary sources in Spanish and English. In his preface he thanks a number of
American and Canadian scholars, as well as Cuban and Spanish colleagues, for advice and suggestions.

The book’s thesis is best captured by a statement at the end: “In this book I have sought ... to show the great transformation of the island’s landscapes from the point where sugar production began to take shape in the last third of the eighteenth century until the cane plantations completed their occupation of most of the flat and gently rolling natural regions in the 1920s” (p. 274). Funes Monzote mentions and discusses only briefly the environmentally oriented academic work describing postrevolutionary Cuba in a useful bibliographic essay (pp. 333-41). The book itself consists of seven chronological chapters. Throughout, photos and diagrams of sugar cane, forest devastation, railroad engines, teams of oxen, and enormous central sugar grinding mills help to bring the story to life. The several historic maps are less useful, a number being faint and nearly indecipherable. Magnitudes discussed in the study are not readily appreciated by the non-Cuban reader; land areas, for example, are given in caballerías, a unit somewhat over 33 acres in size and derived from Cuba’s colonial period.

Funes Monzote shows effectively how, from almost the earliest Spanish colonization of Cuba, rivalries between sugar cane planters and shipbuilding authorities played themselves out within the contexts of fluctuating international events, feuding political personalities, and changing resource needs. These influences and others could often be read in the local landscape. The early deforestation around Havana for fuel and building supplies was overshadowed by shipbuilding needs. Havana was Spain’s principal shipyard not only for the Americas but also for the empire as a whole at various times in the eighteenth century. In 1789 broad legal authority was conferred upon the local director of the Royal Forest Reserves, marking the culmination of the Spanish navy’s efforts to control Cuban forest exploitation. But fortunes soon shifted, leading to a royal edict in 1815 allowing private property owners freedom to fell trees, a watershed event in Funes Monzote’s eyes: “The royal edict of August 30, 1815 left the expanding sugar industry completely free to invade Cuba’s wooded areas” (p. 127).

In the next century, as the Cuban forests were removed at varying rates to make way for sugar cane, estate owners and other observers noted the environmental consequences. The absence of protective forest covers reduced stream flows in the dry seasons and led to soil erosion in rainy periods. The coming of the railroad, the first line proceeding south from Havana in 1837(!), was the “decisive element” in the forest’s demise (p. 183). After that, sugar cane planters could extend cultivation into seemingly endless stretches of previously untilled land, especially into the central and eastern parts of the island. It was simply a matter of clearing the forest, planting cane, and realizing bumper crops with little thought to husbanding areas left behind. Paralleling these wasteful cultivation practices, meetings were held warning
of soil depletion, papers were published enumerating disappearing mammal and bird species, and various warnings, decrees, and even laws were passed to curb rampant deforestation, all with limited or no results. In 1876 for instance the Woodlands Ordinances for Cuba and Puerto Rico were enacted. Funes Monzote suggests that the law was hardly noticed in the former place because the forests were being destroyed so quickly (p. 206)!

*From Rainforest to Cane Field* could be improved upon. The writing is dense, and suffers from an excess of overly lengthy sentences and impenetrable paragraphs. When Funes Monzote concludes the book by proclaiming that Cuban sugar cane cultivation from 1815 to 1926 was “dazzling but unsustainable,” one wonders where similarly pleasing turns of phrase were earlier in the study. And the story cries out for firsthand recollections, which are almost certainly available through oral history. The first quarter of the twentieth century is sufficiently recent that a few old people there still remember from their childhoods the smells of smoke from cane fires, the sounds of train engine whistles, and the sights of workers leaving at dawn and returning at dusk, the memories that can truly enliven environmental history.


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The traumatic global food crisis of the twenty-first century brings again into sharp relief questions related to development policy and its impact on agriculture. The question of land use in this context demands urgent reconsideration and critical rethinking by scholars, policy makers, and activists. Carefully crafted interdisciplinary texts on this issue and related subjects are particularly welcome at this time.

*Caribbean Land and Development Revisted* (*CLD Revisited*) is a general text that, as its title suggests, seeks to revisit the land question in the Caribbean and to extend the editors’ earlier ten-chapter volume, *Land and
Development in the Caribbean (1987). In that earlier work the issues of the food crisis loomed, as the editors pointed out the “food deficit” profile of the Caribbean, while noting the increase in “uncultivated farm land” and arguing that the “key to a reversal of this depressed agricultural situation lies in a clearer understanding of contemporary attitudes of land” (Besson & Momsen 1987:1). This first volume set out to challenge “Eurocentric ‘outsider’ models of development and the significance of Creole ‘insider’ perspectives” (Besson & Momsen 1987:1).

Unlike the earlier volume, which focused exclusively on the Anglophone Caribbean, five of the eighteen chapters of CLD Revisited deal with other areas of the Caribbean – Martinique, Guadeloupe, the Dominican Republic, Suriname, and Cuba. In CLD Revisited, the editors also seek to deepen the earlier book’s views by framing their offerings under four new headings – “Historical Perspectives on Land and Crop Production,” “Policy, Planning, and Management,” “Land for the Peasantry?” and “Landscape, Migration, and Development.” The chapters grouped in this way provide readers with a general sense of broader issues regarding land and development and disrupt the earlier text’s reliance on binaries such as “insider/outsider” and “Eurocentric/local” (the latter invariably read as “peasants”) as analytical frames. CLD Revisited wrestles to break from earlier binarisms expressed in and around a romanticization of peasantry, but elements of these, central to the earlier text, are still present. This attention to complexity, not provided in every essay, is especially evident when the text is read in an interdisciplinary fashion in an attempt to bring disparate pieces from different parts of the book together.

This ambitious book touches on a variety of issues, ranging from land use to the reorganization of agriculture in Cuba’s special period. It also offers analyses of squatting, land policies, migration, Montserratians’ dynamic virtual landedness, or landlessness, reinterpretations of Martinique’s historiography, and depeasantization in Barbados.

Elements of this rethinking project are clearly present in the essays by Bonham C. Richardson and Lawrence S. Grossman, whose arguments are provocative of a certain rethinking of the politics of change. Richardson’s “The importance of the 1897 British Royal Commission” suggests that it might be better viewed as a response to the agency of plantation workers rather than as simply a colonial imposition. Moreover, for these workers the Commission was an opportunity to indict their employers. Planters, too, pressed their political advantage in this moment to castigate colonial policy, thus fracturing the interests connecting “Eurocentric” populations, and to some extent the colonial state itself. These developments, combined with natural disasters in the form of hurricanes, hastened the demise of plantations and opened a window of opportunity for the sale of land to workers.
In “Colonial Office and Soil Conservation in the British Caribbean 1938-1950,” Grossman argues that the colonial preoccupation with conservation, while not necessarily emanating from “local” demands but rather from global fears, had the effect of introducing (with a sort of missionary zeal) concerns for the environment into the development policy of the day. Grossman also notes the disconnect between resident colonials and the Colonial Office, pointing out the policy zeal of the latter. If his essay is read along with “Agrobiodiversity as an Environmental Management Tool in Small-Scale Farming Landscapes” by Balfour Spence and Elizabeth Thomas-Hope, or even Mimi Sheller’s “Arboreal Landscapes of Power and Resistance,” one might ask how and in what ways earlier colonial policy of conservation might have influenced the agricultural practices of small farmers, including their arboreal sensibilities. And how might these refashioned practices and beliefs throw light on a different understanding of creolization, for instance, not as insider/processes or biological mixtures, but rather as a dynamic condition/experience and process and practice expressive of contested, hybrid, and mutual agendas (see Crichlow 2009). From such a perspective it would be possible to rethink the notion of postcoloniality beyond the linear temporality offered in this text – i.e. (after) colonialism – and bring it in sync with the term’s more productive use. That is when it is concerned with the folding of temporalities through particular strategies, or alternatively the ways in which the colonial/postcolonial experience constituted “sedimented histories” (Moore 2005) or “times of entanglement” (Mbembe 2001), within the various practices of development narratives. These “stitches on time” (to borrow a phrase from Dube 2004) and correlated strategies inhere in the struggles of indigenous and maroon peoples in Suriname who have set the state against itself by appealing to transnational agencies like the United Nations in their struggles for territory, as Ellen-Rose Kambel chronicles in “Land, Development, and Indigenous Rights in Suriname: The Role of International Human Rights Law.” This and other practices noted by various contributors certainly beg the question of what we mean by “the Caribbean,” a term that warrants a dynamic engagement, especially for those writing on transnationalisms.

Many of the essays in CLD Revisited extend the thinking of its predecessor, but several also succeed in going beyond those constricted binary perspectives, for an interrogation of the sorts of assumptions that underlie analyses, policies, and constructs. This provides material for scholars to wonder productively about the kinds of governmentalities (to use a well-known Foucauldian construct generically described as the conduct of conduct) that emerged through social relationships produced in, and made by, “landscapes,” and about states co-existing in complex relations with their “subjects” of power, in the Caribbean projects of “Land and Development” (Crichlow 2007).
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Ayala and Bernabe have written an admirable history of Puerto Rico. An extensive array of endnotes, covering some forty pages, identify the secondary materials, newspaper accounts, and decisions of the courts that sustain this research. The breadth of the sources consulted is impressive as it ranges from periodicals such as American Banker to Piri Thomas’s “Puerto Rican Obituary.”

The book has a sustained theoretical approach throughout, probably on account of the similar academic and ideological experiences of its two authors, both of whom graduated from the prestigious Jesuit-run school in San Juan, earned undergraduate degrees in Princeton (Bernabe in 1981 and Ayala in 1982), and obtained their Ph.D.s (in 1989 and 1990) at the Department of Sociology of SUNY Binghamton. Currently, Bernabe is a researcher of
Spanish literature at the University of Puerto Rico in Río Piedras and Ayala teaches sociology at the University of California, Los Angeles.

Their career specialties complement each other in an uncommon, yet refreshing, way for a book of history. For instance, when discussing the fate of tobacco farming and manufacturing, they refer (as any reader would expect from a history book) to the expansion of the Tobacco Trust, the plight of tobacco growers that eventually led to a 1931-32 boycott. However, they refer to two short stories by Miguel Meléndez Muñoz about Portalatín Aponte, a farmer who embodied the vicissitudes, pains, and glories of a small farmer in the shift from coffee to tobacco growing (p. 43). They accomplish the same feat with coffee by intertwining Manuel Zeno Gandía’s *La charca* with their narrative on the coffee industry (p. 46). A section entitled “Enter Muñoz Marín” represents an excellent use of literature to illustrate and document the political. Its analysis of future governor Luis Muñoz Marín as a young poet considers that he did not abandon “the topic of despair and future deliverance” of the downtrodden (p. 99). In a consistent manner, literature has complete chapters of its own.

The book’s organization generally follows Belgian economist Ernest Mandel’s long waves. Accordingly, the twentieth century had two long waves separated by World War II and each wave had an initial phase of economic expansion (1898-1930, 1950-75) followed by one of retrenchment (1930-50 and 1975 to the present). Chapters 1-8 cover the first wave and 9-15 the latter half of the century.

Complementing the Mandelian organization of the book, the political status question and Puerto Rican identity loom large, constituting powerful threads that weave the tapestry of the book. More specifically, a good part of the text rests on an ongoing debate with national identity issues raised by Antonio S. Pedreira’s *Insularismo* (1934) which Ayala and Bernabe hold to be “the most debated essay in Puerto Rican literary history” (p. 391).

The book is not an aseptic narrative nor does it pretend to be a value-free (p. 1) recounting of events. It is written by intellectuals with a historical perspective accompanied by social and political commitments to the betterment of Puerto Ricans. The “imperatives of capitalist accumulation and of survival in a competitive market” (p. 332) are two forces that work against their commitment to a radical democratic imagery. Consequently, Ayala and Bernabe engage scholars of differing views, such as Carmen Luisa González who concluded “that the Foraker Act was not the ‘result of a unilateral imposition’ but rather ‘a dispositive produced within the space of negotiation that opened in 1898’” (p. 40). They argue that the fact that some groups prospered under the Act does not deny colonialism, but rather qualifies it. Another engagement refers to the critical endorsement that several local intellectuals gave to the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks. Ayala and Bernabe hold no sympathy for Islamic fundamentalism but explicitly
disapprove of the support of U.S. policies in the Central Asian country (p. 329).

The book’s plan explicitly privileges a discussion of politics, economics, and culture. It is a pity that Ayala and Bernabe deliberately chose not to discuss religion. They miss the enormous impact of the Protestant missionaries after the Invasion in 1898, the Catholic Cheo – in the lay missionaries with the gift of tongues known as the Hermanos Cheos – response that followed, and the colossal upswing of Pentecostalism following World War I, up to the sizable influence of religious leaders in present-day politics. Fortunately for those interested in these themes, Samuel Silva Gotay and Reinaldo Román have addressed the issue (see Gotay 1997, 2005; Román 2007).

For a text aimed at an English-speaking readership, the book might usefully have cited the translations of several important works well discussed in the text. These include Antonio S. Pedreira’s *Insularismo*, José Luis González’s *The Four-Storeyed Country*, and Luis Rafael Sánchez’s *Macho Camacho’s Beat*, to cite just a few. Fortunately for English-speaking readers, the *Memoirs of Bernardo Vega* are cited in translation.

The discussion of the agricultural sector of the economy during the first half of the twentieth century center on the very important orientation of sugar and tobacco exports to the United States and the ensuing loss of markets by coffee exporters to be followed, during the thirties, by the sugar crisis. Although the book states that about one third of the total cultivated land was dedicated to “food crops for local consumption” (p. 35), there is no recognition of the relevance, changes, or breakdown of the minor fruits. A map (p. 34) graphically reproduces the schema when it divides the land use into the three major crops: sugar cane, coffee, and tobacco, with no mention of minor fruits. Thus, according to the 1935 census, municipalities as Trujillo Alto, Isabela, Corozal with more land dedicated to minor fruits (45.7, 43.3, and 31.9 percent, respectively) than any of the major crops are considered to be either sugar or coffee municipalities. The downplaying of the mixed-crop farmer has repercussions in the cultural realm. Ramón Frade’s iconic painting “El Pan Nuestro” centers on a minor-fruit farmer carrying a large bunch of plantains. A *jíbaro* or peasant who packs a mare with a load of his produce for the city’s market is the main character of Rafael Hernández’s still-popular song “Lamento Borincano.”

In spite of these minor shortcomings, I agree with Francisco Scarano’s statement, on the book jacket, that this book is the standard against which any other about twentieth-century Puerto Rico will be judged.
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Everyday Harm: Domestic Violence, Court Rites, and Cultures of Reconciliation. MINDIE LAZARUS-BLACK. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007. xii + 244 pp. (Paper US$ 22.00)

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In 1991, Trinidad and Tobago became the first Caribbean country to pass a domestic violence act. Everyday Harm, focused on this act, analyzes data Lazarus-Black collected between 1997 and 1999, primarily in a northern Trinidad town. Chapter 1 presents views of coalitions and debates, with general reference to the economic, political, and social factors that made passage of the act possible. Chapter 2 tabulates applications and their disposition (for women against men, men against women, and male and female homosexuals against each other), parties filing cross-complaints, mandated offenses, case duration, causes for dismissal, and comparison to other locations in Trinidad and Tobago and countries having enacted similar statutes.

Because the tables do not cross-tabulate socioeconomic variables, they provide little assistance in understanding social variations among litigants glimpsed in the qualitative analysis of cases presented in Chapters 3 and 4. Superficial historical, economic, and political summaries poorly contextualize the complexity of the cases described, especially in Chapter 6, “Being Family, Doing Gender, and Making a Living in the Caribbean.” The lack of systematic attention to systemic socioeconomic factors within and across households also makes superficial the quantitative and qualitative comparison of Trinidad and Tobago with other countries in her brief discussion, “Cultures of Reconciliation, East and West” (pp. 142-56).
Lazarus-Black restricts her attention primarily to what domestic violence law can and cannot do to help in “regendering the state,” defined as a process that should bring to public attention and legal consideration categories and activities that were formerly unnamed. These categories, she contends, “constituted harm to women, denied them rights, silenced them, or limited their capacity to engage in actions available to men” (pp. 21-22). The analysis proceeds as if all men are equal heirs to patriarchal dominance, and therefore underanalyzes power differences among men and their consequences for powers that women, children, and elders (of both sexes) have to instigate or perpetrate violence in domestic units.

Finding that the courts dismissed applications for half of most categories and nearly half of the remaining by-gender categories, though the sample is highly skewed for women against men (of 550 filing, only 74 involved men filing against women), and includes few homosexual conflicts, the protections of which the act at best nominally applies, Lazarus-Black accepts her skewed dataset as consistent with studies demonstrating that women are the overwhelming targets of domestic violence. From the statistical consistency, she tries to explain the outcomes as adverse consequences for women’s empowerment. Lazarus-Black found that, when added together, three causes (failure to show, withdrawal, and accepting reconciliation agreement) accounted for the largest percentage of dismissed cases. She concludes that the prevalence of these three causes demonstrates how cultural and legal practices combine to produce structural deflection. By structural deflection she means that the act offers women illusory power because the way it is implemented maintains and reinforces male hegemony. Lazarus-Black claims to be building on Paulette Pierce’s use of structural deflection, by pushing its implications beyond “elite” male conduct, but she fails to note that Pierce’s reference to elite men does not identify an economic class. Instead, Pierce focuses on a racially subordinated population in a racially subordinated organization in which elite means those males with a capacity to subordinate other male and female organization members who knew less about revolutionary texts and could not speak street-savvy language. The primary weapon for Pierce’s elite men was the verbal abuse these skills allowed them to deploy against weak men and impoverished love-starved women. The abuse was effective largely because the members who lacked these skills accepted that for the sake of racial loyalty and subordinated national pride these elite men were best able to project a positive image of “civilized Black masculinity” to a world beyond the organization. While Pierce views the nationalist ideology as “suicidal,” Lazarus-Black points to a rise in nationalist pride as a factor that aided the passage of an act to civilize men in domestic relations.

Having homogenized male power and female powerlessness, after presenting cases that “beat the odds” imposed by structural deflection (Chapter 3), Chapters 4 through 6 describe how masculine-devised “court rites” “color
law’s efficacy as a form of protest and protection” for women seeking redress from domestic violence (p. 157), aided by the way professionals manipulate time and a “culture of reconciliation,” operating in and outside the courts, to assure that persons who file and persist are made to feel guilty of violating cultural norms. Lazarus-Black concludes that studying the outcomes of the act’s implementation helps us understand why “Discerning the complexities of how law works reveals the real work that is necessary to address everyday harm, to implement the domestic violence law and to make a future free of violence against women” (p. 176).

Domestic violence law, on which Trinidad and Tobago modeled its 1991 act, increasingly includes verbal as well as physical assault. Women, children, and elders have capacities, different, but not necessarily less, than men, as the “stronger sex,” to perpetrate verbal and status violence. The 1999 act that replaced it followed the general pattern of legal efforts to balance or make inclusive forms of violence. The effort should, but in Lazarus-Black’s analysis does not, raise questions about whether reference to statistics for women as overwhelming targets of domestic violence properly captures gendered roles in instigating and perpetrating violence in short- and long-term conflicts. Instead, uncritically accepting the “overwhelming target” view, she explains as exceptions (bad apples in the barrel of female powerlessness) cases of women abusing the power granted in the act’s provisions, by understating their use of verbal and physical violence in altercations or by misrepresenting male violence to gain custody of children or control over men’s property, even as the next version of the act (1999) tried to cure the infirmities that permitted the abuse.

The current politics of victimhood and related values that shape legal provisions encourage Lazarus-Black’s negative stance on the act’s “reconciliatory provisions” – merely a means to maintain and reinforce male hegemony – even as countries that for the past three decades have tried solving problems with more laws, now facing economic and social consequences of high rates of incarceration, search for combinations of reconciliatory and compensatory processes to reduce the reliance on retributive law. Most importantly, this work demonstrates the difficulty of devising methods and analyses that do not silence attention to complex interplays of forms of violence and the powers all parties bring differently and unequally to manipulating legal provisions to aid them in producing and deploying “everyday harm” rather than merely seeking the protection of the law. It leaves unaddressed how to analyze what regendering a state would entail were it more than a call to law to substitute one (heterosexual) gender’s power for another’s.
This book is timely and topical. The forced union of Trinidad with Tobago was dodged by tension, as each side was suspicious and resentful of the other. At the present time, the question of the relationship between the two islands is center-stage, as there is an accepted need for a revision of both the constitution of Trinidad and Tobago and the Tobago House of Assembly Act (1996). Luke’s book provides important details on the saga of the union and the circumstances around which the relationship was forged, which can inform the very important process of constitutional changes that are currently under consideration.

The book makes an important contribution to the historiography of the Caribbean. By its focus on the experiences of one of the smaller Caribbean islands, it serves to reduce the generalized perception of historical uniformity in the region. Many of the smaller islands of the Caribbean remain underrepresented in the existing histories of the region, as they have been dwarfed by the larger more prominent units. Luke has removed the shroud of secrecy over the history of this small island, rescued Tobago from its present invisibility in Caribbean history, and thus widened the scope and extent of Caribbean history. It is hoped that this publication will stimulate further research on these under-researched areas.

The book provides a wealth of knowledge on the history of Tobago. It details the complex story of the island’s development as a colony under
British rule and later, by sub-contract, under the colonial administration of Trinidad. It identifies the problems stimulated by this latter arrangement and the factors that dominated the history of the island across the period under study and provides information on the colonial officials and representatives of the people. Luke captures the mood of the people of Tobago, as they responded to the challenges they faced, with marked accuracy. The text is forcefully written, very analytical, and easy to read.

The eleven chapters span approximately the 100-year period from about 1889 to 1980, from just before union to self-government and discuss the significant issues which emerged across the period and led to the demand for self-government by the disenchanted people of Tobago. These are centered around identity and autonomy. The book attains its objectives, which are to show that identity was the main buttress of the autonomy movement, that the problems which beset Tobago were longstanding, and that the charges of neglect and underdevelopment made by Tobago against Trinidad were well founded.

Luke analyzes the island’s history by tracing the development of Tobago’s identity through responses to constitutional change. In particular, he identifies the bitter pill of union and its backlash, and the poor relations of the people of the two islands, as the factors which provided the context for the development of the “we/they” antipathies, the essential ingredient in the identity-formation process in Tobago. The basic tool for his analysis is the autonomy continuum, which classifies peoples’ views of the relationship between the islands. The integrationists saw the union as indivisible, the centrists stood on the middle ground veering to the left or right from time to time, the separatists/autonomists were left of center, and the secessionists were on the extreme left. This continuum permits Luke to realistically chart the variation of sentiments expressed in relation to particular issues, at different points in time and of course in relation to personal and class interests.

Luke utilizes a wide range of sources and provides an exhaustive bibliography which adds to the book’s value. The book accurately presents the concerns of the people of Tobago and their reactions to the problems that faced them in the union. While its theoretical approach is interesting and useful, there are instances where the argument is clouded. Luke’s reference to Tobago as the minor partner in the union (p. 102) is not in keeping with either his representation of the proud Tobagonian (p. 29) or the way Tobagonians viewed themselves. There are also some contradictions in his assessment of the role of colonial officials and the resident planter class in the process of identity formation. For example, he credits the racist commissioner, William Low, with both a strong sense of Tobagonian identity, which affected his responses to the issue of wardship for the island (pp. 103-4), and a “genuine interest in the welfare of Tobago” (p. 105). It is difficult to accept that a colonial official had become so affianced with the island as to develop
identity responses similar to those of his charges. Similarly, the position-
ing of the Tobago Planters Association on the autonomy continuum is of
dubious value given that they were serving their specific class interests (pp.
117-24). Perhaps a concentration on the variations of the views on the mat-
ter expressed by the lower classes and those who were resident in Trinidad
would have been of greater value. These drawbacks notwithstanding, this
book is a significant addition to the historiography of the Caribbean and a
must-read for anyone interested in the history of Tobago and in Caribbean
history more generally.

_Dub: Soundscapes and Shattered Songs in Jamaican Reggae._ MICHAEL
(Paper US$ 27.95)

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In this history of dub music, Michael Veal presents “the half that never been
told” – the story of how sound engineers and DJs in Jamaica developed a
way of reconfiguring and “versioning” popular songs that in the long run
had as much global impact as the recordings of Bob Marley. The book is
a primer for cultural literacy in Jamaican music of the 1970s and its off-
shoots in Europe and the United States, and also a theoretical/philosophical
consideration of that music’s significance. Veal is above all a keen listener,
and a good deal of space is devoted to brief (page-long) exegeses of specific
recordings. (There is no CD with the book, but many of the recordings he
describes are available on iTunes.)

After an introduction, Chapters 1 and 2 describe the relationship between
Jamaican studios and the competitive sound systems that generated demand
for their records. Faced with a relatively small market, Jamaican studios
made money by selling the same recordings in multiple “versions” for DJs
who wanted to play something distinctive and customized. Studios supplied
remixes on demand, using an acetate machine that could make single copies
of a record on a metal plate coated with wax. These “dub plates” degraded
quickly, but they avoided the delay of pressing records at a factory. Veal
argues that sound engineers who applied their real-time mixing skills to these remixes became improvising performers themselves, catching the vibe and dancing as they worked the mixing board in musical time, sometimes creating a whole new version in the three minutes it took to play the master tape.

The distinctive techniques and aesthetics that emerged from this remixing practice came to be known as “dub.” Veal shows how dub versions represented an alternative concept of authorship that favored the sound engineer over the composer, prefiguring “the digital age of popular music production, in which reconfiguration has become more important as a compositional strategy than traditional conceptions of composition” (p. 93). In this view “a song” can only be understood through the aggregate of its versions, each of which plays upon the popularity and meanings of earlier versions. This effect of “accumulation” is one of several aesthetic principles Veal identifies, as he develops a vocabulary appropriate to dub, including such terms as “dropping out,” “fragmentation,” “incompletion,” “drum and bass,” and “riddim.” He also describes the innovative use of existing electronic equipment and technologies like filtering, equalization, echo, and reverb.

These aesthetics and techniques themselves become clear through their accumulated illustration in the middle chapters of the book, where Veal reviews the careers of influential sound engineers. Chapter 3 focuses on Sylvan Morris, who recorded Bob Marley’s first albums at Coxsone Dodd’s Studio One. Chapter 4 describes the work of King Tubby (Osbourne Ruddock), who honed the art of remixing, and created a sound that reflected the tensions of ghetto life during the increasingly violent decade of the 1970s. Chapter 5 describes the work of Lee “Scratch” Perry, the most performative of the leading dub engineers, whose Black Ark studio produced recordings in the late 1970s that Veal portrays as an “organically” Jamaican sound infused with African spirituality, wed to the image of a “mad scientist.” Chapter 6 focuses on Errol Thompson, who went beyond the practice of reconfiguring original recordings, adding many new sounds to create dense and varied textures. Chapter 7 describes the end of the dub era, marked by Prince Jammy’s hit song, “Under me Sleng Teng,” which used a riddim created on a Casio keyboard, and ushered in the era of digital studio production and the new style of “ragga” or dancehall music.

The book takes a strong philosophical turn in Chapter 8, where Veal relates dub to the postcolonial predicament, and specifically to the disruption of slavery and the project of reclaiming African cultural memory in reconfigured fragments and echoes. Veal argues that the Caribbean was a logical breeding ground for dub’s “afro-futurist” vision, underscoring his argument with a beautiful quote by Guyanese poet David Dabydeen: “We were freed of certain traditions, knowledges and so on, and while we have sorrow about the loss of those, nevertheless, we are always on the threshold of originality” (p. 218). He also makes links between sound production and language, and
points out that dub first developed in the sound systems as a platform for the DJs’ speech, making it an important site for political discourse (although Veal does not describe DJ uses of dub in much detail – his own experience as a listener and researcher after the fact favors a focus on records rather than live sound system performances).

The last chapter follows dub music across the ocean to England where it was taken up by both Jamaican expatriate and native English producers, with links to the punk music scene. Veal also reviews the influence of dub on German and American electronic music producers. And in hip hop he describes the “revolution of the soundscape over the song” as an outgrowth of Jamaican remix techniques (p. 246). Finally he illustrates the influence of dub aesthetics and meanings in the writing of black intellectuals like Paul D. Miller, Louis Chude-Sokei, and Paul Gilroy, arguing that the black modernity of these writers shares with dub its impulse to reclaim the past, in contrast to European definitions of modernity as a break with the past.

Veal draws on a variety of oral and written sources to reconstruct the stories, the techniques, and the ethos of Jamaican recording studios in the 1970s. His knowledge of dub recordings is especially impressive, and his inspired and imaginative writing relates their sounds to social turmoil and diasporic consciousness. This is an important book about an extraordinary and influential moment of musical innovation.


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Since 1956 when Caribbean Quarterly brought out a special issue on Carnival, scholarly research into the Trinidad Carnival has been uneven. Errol Hill’s The Trinidad Carnival, Mandate for a National Theatre was published in 1972, after which we have seen excellent studies of the calypso and of steelband. But the masquerade has been less well served (Hill 1972). In 1984 two papers were presented at a conference at the University of the West
Indies and some others were presented at a conference in Trinity College, Hartford in 1998 (published in The Drama Review and republished as Culture in Action – The Trinidad Experience). Now Garth L. Green and Philip W. Scher have added to the literature another anthology: Trinidad Carnival, The Cultural Politics of a Transnational Festival.

The Trinidad Carnival is certainly transnational. It has given birth to huge carnivals in many countries in the Caribbean, North America, and Europe. Keith Nurse (2004) counts thirty diasporic carnivals in Britain, twenty in the United States, seven in Canada, and four in Europe. Green and Scher’s “cultural politics” is more questionable, however:

We see Carnival as integral to the cultural politics of Trinidad and Tobago. It is this centrality that places it at the core of efforts of West Indian migrants to draw upon the carnival form and its history in emerging local cultural politics of identity. The idea of cultural politics we develop in this introduction relies upon political economy approaches within anthropology that compel one to consider the place of “class, capitalism, and power” in the constitution of localized subjects, yet can also account for subjects who may occupy multiple localities, as can be argued in the case of the transnational communities considered in these essays. (p. 3)

One can see Carnival as being integral to whatever one chooses but it seems more insightful to view Carnival as a celebration of, among other things, highly rhythmic Africa-derived music and dance, which have long been the cement of exiled communities. After all, African-derived music has consolidated various groups, ranging from basement parties, through neighbourhood gangs, to entire nations. (Actually, in New York, whose puritan environment is quite inhospitable to the bacchanalian anarchism of the Trinidad Carnival, the Brooklyn Labour Day carnival has become less a song-and-dance affair and more a celebration of a different cornerstone of community: food. Recall that the word festival comes from feast.)

Consisting of ten essays, plus an editors’ introduction and an afterword by Roger Abrahams, Trinidad Carnival was intended as a celebration of the special 1956 Caribbean Quarterly issue devoted to Carnival. Alas, the essays anthologized by Green and Scher owe less to the straightforward empiricism of the 1956 writers than to recent fashions in cultural studies.

Three essays, for instance, discuss a sideshow of traditional mas, Vie La Cou, which is small-scale and peripheral to Carnival, even if it is enjoyable for kids. Pamela Franco claims that that revival of “traditional” mas was a response to the dominance of women in the modern Carnival, but the so-called traditions were actually a black nationalist male invention of the 1956 Caribbean Quarterly group. Garth Green dismisses the same revival for being commercially inspired, and stresses its inauthenticity in comparison with Leighton James’s large sculpture of a 1959 mas band Flowers and
Fruits. Philip Scher argues that Vie la Cou and other traditional revivals were a product of the nostalgia of returning migrants. Patricia De Freitas, one such returning migrant, makes no mention of nostalgia but rather wrings her “theoretical” musings from the experience of playing mas back home after studying anthropology in the United States.

Exhibiting the most extreme symptoms of empirical malnutrition and theoretical obesity is Robin Balliger’s paper on “The politics of cultural value and the value of cultural politics.” Balliger looks at the pros and cons of intellectual property legislation, which producers local and foreign favor, and cassette pirates and consumers are against. He concludes that “Popular expression in Trinidad has always required resources and has been involved in the circuit of global capitalism – which negates teleological narratives of a pure culture of resistance becoming a purely commodified popular culture” (p. 214).

Fortunately, other papers provide more useful empirical knowledge. While Lyndon Phillip dismisses the calls for a return to tradition, he also gives the interesting story of Caribana’s history, including its forgotten origins in the Emancipation Day Calypso Carnivals of the 1950s. Victoria Razak tells a similarly unknown story of carnival in Aruba and the ethnic and class conflicts that fuel its history. Nowhere, however, is there a description of the mas.

Shannon Dudley recounts how Starlift Steel Orchestra performed a composition by their arranger Ray Hollman in 1972 in the Panorama steel-band competition in Trinidad, and the ensuing furore caused by Starlift’s break with the tradition of arranging a song by a calypsonian. Ray Funk and Donald Hill describe the few crazy months in 1956-57 when calypso’s popularity in the United States briefly skyrocketed before falling back to earth: “An incredible number of calypso records were rushed to the market, nightclubs around the country switched to an all-calypso policy, and many in the industry came to believe that rock’n’roll was dead and that calypso was taking over” (p. 178).

Fifty years after its publication, the Caribbean Quarterly issue is still necessary reading for anyone interested in Carnival. It would be surprising, on the other hand, if Trinidad Carnival: The Cultural Politics of a Transnational Festival is read by anyone after five years.

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Calypso has been viewed as open-air folkloric performance, as theater, through the eyes of literary critics and, from the points of view of performer-scholars and through exegesis of politically oriented lyrics, as unfolding in various forms depending upon the era and the venue. Most recently, concepts of power, identity, and history (Foucauldian “genealogy”) are central ideas in humanistic academe, including Caribbean studies. In this work, Jocelyne Guilbault has created a grand blend of Trinidad’s fulsome Carnival scholarship in a masterful manner. She has seamlessly woven together Foucauldian theory and ethnomusicological practice. By incorporating a variety of Carnivalesque statements of identity by selected “players,” she has created a calypso “genealogy” that does not deny a sense of historical chronology. Furthermore, her explication of an ethnography of discourse does not deny but enhances her own objective ethnography. Through it all are the usual issues of power through creation and performance and the ever-transforming personal and national conception of calypso, which is always in a state of becoming, just as it establishes an identity of being.

For Guilbault, “governing sound” is more than governmental power over calypso venues and expressive and verbal contents, and includes the acts of “governing technologies” by performers and musical entrepreneurs. She reads calypso in a wide framework; she not only examines traditional calypso as it is performed in Carnival season in the tents and other venues but she also notes genres that have a family resemblance to calypso, which she rightly sees as spin-offs of calypso. Rather than focusing on the resultant list of calypso genres or examining the sounds of calypso per se, she is interested...
in technologies used to produce and disseminate sound and in people and institutional frameworks that control those technologies.

Guilbault explores three periods of calypso – “colonial, anticolonial/nationalist, and neoliberal” (p. 270). Part One of her study (Chapters 1-5) deals with the first two eras while Part Two concerns the current, neoliberal era. In Chapter 1, Guilbault sees the mantra that Trinidad is “the Land of Calypso” (p. 22) as a process of the centrality of Trinidad in the political economy of the region rather than as a historical fact of a particular musical style or related styles. Perhaps Trinidad is the Land of Calypso only in some hegemonic sense. This calls to mind something that Dan Crowley, one of my mentors, once told me; he said he was not sure that calypso originated in Trinidad. Dan, whose spouse was born and raised on the island, had wide experience in the Eastern Caribbean. Indeed, he was once listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the most traveled paraplegic in the world and he undoubtedly observed and participated in Latinate Carnivals in more countries than soucouyant. In his modernist, colonial-era scholarship, a case for calypso’s birth could be made for Martinique, St. Lucia, or some other place as easily as for Trinidad. And John Cowley, historian of all things carnival and anticrist to postmodernism (fellow historian Kim Johnson praised his approach by calling it “British empiricism”) also thinks that calypso, as a genre, did not originate in Trinidad, separate from similar genres in the area.

In Chapter 2 Guilbault applies Foucault’s notion of “genealogy” to Carnival and views calypso as a “problem-space” wherein the “technologies” of the setting as well as the performer’s intentions provide an opportunity for “consequential effects” (p. 40). The history of calypso is not a lineal march of important events set in a “cause-comes-before-effect” chronology. The history of calypso is a broad ancestry of bits and pieces of calypso whenever it may insinuate itself into Carnival, even if it occurs outside of chronological time. In other words, genealogical time deals with events analyzed as “colonial, anticolonial/nationalist, and neoliberal” that may not precisely exist as discrete chronological epochs. Chapter 3, “Power, Practice, and Competitions,” takes up several issues, especially the effects of presentation and technology in calypsonians’ quest for stardom. Chapter 4 deals with the contemporary calypso performance itself by tracing the careers of Black Stalin, Calypso Rose, Denyse Plummer, Crazy, and De Mighty Trini. The next chapter focuses on how, post-independence, “the sound(ing)s of calypso became an important site in which to articulate received notions of modernity, authenticity, originality, and ‘cultural’ dependence” (pp. 135-36).

Chapter 6 covers the post-independence era, especially the 1990s, and presents extra-textual exegesis of various contemporary styles such as “soca, rapso, chutney soca, and raga soca” (p. 17). As Guilbault puts it, “This chapter examines how the new Carnival musics, making audible the presence of
heterogeneous constituencies, have redefined the terrain on which national culture is debated” (p. 169). In Chapter 7, she focuses on the styles and neoliberal economic/political/social milieu of the music of Afro-Trinidadian Machel Montano and Indo-Trinidadian Rikki Jai. She sees a disjunction between the centripetal, integrationist force of their musical stylings (good) and the centrifugal, neo-segregationist (my word) tendencies of their audiences (bad). The final chapter examines neoliberal commercial entrepreneurship as government retreated somewhat from sponsoring musical extravaganzas and as performers, entrepreneurs, and corporate sponsors within the music industry have moved in to utilize “the tactics of management and methods” to create a “new style of governing dealing with Carnival musical activities (p. 240).” Guilbault closes the book with a “Coda” set in 2005, which nicely ties together her strains of analysis for the entire volume.

Extending Guilbault’s Foucauldian argument to the scholarship of calypso and Carnival, one can see that scholars, especially local scholars, are themselves players in the expansive unfolding of “governing sound” on the island and in the region. It is therefore appropriate that local intellectuals continue critical analysis of calypso and Carnival. However, for those of us who are foreigners, in addition to like-minded Trinidadian academics, Guilbault has wrapped up Trinidad’s Carnival in an impressive package, tying together many of the contentious issues of contemporary scholarship. At this point, at least for a time when so many important musical settings in the region are receiving much less attention, I suggest that researchers turn elsewhere, to other times and other islands, to other carnivals, to other performances both new and traditional in smaller spaces. What Jocelyne Guilbault has given us here in this critique of “Trinidad’s gift,” is a model that may be adjusted to fit that large body of culture out there in the Caribbean and Atlantic region that could use informed analysis.
In terms of sheer magnitude, there are few musical events anywhere quite like Trinidad and Tobago’s Panorama, the multi-round steelband competition that takes place during the weeks preceding the pre-Lenten Carnival. At the competition finals, the eight best orchestras in the land (with approximately 100 members each) perform intricate 10-minute arrangements of calypsos for the adjudicators and the thousands of steelband aficionados, community supporters, general revelers, and tourists. Shannon Dudley’s major contribution in his new book is a cogent analysis of the musicianship and social contexts of Panorama from its founding in 1963 (a few months after independence) through the present. By marshaling a range of historical and ethnographic evidence, he argues that Panorama has been shaped as much by the agency and experiences of musicians and audiences as by the efforts of middle-class reformers and promoters. Thus, the competition can be seen as an expression of “popular nationalism” that merges both popular and elite interests and street participatory and staged presentational modes of performance.

Dudley begins his book with background chapters on the emergence of pan (steelband music) around 1940 and its development into the 1960s. After a review of several pan origin stories, he outlines some of the musical principles of early steelbands, such as the use of polyrhythmic textures and cyclical forms rooted in Afro-Trinidadian tamboo bamboo and Orisha drum ensembles and, by the late 1940s, the division of bands into frontline pans for melodies and background pans for harmonic accompaniment. Particularly useful are his profiles of Neville Jules, Ellie Mannette, and Anthony Williams – three pioneering pan tuners who, along with others, created an ensemble of chromatic instruments with greatly improved timbre. Dudley also discusses Rudolph Charles (a later tuner) and complements these profiles with an appendix that includes helpful diagrams of pans from various eras. By the 1950s, panmen were using their instruments to perform highly eclectic repertoires. Dudley devotes a chapter to “Bombs,” European classical or other foreign tunes that were arranged in calypso style for performance on the road during Carnival. Though Bombs remained immensely popular...
into the 1960s, they were condemned in a nationalist discourse that advocated calypso as the music of Carnival. Dudley demonstrates how government organizers of Carnival and their allies essentially marginalized Bombs by creating Panorama as a new showcase for pan and the performance of calypso.

Dudley’s chapter on the rise of music arrangers in Panorama is particularly strong. Drawing on personal interviews, he outlines how several major arrangers developed distinct approaches to creating music for the new competition. Anthony Williams of North Stars was the first to grasp the opportunities offered by this staged performance setting: he won the 1963 and 1964 Panoramas with calypso arrangements that featured introductions and codas, themes and variations, modulations and counterpoint (all concepts that have remained standard up to the present). Then Bobby Mohammed (Cavaliers) generated tremendous excitement with sudden rhythmic breaks and dramatic changes of texture, such as dropping out bass pans and returning them with a roar. Clive Bradley (Desperadoes) achieved a high level of clarity in arrangements by grouping different sections of pans into functional “envelopes,” while building excitement in cyclical, polyrhythmic jam sections. Earl Rodney (Harmonites) and Ray Holman (Starlift) also experimented with jam sections and incorporated Latin and jazz idioms in their phrasings and harmonizations. Drawing on his love of both Kitchener calypsos and Bach, Jit Samaroo (Renegades) wove long, complex runs into dense contrapuntal textures.

Equally informative is Dudley’s chapter on arrangers’ composition of their “own tunes” for Panorama. In 1972 Starlift entered Panorama with Ray Holman’s “Pan on the Move.” Holman went on to arrange his own tunes for several other bands, and a number of arrangers followed suit during the 1980s and 1990s. Certainly the most successful has been Phase II’s Len “Boogsie” Sharpe, who developed a unique musical style involving such elements as dissonance, complex sound effects, and funk-inspired rhythms. Dudley offers a comparison of Sharpe’s 1993 composition, “Birthday Party,” with Jit Samaroo’s arrangement of Kitchener’s “Mystery Band” from the same year. While “Mystery Band” consists of a linear structure of themes and variations (with all of Samaroo’s usual inventiveness), “Birthday Party” extends themes and variations in call-and-response jam sections that are based on African concepts of musical time.

Along with his discussion of leading arrangers, Dudley examines Panorama performance practices between 1989 and 2000, a period during which he played with major bands. Among the many topics that he considers are the dynamics of rivalry and competition, the expectations of players and supporters, the construction of dramatic performances, and the sense of spirit, play, and excitement that are central to the Panorama experience. He also gives much attention to the way in which structures, expectations, and
musical formulas in the competition have constrained creativity to the extent that some pannists have sought alternative paths of musicianship, such as working in small ensembles or exploring opportunities outside of Trinidad.

My only criticism of this book is that I wish Dudley had included more of the type of musical analysis presented in the two chapters on arrangers. His overview of the styles of various arrangers could have been illustrated with more details on specific Panorama tunes. Also, the substantial archive of steelband recordings from the 1950s and early 1960s would have allowed for a more in-depth examination of musical practices that provided a foundation for Panorama arranging. Finally, Dudley might have further explored similarities and differences between Panorama arrangements and arrangements of popular and classical music for other settings. But perhaps these are all topics for another study. The material that Dudley does cover is handled with great skill and insight. This book is strongly recommended to scholars and students in music and Caribbean studies and to anyone with an interest in artistic achievements in pan.


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Kevin Birth’s *Bacchanalian Sentiments* offers an innovative approach to the ethnographic study of music in a Caribbean setting. Working in a community in Trinidad with which he has had a long relationship, Birth aptly adopts a political-aesthetic theory that tends to eschew a strictly ethnomusicological approach in favor of a theoretical perspective derived both from Caribbean scholarly sources and the experiences of the musicians with whom he has worked and played. Although the complexities of this approach resist quick summary, one might generalize that it explores the idea of an aesthetic that is political almost by virtue of its emphasis on the experiential nature of music and by extension its collective nature. That is, from a kind of formal perspective, Caribbean musical genres resist strict objectification because they are
structurally in flux, but also because (and this seems especially true of the musical forms Birth is dealing with) at the level of content they are linked to important moments in the lives of community members which may be fleeting, but are still vital. Historically the nature of Caribbean musical forms such as calypso is linked to the political and expressive needs of the community – needs that existed in a colonial or postcolonial setting of extreme duress, exploitation, and oppression. As such, it has been observed widely in Caribbean studies that aesthetic forms such as music, folk narrative, festive behavior, and so forth have been both creolized and changeable. Indeed, the structure of such forms reflects a system of values that uses flexibility and adaptation as political strategies in themselves as well as aesthetic principles to be emulated and admired. Furthermore, as much of African-Caribbean music was labeled “noise” by colonial observers, the concept that it could be music at all reflects Jacques Attali’s observation that “Listening to music is listening to all noise, realizing that its appropriation and control is a reflection of power, that it is essentially political” (Attali 1987:6).

To this end Birth has made a conscious decision to reject traditional metaphors of theoretical description to focus on a new vocabulary that derives from musicological ideas themselves – hence the notions of counterpoint, polyrhythm, polyphony, etc. In this way, one might say it reflects a commonality with Bakhtin’s use of “heteroglossia.” However, Bakhtin was drawing on linguistic insights. By using musical concepts Birth not only allows for a multiplicity of voices and the idea of performance (included in linguistic anthropology) but leaves room for the generic qualities of the forms themselves to help shape his theoretical perspective.

The book consists of six chapters and an introduction. The first two chapters address head-on, as it were, the role that official bodies such as the state play in management of music and culture in Trinidad. Looking at the development of the state’s involvement in culture through the independence movement, Birth contextualizes musical performances while being careful to remind us that such contexts are not only never completely deterministic, but often have little to do with the role that specific musical performances play in the lives of the community of Anamat (pseudonym) in which he conducted fieldwork. However, the importance of their presence, Birth indicates, is that they are part of the contrapuntal movement of songs and meanings as they circulate within Trinidad. As he writes, “these competitions and related institutions are sites of counterpoint between the people’s participation in festivals and music and the government’s policies” (p. 68). The following two chapters then examine closely the ways in which acts of “spontaneity” are exercised by community members. If the state is ambivalent about losing “management” to spontaneity and vice versa, the community seems less so. Here, as Birth indicates, their own structures of behavior, performance, and community building create opportunities for individual acts of creativity.
correlating the rhythm of seasonal activities with the irregularity of conflicts and disruptions that potentially threaten that sense of wholeness. Indeed, in Trinidad the recognition that one lives in a diversified community, with potential conflicts of interest, seems to necessitate forms of expression that account for, allow, and process looming discord. It is an additional bonus that Birth uses the musical form of Parang as his example, as there has been precious little written about this music compared to calypso, soca, steel band, and other forms.

This concept of discord, or in local parlance *bacchanal*, is well explicated in Chapter 4, where the attempted political coup of 1990 is discussed in detail. Here, music may create a sense of belonging, of stability in a moment of crisis and potential dissolution, but as Birth reminds his readers, the aesthetic quality most valued in performance – and indeed, in listening – is not one of uniformity, but change. Although the calypsos played on the road to accompany festive masqueraders in Trinidad have traditionally been called “Road Marches” it is not marching that is required. There may be some imperative on the part of the state to seek the regulation of performances, but Trinidadians will neither resist nor capitulate to such attempts in any kind of linear way. This has been frustrating for state initiatives to harness Trinidadian creativity in the service of the economy (a fact reflected in the way politicians of Trinidad sometimes make scornful allusions to a “carnival mentality”). But this is a narrow-sighted way of seeing what Birth calls “coordinated movements ... not aimed at creating conformity ... but at creating experiences of relation and permitting spontaneity” (p. 224).

**Reference**