Laurie R. Lambert, *Comrade Sister: Caribbean Feminist Revisions of the Grenada Revolution*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020. xii + 226 pp. (Paper US\$23.50)

In this feminist literary analysis of works by Caribbean writers, Laurie Lambert focuses primarily on the way women writers depict gender, as they remember the Grenada Revolution. She also considers commentary on the Revolution by four West Indian men—Derek Walcott, V.S. Naipaul, George Lamming, and Andrew Salkey—though here the role of women does not figure centrally.

According to Lambert, the work of the women writers she analyzes functions as an alternative to the Revolution's archives. She believes that those archives are a "patriarchal construct, depending on knowledge from such sources as courts, newspapers, and government records." Seeking a different perspective, she argues that Caribbean women's writing comprises a "literary archive," one that provides not only a corrective to a patriarchal view of the Grenada Revolution but also, more generally, "a challenge to the heroic masculinity trope so prevalent in the writing on Caribbean revolutions" (p. 16).

Most of *Comrade Sister* is devoted to Lambert's examination of the writing of three Grenadian women, Merle Collins, Dionne Brand, and Joan Purcell. Collins and Brand were strong supporters of, and deeply involved in, the Revolution. Their feminist poetry and novels depict the Revolution through the eyes of poor, often rural, women who comment on its impact on themselves and their families—on the many positive changes it brought, but also on its marginalization of women, its violent end, and the traumatic postrevolutionary period. By putting women at the center of their work, Lambert believes that Collins and Brand provide needed criticism of male domination in both the Grenada Revolution and the broader Black radical tradition from which the Revolution's leaders emerged.

Turning to an analysis of Joan Purcell's autobiography, Lambert discovers a Grenadian woman who was strongly opposed to the Revolution. For Purcell, the Revolution was "a violent aberration in Grenadian political history," incompatible with the Christianity by which she and other Grenadians have ordered their lives (p. 154). Lambert argues that Purcell especially disapproves of the secretive and authoritarian male leadership of the Revolution, and that, while Collins and Brand agree with this critique, they reject Purcell's insistence that the American invasion "rescued" the country, and that life in post-Revolutionary Grenada was vastly superior to life during the Revolution (p. 164).

A common theme Lambert identifies in all the writing she explores is recurring cycles of revolt, political violence, and trauma in Grenadian history. These include fierce protests against oppressive British colonialism, followed by the

corrupt and brutal regime of Prime Minister Eric Gairy, his overthrow by the Revolution, and finally the Revolution's terrifying implosion as its male leaders turned on one another, opening the way for a military invasion by the United States.

Lambert believes that "this repetition [of violence and trauma] is structured specifically by a patriarchal order," and argues therefore that "Grenadian women of all walks of life were uniquely positioned to see all the ways the revolution itself was in need of revolutionizing" (pp. 15, 16). Indeed, all the authors she considers maintain that the Revolution committed serious errors, especially by importing Marxist/Leninist ideology, and then depending on it to guide and govern the country.

Lambert argues that these authors believe that the Revolution should instead have looked to distinctly Grenadian ideas and influences, variously depicted in their work as the voices of Grenadian ancestors, the natural world, Grenadian poetry, queer love, and religiosity and spirituality. She implies that had the leadership listened to these indigenous influences, most often expressed by women's voices, they might well have avoided the missteps that doomed the Revolution.

Together, the written memories of the Revolution by these authors present an important perspective on the Grenada Revolution and its demise. They are persuasive that the Revolution's discounting of women, while employing a rhetoric of equality and depending on women's support and work, was a profound betrayal of the liberation that the Revolution initially promised Grenadians. But Lambert herself does not question, and in fact seems to agree with, the view that by listening to the voices of women and other Grenadian influences, the Revolution could have found a blueprint to prevent its crises and early collapse. This is much too simplistic. There is little evidence that those voices could have provided an adequate foundation to deal with the difficult and complex task of constructing a new society. It would have taken a great deal more than that to succeed in building the just and peaceful Grenada that these authors, Lambert, and the Revolution's leaders had all hoped was possible.

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