
*New Perspectives on Hispanic Caribbean Studies* fills a void in the Caribbean theoretical tradition that often overlooks Hispanophone Caribbean contributions. To this end, editors Magdalena López and María Teresa Vera-Rojas reject “those structures of thinking of a single origin” that reinforce the rigid categories and historical narratives on which Caribbean nationalism and social experiments in Marxism rely. This edited volume is also premised on Carlos Pabón’s “aesthetics of contingency,” which suggests that the artist is not alone in giving form to the artistic object. And it draws on Juan Carlos Quintero Herencia’s “archipelagic effect,” to ponder the Caribbean as a fragmented, ever-evolving cosmos that resists definition and should be read with attention to sensory stimuli (p. 7). These approaches are coupled with Juan Ramón Duchesne Winter’s notion of the “eccentric Caribbean,” which he explores through the Indigenous Wayuu intellectual tradition of Venezuela/Colombia (p. 7).

The book’s ten essays focus on Marxism, internationalism, the sensorium as an interpretive lens for Caribbean experience, queer identity, and social movements, as well as Caribbean immigration to Spain. I will highlight a few salient contributions.

In Chapter 3, Duchesne Winter brilliantly analyzes a poem by Vittorio Apúshana, a Wayuu poet whose ancestral lands predate the Venezuelan/Colombian border along the coast. The Wayuu concept of “double-existence” resists assimilation and acknowledges the need to *be* simultaneously within two worlds. The Wayuu replicate simultaneity with dreams, which are not an individual occurrence, but rather a collective event where “conflicts are solved and all types of transactions are made” (p. 43).

In Chapter 4, Magdalena López examines deracination as a prerequisite for thinking about regional identity. She cites Martiniquan Édouard Glissant’s claim that Caribbean culture lacks a “fixed genesis” and Cuban Antonio Benítez-Rojo’s description of Caribbean as disrobed castaways condemned to a perpetual sense of seclusion (p. 47). She aggressively deconstructs the liberation myths derived from the Haitian and Cuban revolutions, instead arguing that any denial of deracination results in the imposition of a unitary identity. Her deconstruction of Cuba’s narrative concerning the war in Angola (1965–91) is premised on a thoughtful reading of history that exposes corruption in the military ranks. But I would argue that Cuba’s victory against apartheid South Africa contributed indisputably to Angolan independence, and should not be discredited due to corruption or the regime’s unwillingness to acknowledge...
the persistence of racism. Carlos Moore’s *Castro, the Blacks and Africa* (1988) and, more recently, Devyn Spence Benson’s *Anti-Racism in Cuba: The Unfinished Revolution* (2016) addressed those contradictions.

In Chapter 5, Nanne Timmer attempts to dislodge Cuba from its perch as an exceptional space within the circum-Caribbean. She conceives of the nation as a problem and pursues “an urge to find a new language uncontaminated by nationalist rhetoric or the romantic self-exoticisation so present in the whole twentieth century” (p. 69). She lauds Legna Rodríguez’s *The Illiterates* (2015) for desacralizing Black Cuban independence hero Antonio Maceo by portraying him with a vagina. Critiquing the pantheon of national heroes can be a productive intellectual exercise if one offers a corrective. But Nanne Timmer’s essay doesn’t reassess archives; rather, it renders their contents altogether irrelevant. Furthermore, the misgendering of Black independence fighter Maceo in *The Illiterates* is particularly disturbing because it disregards efforts among queer theorists to acknowledge the named and claimed gender identities of vulnerable populations. This consideration should be extended to Black men, since the Atlantic slave trade was—to a great extent—a historic act of anti-Black misandry. Likewise, historian Aline Helg, in *Our Right Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886–1912* (1995), acknowledges that Black men were the overwhelming majority of the independence fighters known as *mambises* that defeated Spain and abolished slavery in the Cuban War of Independence.

Lastly, in Chapter 6, Lina Martínez Hernández ponders whether or not “queerness [may] continue to be transformative and bring liberation” if the distinction between queer as a minority identity and queer as “a set of actions/decisions/ways of being in the world” is disrupted (p. 141). She provides a valuable genealogy of queer movements, particularly in Puerto Rico, and explains tensions between socialists and lesbian activists in the 1970s. Her discussion of sustainable Puerto Rican projects permits readers to contemplate the “materiality of bodies struggling for survival” (pp. 158–59).

*New Perspectives on Hispanic Caribbean Studies* offers critical, sometimes transformative, insights into new ways of thinking about the Caribbean. Unfortunately, the density of theoretical language and an inattention to the substance of history detract from its salient contributions.

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