

The Influence of Anxiety:
Re-presentations of identity in Antiguan literature
from 1890 to the present.

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ABSTRACT

The Influence of Anxiety: Re-presentations of identity in Antiguan literature from 1890 to the present.

This thesis examines Antiguan narratives' peculiar engagements with the national question. It draws largely upon the works of four writers—Jamaica Kincaid, Joanne C. Hillhouse, Marie-Elena John and Frieda Cassin—and selected calypsonians including Antigua's leading female and male calypsonians, Queen Ivena and King Short Shirt. It reads anxiety as the chief organising principle of the singular deconstructions of gender, 'racial', ethnic, and class identities undertaken by these texts. I offer a retooled account of anxiety that elaborates the local/regional concept of bad-mindedness informing the core of the narratives' deconstructive and recuperative projects.

Chapter one probes the bad-minded delimiting of Antiguan literary production. It interrogates the singular cohesive Caribbean canon typically suggested by critical readings, which obscure the narratives/ literary traditions of smaller territories such as Antigua. It also highlights locally produced canons' intervention into the dominant canons/maps of Caribbean literary traditions. Its discussion is underpinned by the concept of bad-mindedness which I use to frame the evils that locate the smaller territory and its inhabitants at the cultural periphery.

Chapter two examines the texts' enunciations of the bad-mindedness inherent in the construction of the composite gendered identities of 19th century Creole women, 20th century working-class Afro-Antiguan women and men, and 20th century proletarian Carib women. It refashions Erna Brodber's kumbla trope, Kenneth Ramchand's notion of terrified consciousness, and Jamaica Kincaid's line trope to elaborate these enunciations.

Chapter three examines Antiguan calypsos' record of the peculiar responses of small-islanders to their subordinate position within the 'global village' and continuing entanglement in British colonialism and neo-colonial relationships and processes. It draws upon Charles Mill's theory of smadditization/ smadditizin' or the Afro-Caribbean struggle for recognition of personhood and Paget Henry's account of the dependency theory to analyse the calypsos' anxious insistence upon Afro-Antiguan personhood.

The primary conclusion of my thesis is that an engagement with the neglected literary traditions of the smaller territories and national literatures on the whole, is likely to excavate a cornucopia of currently sidelined experiences, issues, and transnational relationships which can only serve to enrich our postcolonial conversations.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Texts:

T.A.O.M.M: *The Autobiography of My Mother*

B.O.T.R: *At the Bottom of the River*

Dancing Nude: *Dancing Nude in the Moonlight*

W.S.T: *With Silent Tread*

Willow Bend: *The Boy from Willow Bend*

J&L: *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home*

Organisations:

ALP: The Antigua Labour Party

CARICOM: The Caribbean Community and Common Market

CARIFESTA: The Caribbean Festival of Creative Arts

OECS: The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

UPP: The United Progressive Party

UWI: The University of the West Indies

Territories:

A&B: Antigua and Barbuda

SVG: St. Vincent and the Grenadines

T&T: Trinidad and Tobago

US: United States of America

INTRODUCTION:

THE INFLUENCE OF ANXIETY

What constitutes the Caribbean? The answer is often a matter of perspective and context. (Girvan 3)

Caribbean insularity is much more than a geographical hallmark: it is an historical experience and an emotional and psychological condition. (Thompson 24)

No flour, no rice in de land / Believe me, too much small island / Yes they come by the one, the two and the three / Eating our food and they leaving us hungry / So small island, go back where yuh really come from. (King Lord Invader, 'Small Island' verse 1)

I told dem my little country is blessed / Wit' some of / De brightest and de best / In sports or music / Or academics / Antiguans can compare / Wit' anyone anywhere / Although on the map / We are just a dot / We talented people / We produce a lot. (King Young Destroyer, 'Defending My Flag' verse 3)

Near two decades ago, I encountered my first Antiguan novel, entirely by chance. I was delighted with this novel because it was the same but different from V.S. Reid's *The Young Warriors*, C. Everard Palmer's *A Cow Called Boy* and Samuel Selvon's *A Brighter Sun*, all of which were on our secondary school's reading list. The scenes and dilemmas presented within the pages of these latter texts were not unfamiliar. Like the mango-thieving mongoose and the trip to a drive-in volcano featured in my primary school readers, I apprehended them as belonging to a region of which I was taught to be proud. A region from The Bahamas to Antigua to Belize whose national flags, capital cities, national mottoes, names of political leaders, names of national birds, and so on, I enjoyed committing to memory. However, my newly discovered novel featured something I least expected to find in a written fictional text: Antigua and an exploration of an Antiguan experience. My delight then with Jamaica Kincaid's *Annie John* was equal to my delight

a few years prior when I discovered the Antiguan *kaisonian*, after years of a staple diet of Trinidadian calypsos.

The two moments described above have plotted my trajectory to this present moment in which I am presenting a thesis that intervenes into the conventional obscuration of Antiguan narratives/literary traditions. My thesis protests the hegemonic readings of literatures from the region that exclude the smaller territories from, to borrow from Anderson, ‘imaginings’ of the literary Caribbean. It demonstrates that the obscuration of smaller territories such as Antigua is in keeping with their typical exclusion from imaginings of the region and is in fact a metaphor for and indicator of the displacement of the inequalities and subordination marking their [non/]positionings within the group. It also insists that critical engagements with the literary traditions of the smaller territories and discrete national traditions on the whole are likely to unearth a plethora of significant but currently sidelined experiences, issues, and transnational relationships. My overall suggestion is that these narratives, once excavated, will encourage Caribbeanists, to adapt Gandhi, to ‘diversify . . . [their] mode[s] of address and learn to speak more adequately to the world[s]’ that they speak to and for (x).

My insistence upon critical engagements with national literary traditions is grounded in the longstanding failure of dominant readings of the region and its literatures to articulate the significant realities of Caribbean differences. Contra these hegemonic and homogenising readings of the Anglophone Caribbean, the region, though characterised by sameness and cultural kinship, must also be understood, to cite Bruce King, as ‘a place of differences’. As King aptly observes, despite shared characteristics, the history, social composition, and culture of the individual territories are marked by

dissimilarities¹ (1995 3). I fully agree with the suggestion of Caribbeanists such as Sidney Mintz and Franklin Knight that it is more appropriate to employ a methodological view that ‘regard[s] the Caribbean experiences as systadial—comparable stage—rather than synchronic—simultaneous occurrence’² (Knight x). I also consider particularly useful Torres-Saillant’s framing of Caribbean sameness and difference as analogous to a puzzle. He offers an apt image in which, ‘each discrete piece of the Caribbean consists as much of its own specific shape as of its integration into the whole’ (16).

Moreover, whilst the Caribbean remains peculiarly preoccupied with the national question as a region, significant distinctions mark territories’ individual engagements with it. Historically, Caribbean territories have articulated a preference for negotiating the national question as discrete and autonomous entities. Lowenthal and Clarke observe that the territories’ ‘desire to be on their own is historically rooted in West Indian particularism, fostered by geographical isolation and colonial dependence’. Their historical portrait of the region reminds us that even ‘Caribbean appendages of the same European empire usually knew more of the mother country than of their West Indian neighbours’ (294).

On one hand, commonalities in the address of the national question manifest themselves in the territories’ overall quarrels with: their colonial past; their peripheral statuses as small nations; the hegemony of global powers; and post-colonial nationalism. They are also evident in the like disunities marking relationships between social groups within the individual territories. By way of example, calypsonians across the region have long been connected by their elaboration of a regional tradition of anxiety that articulates

¹. By way of example, Antigua is considered a special case in studies of post emancipation Caribbean since it skipped the apprenticeship period. Another example is Barbudans’ differentiated engagement with ownership of and access to land. The island is distinct in the region for its system of land tenure in which all land is owned in common by Barbudans (see Lowenthal and Clarke’s ‘Island Orphans’ and the Barbuda Land Act 2007).

². Mintz’s 1958 ‘Labor and Sugar in Puerto Rico and Jamaica’ is generally credited with introducing the concept of a systadial investigation of Caribbean systems of slavery.

‘the people’s’ discontent with their governments’ expressions of post-colonial nationalism. Barbados’s King Mighty Gabby’s ‘Jack’ (1983), St. Lucia’s King Mighty Pep’s ‘Alien’(1994), and Antigua’s Queen Ivena’s ‘The Old Road Fight’(2001) all express anxiety over what is perceived as their national governments’ complicity in attempts by foreign investors to un-home and depersonise the Afro-Caribbean.

On the other hand, significant differences manifest themselves in the type and timbre of national quarrels. By way of illustration, Dominican engagement with the national question is distinctive for the quarrel engendered by the competing national claims of the Afro-Dominican majority and the indigenous Carib minority³. In the past, the Dominican central government has expressed its wariness of what it viewed as the Caribs’ contest of the national imaginary via the use of terms such as ‘Carib Territory’ and ‘Carib Nation’. The government argued that these terms encouraged the unsustainable idea of a state within a state (Gregoire, Henderson, and Kanem 167).

Moreover, differences also manifest themselves in the persisting intense insularity that characterises relations between Caribbean nations. The peculiar quarrels resulting from regional insularity have been recorded, for example, in the Trinidadian calypso tradition which has been marked by expressions of anti-small-islander sentiments during periods of influx of intra-regional immigrants from the smaller neighbouring territories. The calypsos typically protest ‘small-islanders’ attempts to integrate themselves into the Trinidadian nation—‘If ever you meet any Vincentian / They will tell you that ‘am a Trinidadian’ / . . . So small-island go back where yuh really come from’ (King Lord

³. Dominica is peculiar in the Eastern Caribbean not only for the continuing presence of the Caribs on the island, but also for the latter’s habitation of a communal area of land known as the ‘Carib Territory’/ ‘Reserve’. The term ‘Carib’ was coined by Europeans to refer to the indigenous peoples of the Lesser Antilles whom they regarded as a ‘warlike race’. Since the late 15th century, the Carib body been delineated by several myths, including that of the cannibal and the savage. I have avoided re-designating the ‘Caribs’ as Kalinagos/Garifunas as has been the recent tendency. My decision is based on the enabling recuperation of the term undertaken by Antiguan authors and the group’s own appropriation of the trope of the aggressive Carib as a ‘symbol of resistance to the intrusion of those colonial and neo-colonial regimes’ (Whitehead 12).

Invader, 'Small Island' 3rd verse). By way of another example, like Antiguan anxiety over attempts by migrant Caribbean bodies to integrate into the nation is one of the main themes in Joanne C. Hillhouse's *Dancing Nude*⁴. In one incident portrayed in the text, the Dominican⁵ hostess at a restaurant is attacked by a waitress who 'resented her because she was not Antiguan, yet, as hostess, had some authority over them'—'Ar-you mussa feel ah ar-you run this country. Well, non a ar-you nar come ya come tell me wha fu do'⁶ (101).

Importantly, the territories' differentiated engagements with the national question are borne out in the themes that preoccupy their literatures, as illustrated by the above examples of King Lord Invader's 'Small Island' and Hillhouse's *Dancing Nude*. Another example is that of Jamaican dancehall's conventional and singular preoccupation with limning the homosexual/non-heterosexual body as at odds with Jamaican citizenship, that is, incapable of performing and re-producing it⁷. For their part, Antigua's literary traditions feature a pronounced engagement with 'small-islandness'. Writers and calypsonians alike are preoccupied with articulating the manner in which the peripheral status of the small nation, as engendered by its modest physical size and economy, augments the woes typically associated with personal and national Caribbean petitions for recognition of personhood and nationhood.

This thesis foregrounds Antiguan narratives' recurring expressions of anxiety concerning the influence of 'small-islandness' on personal and national claims to personhood and nationhood within the global community of men, women and nations. It

⁴. See Appendix A for notes on the writers and calypsonians.

⁵. Citizen of the Dominican Republic.

⁶. 'You [foreigners] must think you run this country. Well, none of you can come here to tell me what to do'.

⁷. This correlates with Jamaica's much remarked upon quarrel with 'queer' bodies. White and Carr describe this quarrel as engendered by the dominant re-production of the nation as a conservative religious society. They also place blame on the conventional production of Jamaican male citizenship as an expression of a hypermasculinity that is grounded in hyper-heterosexuality (350).

analyses the preoccupation with small-islandness as framed within the narratives' singular engagements with the national question as connected to the production and performances of gendered, 'racial', ethnic, and class identities⁸. It reads these engagements as referencing and elaborating a tradition of anxiety that maps as simultaneously discretely Antiguan and distinctly Caribbean.

I apprehend the regional tradition of anxiety that is referenced and elaborated by Antiguan narratives as mapped by the many peculiar anxieties that have marked national quarrels/engagements with the national question in the region. I suggest that this tradition of anxiety is one whose contours have been in development since the late 15th century. I in turn envision the anxieties constituting this tradition as informed by, and informing, networks of discourses and recurring myths/motifs as articulated in royal edicts, treaties, government reports, creative as well as critical writings, indigenous popular music, and so forth, since 1492. I contend that these networks of discourses and motifs/myths are marked by attempts to either produce or intervene into hegemonic prescriptive models of the bodies that articulate belongingness to and ownership of the space that has been designated as the New World, West Indies, and the Caribbean.

By way of illustration, the original 'West Indian' quarrel was engendered by European intrusion into indigenous space and the systematic unravelling of the indigenes' claim to the territories, via physical, epistemological, and ontological violence. Scholars such as Lennox Honychurch, Peter Hulme, and Kathryn Morris have all observed the critical role myth played in the early historical narratives of the region especially as pertaining to the indigenous group most maligned by European discourse—the so-called

⁸. In this thesis, I follow the example of Gates, Jr. and other sociologists who have undertaken to query the term 'race' and its derivatives. The situating of 'race' in scare quotes draws attention to the term's genealogy as social construct, biological misnomer, and, to adapt Gates, Jr., troubles the 'sense of natural difference' encouraged by its conventional usage. I fully agree with Gates, Jr.'s assertion that 'race' 'is the ultimate trope of difference because it is so very arbitrary in its application'. As he aptly observes, the 'biological criteria used to determine "difference" in sex simply do not hold when applied to "race"—"white", "black", "yellow", and so on, are but 'arbitrary constructs, not reports of reality' (6).

‘warlike’ Caribs. The Caribs were ‘othered’ as both non-European and non-human by a network of myths that limned them as savage, cannibalistic, and prone to immoral excess, unlike the ‘civilised’ and Christian Europeans. Carib anxiety over European attempts to re-produce the West Indies as a European space found expression in the sustained war of resistance the group waged against the newcomers. Their ‘irrepressible’ resistance in turn engendered immense European anxiety as expressed in the undertaking of an ‘ideological campaign in which they were established within the European mind . . . as “vicious cannibals” worthy of extermination within the context of genocidal military expeditions’ (Beckles, ‘Kalinago (Carib) Resistance’ 4).

The tradition of anxiety as it applies to Caribbean literatures and criticism features a peculiar and predominating preoccupation with what Edward Baugh has now famously described as ‘the West Indian quarrel with history’ (60). Alison Donnell aptly identifies writers’ engagement with this quarrel as being centred upon both the history of colonialism and that of English literature (*Twentieth-Century* 1). This quarrel has informed and been informed by a core group of now very familiar narratives and motifs. There is, for example, the narrative of the female West Indian literary artist who ‘thought all poets were men and that they wrote poems like “The Daffodils”’ (Goodison 291). This references at least three motifs. First, the motif of the ‘quest for a female ancestor’ in the face of the then hegemonic model of the writer as both English and male (Pacquet, *Caribbean Autobiography* 12). Second, the motif of the orphaned West Indian literary producer who ‘had never heard of The West Indian Writer’ and had no notion that a West Indian literary tradition existed (Kincaid, ‘Re: Question 5’). Third, the motif of the ‘repudiation of “The Daffodils”’—William Wordsworth’s poem is considered

‘emblematic of a colonial system that imposed its own values and cultural standards through a system of education that fell outside local control’⁹ (Paravisini-Gebert 123).

A further example of a central narrative associated with West Indian writers’ and critics’ quarrel with history is that of the West Indian novel as best preoccupied with ‘the fishermen, the washerwomen, and the clerk in their morning at the office, and their struggle to be other than’ (Hector, ‘Why’ n.pag). This narrative enlarges the motif of the ‘return to an apparently authentic West Indian Culture’ that limns the ‘black’ working class or rural peasantry ‘as somehow more indigenous to the region’ (Edmondson 59). Rosenberg notes that this definition of the novel as the novel of the peasant was promoted by writer and critic George Lamming, rose to dominance in the 1970s, and still retains influence (4). The particular ethno-class bias it encouraged was designed to counter previous centuries’ limning of the West Indies as a ‘white’ space and to reify ‘blackness’ as the antithesis of Englishness (Edmondson 59).

As Rosenberg reminds, 20th-century anti-colonials in the region referred to Caribbean writings as ‘part of an argument for Caribbean political rights’. According to her, literature was commissioned to play this role due to the like sentiments of British and West Indian intellectuals that it was ‘evidence of a people’s cultural legitimacy and political competence’. She also notes that Caribbean literature and literary criticism have long been ‘products of nationalist discourses designed to extend the political rights of Caribbeans’. Indeed, according to her, following independence, ‘the ability to produce national literature became a basis for claiming the right to determine national culture’. A noticeable result of this is that ‘canon formation has been and is likely to remain political’ (3).

⁹. Derek Walcott, Lorna Goodison, Jamaica Kincaid, George Lamming, and others have referenced their experiences as young colonials having to read William Wordsworth’s ‘The Daffodils’, without having ever seen the flower which was alien to the West Indian landscape.

Importantly, the tradition of anxiety as it applies to the region's literatures and criticism has also come to be marked by, to borrow from Donnell, 'quarrels with the quarrels of history'. West Indian writers and critics alike have intervened and continue to intervene into the prescriptive models of the bodies and subjects delineated as performers/expressions of 'West Indianness'. For example, anxieties over the obscuration of non-'black' bodies have been expressed in the positive [re]insertion of Indo-Caribbean women into imaginings of the region and literatures by Brinda Mehta's *Diasporic (Dis)locations* (2004) and Routledge's *Critical Perspectives on Indo-Caribbean Women's Literature* (2012). Similarly, anxieties over the erroneous limning of West Indian literature as a 1950s invention has engendered studies by scholars such as Ferguson and O'Callaghan whose works insist, contra the earlier estimations of Kenneth Ramchand and Bruce King, upon the import and belongingness of 19th-century writings to the West Indian literary tradition.

As a final example, the corpus of 'quarrels with the quarrels of history' has also featured petitions for equal integration of the female writer and body into imaginings of the Caribbean and its literary traditions. Critical texts such as *Out of the Kumbla* (1990), *Caribbean Women Writers: Essays* (1990), and *Women Writing the West Indies* (2004) have all intervened into the conventional limning of Caribbean literature and the region as an Afro-Caribbean male space. So too has the insistence by West Indian female writers, as seen by the literary gush of female voices in the 1980s, upon performing the body of the literary producer. New quarrels continue to surface over excluded bodies and experiences, particularly as engendered by the region's engagement with postcolonial nationalism. As Ellis has noted, the 'nation', in and of itself, has come to preoccupy recent work critiquing Caribbean literature (136).

For its part, my thesis commits to several interventions into the conventional hegemonic readings of regional literatures and imaginings of the smaller territories. It also redirects typical modes of reading particular Caribbean cultural elements. The overarching quarrel framing this thesis is its query of the obscuration of literatures and literary traditions of the smaller Caribbean territories, like Antigua, and the neglect of national literary traditions. Within this quarrel is another—a protest against the non-consideration of small-island agency in canon formation processes. These two quarrels sum up my intent to [re]position Antigua and, to invoke Jamaica Kincaid, the ‘small place’ as enabled and significant, despite their modest physical sizes and economies. My [re]positioning of Antigua insists upon its ‘placeness’ and its ‘nationness’, that is, its legitimate existence ‘as a place [/ nation]—no matter how small—in its own right’ (Gauch 911).

Scholars such as Gillian Beer, Russell King, and Stephen Royle observe that [small] islands have typically been limned—in fiction, by their use, and in the Western imagination—as isolated outposts that operate counter to the norms of the ‘big places’. By way of example, Royle observes the way in which island settings have been used in literature to displace biological and physic laws as in the 1726 *Gulliver’s Travels* or to allow characters to ‘permit their more “primitive”, because less socially-constrained, sides to emerge’, as in *Lord of the Flies* (13-14). For his part, Russell King reminds of the way in which the isolationist role of islands has been made evident in their use ‘as places of exile for deposed figureheads and criminals, or as locations for monasteries or colonies of artists’ (20). Similarly, Beer observes the way in which fictions with island settings limn the island as the ‘other’ place, one which characters all leave—‘Castaways come and go: the triumph of most island fiction is . . . to leave the island. These sojourners sail back to Naples, or England, or Africa. They go *home* . . .’ (42).

For their parts, David Lowenthal, Colin Clarke and Carleen O’Loughlin have observed and demonstrated that Caribbean islands—both the large and smaller territories—have traditionally been produced as having lesser claims to nationhood and political autonomy¹⁰. By way of example, Lowenthal and Clarke remind us that prior to the 1960s, the British Colonial Office worried that it was plainly impossible for ‘the present separate [West Indian] communities, small and isolated as most of them are, to achieve and maintain full self-government on their own’ (‘Report on Closer Association’ qtd. in Lowenthal and Clarke 293). Writing in 1980, Lowenthal and Clarke herald the erosion of the size criteria once considered essential to self-government as the most striking political change of that time. However, in 1986, Lester Bird, then chairman of the ALP, in a speech to the heads of government of the commonwealth countries protested the differential location of small nations in the global community of nations. According to him, small nations such as Antigua lived in fear of superpowers’ reaction to their national decisions, which results in a severe restriction of ‘independence of action, national self-expression and the exercise of sovereignty in small states’ (Bird 117). For her part, O’Loughlin’s description of the disunities marking the federation of the Leeward Islands in the first half of the 20th century features the telling assertion that that it is these islands, though the smallest, ‘and in that sense *the least qualified to consider themselves as potential national entities*’, that have exhibited the least willingness to sacrifice island sovereignties¹¹ (12, 15, emphasis added).

¹⁰. In West Indian literature itself, the small island has also been repeatedly produced as removed from the global community of ‘real’ places and nations with its inhabitants who ‘pretended to be real’ but were just ‘mimic men of the New World’ and ‘toy capital’ which is really ‘no such thing as a city’ but, rather, ‘an outpost of despair, a capital of nothing’ (Naipaul, *The Mimic Men* 146; Naipaul, *The Middle Passage* 25; Kincaid, *T.A.O.M.M* 61).

¹¹. Moreover, the terms used to refer to the large and small territories in the Caribbean and the way in which they are utilised also produce the small territories as inferior/ lesser nations. For example, designations such as the ‘Big Four’ as opposed to the ‘Small Eight’ or the ‘more developed countries’ (MDCs) versus the ‘lesser developed countries’ (LDCs) have become staples in the lexicon of the Caribbean integration movement used to signal the larger territories more capable performances of ‘nation-ness’.

I consider my thesis' troubling of the typical limning of the small island as an outpost, the 'other' place, and a subscript performer of nationhood as best executed via my reliance upon the texts of Antiguan calypsos. Antiguan calypsos constitute a living tradition that is officially charged with articulating/ producing the nation, promoting 'nation-building' and representing 'the people'. They enunciate and archive enabling accounts of Afro-Antiguan engagement with the national question. The tradition is marked by a recurring insistence upon an organic connection between the Afro-Antiguan proletariat and the land; it re-presents the small island as 'home' rather than outpost or the 'other' place.

The calypsos also challenge the colonised body of the Afro-Antiguan, revise the historical depersonisation of the 'black' indigene, and, very significantly, [re]invent the nation and nation-state as manifestly autonomous, even as they anxiously bemoan the beleaguered and endangered state of both. Moreover, I consider the calypso tradition a distinct expression of small-nation agency as related to canon formation processes. In this thesis, I demonstrate that Antiguan cultural institutions, the state, and local audiences not only privilege the calypso over written texts but also produce 'oral canons' that trouble the singular cohesive Caribbean canon produced in/by the 'big places'. By way of illustration, Jamaica Kincaid who looms large in maps/canons generated within the region and Western academia is generally ignored in favour of calypsonians such as Kings Short Shirt and Obstinate by maps/canons produced in Antigua.

The calypsos I draw upon in this thesis are largely what are referred to as 'the serious' calypsos, that is, they are selected from the offerings produced annually for the Calypso Monarch competition¹². They are conventionally sung at a slower tempo than

¹². Antigua's Calypso Monarch Competition was first established in 1957. In its present format, it features several rounds of eliminations before the final competition during which the selected calypsonians compete in two rounds, performing one song per round.

the soca¹³ or road-march¹⁴ track and are preoccupied with offering pointed social or political commentary or both. Embedded within my analysis of these calypsos' militant petition for recognition of Afro-Antiguan personhood is my own petition against the conventional snubbing of the calypso and other oral traditions by the dominant mode(s) of reading the region's literatures. The Antiguan calypso as a living tradition and a communal art form constituted by hundreds of songs, equally authored by calypsonians and their audiences, is a rich archive of the corpus of Afro-Antiguan sentiments on the national question.

With regards to the written tradition, I read the selected texts' preoccupation with recuperating mistreated small-island bodies and experiences as signalling the viability and exhorting the elaboration of an Antiguan literary tradition. My thesis underscores the important role Antiguan literary producers play in suggesting and/ or setting the critical agenda for exploration of issues, experiences and identities currently sidelined by Caribbean criticism and/ or fiction. For example, Kincaid and Joanne Hillhouse's recuperative enunciations of 20th-century Afro-Antiguan proletarian male experiences remind of the need for intervention into the myths that produce Afro-Antiguan and Caribbean men as performers of an 'aberrant' and 'dysfunctional' masculinity (Barriteau 334). They insist that such an intervention must be accompanied by a historicisation of present-day expressions of masculinity. This insistence is in keeping with Ramchand's suggestion that the construction of both Caribbean masculinities and femininities not be treated 'as a new problem generated by the given moment' ('Calling All Dragons' 312).

Similarly, Kincaid and Queen Singing Althea's scrutiny of 20th century Afro-Antiguan proletarian women's experiences and their prescribed location within the nation

¹³. The 'soca', held to be Trinidadian in origin, is an off-shoot of the calypso and is commonly treated as dance/party music. In Antigua, the annual Soca Monarch Competition is divided into two segments: Groovy, for the slower soca tracks, and Jumpy, for the faster.

¹⁴. The road-march song, normally a 'jumpy' number, is chosen near the end of each year's carnival festivities and is the song that is played the most by bands during the carnival parades.

draws attention to the need for an ethical engagement with post-colonial nationalist discourse/nationalism. Their scrutiny is marked by an insistence upon the need for an enabling reconfiguration of Afro-Antiguan and, by extension, Afro-Caribbean women's place in the nation. In this regard, they join Caribbeanists—Percy Hintzen, Shalini Puri, Jacqui Alexander, Hilary Beckles, Alison Donnell, Jocelyn Guilbault, and others—who have queried the region's nationalist projects and their significant role in the construction of the prescriptive models of the bodies and subjects that ought to [pre/]occupy the nation.

Moreover, Kincaid and Marie-Elena John's interrogation of centuries-old myths' prejudicial delineation of 20th-century Carib identity and experience endorses the approach of scholars, such as historian Hilary Beckles, who re-situate so-called Carib savagery within Caribbean narratives of anti-colonial resistance. Along with Frieda Cassin, their [re]insertion of 19th-century and 20th-century Creole and Carib female experiences and bodies, respectively, into imaginings of the Caribbean past and present join Caribbeanists such as Evelyn O'Callaghan and Brinda Mehta in intervening into the conventional Afrocentric tenor of critical/academic delineations/ apprehensions of the region.

A further point to note concerning Kincaid and John's exploration of 20th century Carib experience is the fact that their texts are set in Dominica and trouble the Antiguan present with an engagement with a figure—the Carib—long removed from its environs and imaginary. I treat this as evidence of the slippage marking the boundaries of the local/national as well as those of the past and the present, which is typical in the region. I also read it as a reflection of the intraregional connectivity that has long been a marker of the shared histories of the Anglophone Caribbean territories. Historically, the smaller territories, unlike the larger countries, have shared a lengthy past and group identity as

members of federations. Presently, Antigua hosts a sizeable population of Dominicans and people of Dominican heritage.

It must also be remembered that the figure of the Carib is not completely alien to Antiguan literature and travel writings/historical documents about the island. In *Willow Bend*, the abusive and alcoholic grandfather is a Dominican of Carib descent. Likewise, in Cassin's *W.S.T*, one of the few non-Creole Antiguan given a speaking role is a loud and vengeful servant, Barsy, who is identified as 'Carib or at least of Carib extraction' (97). Moreover, in the first volume of Lanaghan's *Antigua and the Antiguan*s, the legend of the 'half-Carib' protagonist Zulmeria features a rebellious Carib leader who canoes to Antigua from his nearby 'mountain home in Dominica' (304). Further, of the thirteen events of 1493-1705 highlighted by historian Desmond Nicholson as crucial moments in Antiguan history, ten involve Carib raids upon the island, mostly from Dominica (*The Story of the Arawaks*).

Moreover, both Kincaid and John, while Antiguan-born are also of Dominican heritage; their mothers are both Dominicans by birth, and both authors have repeatedly vacationed in Dominica during their childhood. I suggest that both texts and the authors' histories are testimonies to the interconnectivity of Caribbean histories, subjectivities, and temporalities as well as the composite nature of Antiguan identity. These testimonies support my contention that the neglect of national traditions obscures not just the peculiarities marking the national corpuses but also the nuances in transnational connections and experiences that continue to be neglected by the dominant readings of literatures from the region.

Connected to the above, my intent in this thesis is to frame Antiguan literatures as belonging to or elaborating discrete national traditions that are themselves components of the larger Caribbean tradition(s). This intent, along with the narratives' own insistence,

has guided my significant dependency upon peculiarly Caribbean concepts and theoretical frameworks. In this thesis, I retool the subversive bodies of demonised/negatively delineated Caribbean figures—such as the ‘bad-john’ and the ‘soucouyant’—to frame the selected texts recuperation of bodies mistreated by colonial, neo-colonial, and post-colonial nationalist discourses.

My engagement with Antiguan narratives over the past three years has repeatedly reminded me, as Torres-Saillant aptly observes, that ‘Caribbean literary texts yield clues to their own explication’ (xi). Admittedly, my research journey was marked by a persistent worry about the suitability of the critical tools I had chosen to inform my readings of the selected texts. Constant re-reading of the latter sparked a belated [re]engagement that has resulted in this thesis’ current underpinning by the local and regional concept of ‘bad-mindedness’, which is used to provide a retooled account of anxiety. Kincaid’s direct references to the concept, the other narratives’ now obvious engagement with the theme, and my own native understanding of the epistemological and phenomenological import of this foundational ethical discourse was instrumental in ordering my new line of engagement. Indeed, the selected texts’ own preoccupation with deconstructive efforts that insist upon locating expressions of Antiguan and Caribbean identities within the appropriate socio-historical sites/matrices reminded me of the need to attempt the same.

My thesis employs the concept of bad-mindedness to provide a retooled account of anxiety that frames my discussion of the conventional obscuration of Antiguan literatures and the ethical engagements and re-presentations of Antiguan identities undertaken by the selected texts. For the most part, I refashion existing Caribbean critical theories and tropes, such as Ramchand’s ‘terrified-consciousness’ and Charles Mills’ ‘smadditizin’’, which elaborate the concept of bad-mindedness, and provide highly

relevant analytical frameworks via which to assess the peculiar hostilities/evils/ bad-mindedness re-presented within the texts. Via the concept of bad-mindedness and the critical theories that I use to reference the former, I examine what I label as ‘the influence of anxiety’. The influence of anxiety references the selected texts’ expression of the role and impact of anxiety on Antiguan identity formation processes as well as the role and impact of anxiety on Antigua’s cultural/literary identity formation.

The concept of bad-mindedness has long enjoyed wide currency throughout the Caribbean. This renders the sparse academic attention it has earned surprising given its regular deployment in everyday conversations, in Caribbean music, letters to the editor, in literature, and so forth, to frame expressions of anxiety, and to identify, elaborate, and settle questions of morality/ethics. It is via the ethical discourse of bad-mindedness that unhappy Caribbean voters voice their anxieties over local politicians’ betrayal of the nation. Then, politicians are said to be ‘bad-minded’ or to be acting out of ‘pure bad-mindedness’. It is also the ethical discourse of bad-mindedness that Jamaican dancehall artists such as ‘Beenie Man’ elaborate when they anxiously dispel rumours about, inter alia, their sexuality—as in his ‘Bad-mind is active’. As a further example, it is also this discourse Kincaid engages when, in *A Small Place*, in reference to Antigua, she speaks of the ‘bad-minded people who used to rule over it, the English’ as well as ‘all the bad-minded things they brought with them’(24, 40).

Antiguan philosopher Paget Henry’s genealogical account of the concept and discourse traces bad-mindedness to the Afro-Christian dichotomy between good and evil that references ‘irreconcilable opposites in which good must cut down and destroy evil’ (*Shouldering Antigua* 81). Henry notes that in both the [West] African and Christian tradition, there are ‘strong ethical discourses’ that are grounded in notions of good and evil. On one hand, in Christianity, there is, ‘the notion of a radical evil in human beings-

original sin'. This, he argues, 'is the root of the bad mind that must be replaced by the mind that was in Christ Jesus'. On the other hand, in West African thought, 'the bad mind has its roots in the tendency of the "sunsum" or every day ego to lose contact with its spiritual ground, the Okra, and get trapped in a number of internal and external conflicts'¹⁵ (Henry, 'Re: Quick Question').

Henry observes that the ethical discourse of bad-mindedness suggests that ill rather than good motives quite often drive the actions of people. He notes that this discourse has, for example, played an important role in Antiguan and Barbudan political culture. Antiguan and Barbudans often engage with it to understand and grasp the motives of politicians who appear to falter from the Afro-Antiguan national project. Or, by way of another example, Henry notes that the first prime minister of Antigua and Barbuda, V.C. Bird initially apprehended the local 'white' plantocracy as embodying the evil half of the dichotomy between good and evil. For him [Bird], the plantocracy was composed of people with evil intentions—'They acted towards Black Antiguan and Barbudans out of bad motives—their minds, their very natures were bad' (*Shouldering Antigua* 81).

Henry also identifies Antiguan texts that reference the discourse. He notes, for example, of Kincaid's protagonist in *The Autobiography of My Mother*: 'To encounter Xuela, is to know bad mindedness first hand'. Likewise, he points to a similar engagement in Edgar Lake's *The Devil's Bridge* noting that the text analyses 'the discourse and practice of ethical bad mindedness in the lives of Antiguan and Barbudan males'. He limns Lake's protagonist as 'a man on the edge, just barely surviving' who 'sees his lot as the fault of all the bad minded people who are doing better than him' (*Shouldering Antigua* 81).

¹⁵ . Henry develops these roots in the first chapter of his *Caliban Reason: Introducing Afro-Caribbean Philosophy* (2000).

Bad-mind and its derivatives are considered peculiar to the Creole English lexicon. Allsopp observes that ‘bad-mind’ is possibly a calque from African languages, in many of which ‘mind’ is expressed by the same word for ‘heart’, ‘chest’ and ‘inside-body’. He points, for example, to the Yoruba derivation ‘ni inu buruku’ that translates to ‘have bad inside’ or means to be ‘malevolent’. Bad-mind, as a noun, denotes ‘malice; spite; animosity; the harbouring of active ill will’. Bad-minded, an adjective, denotes being ‘Spiteful; malevolent; envious; ungenerous’. Bad-mindedness, also a noun, refers to ‘Spite; malevolence; malignant attitude’ (*Dictionary of Caribbean English Usage* 67). Examples of bad-mindedness therefore include ‘acting out of spite, out of hate, acting with the intention to deceive, to dominate the other or to advance oneself at the expense of the other’ (Henry, *Shouldering Antigua* 30). Hickling and James observe that the concept of bad-mind is more often than not connected in Caribbean phenomenology to two other concepts—‘red eye’ and ‘grudgeful’. According to them, “‘bad-mind’ denotes evil intent, “red-eye” connotes jealousy/avarice, while “grudgeful” embodies revenge’ (479).

It is important to note that the ethical discourse of bad-mindedness is not restricted to delineations of the moral quality of people or their actions/words. Antiguan and Caribbean’s seemingly constant worry about or anxiety over being affected by praxes of bad-mindedness extend to flora, fauna, places, the elements, and so on, all of which may be attributed with bad-mindedness or being bad-minded. For example, rain that starts unexpectedly as one is about to leave the house may be described as being bad-minded or engaging in bad-mindedness. A city with limited resources, which translates into limited opportunities for its residents, may also be considered bad-minded. So too, a West Indian may apprehend as bad-minded the climatic conditions of a foreign country, which he/she views as unfavourable or disagreeable to his/her constitution. Therefore, the ‘evil’ that is

referenced in the ethical discourse of bad-mindedness may engage with any of the denotations of bad-mind and its derivatives. Bad-mind and its derivatives may reference the moral quality, that is, the immense immorality (malevolence spitefulness/ enviousness/ et cetera) of a person, act, word or thought or it may denote an act, word, thought or thing which is immensely unpleasant or produces an undesirable impact or exerts malignant influence.

Leading from this, another important point to note is that, as Hickling and James point out, definitions of Caribbean expressions such as ‘bad-mind’ ‘are elusive and often do not capture their full meaning’¹⁶. According to them, ‘the regularity and intensity with which these terms are used by Caribbean people belie the psychological clarity of their meaning’. They also belie ‘the critical importance of their casual and diagnostic relationship to everyday life’ (474). Hickling and James list bad-mind as one of a number of phenomenological terms existing in Caribbean epistemology that ‘escape meaning in the conventional European phenomenological descriptions, but recur repeatedly in Caribbean dialogue and cultural discourse’ (479, 473). For them, expressions such as ‘bad-mind’ are ‘integrally bound to the worldview and belief systems of contemporary Caribbean people, and play an important role in the understanding of their behaviour’ (474). They are thus unsurprised that these ‘expressions are commonly encountered in Caribbean patients and play a profound role in patients’ understanding of occurrences in their lives’ (473).

Similarly, I argue that Antiguan literary expressions demonstrate an organic connection to the *Weltanschauung* of Antiguan, particularly as it relates to the concept of bad-mindedness. At the core of each text’s reconstruction of mistreated subjects are re-

¹⁶. Their article appears in the seminal *Perspectives in Caribbean Psychology* which makes the case for Caribbean psychology contra the ‘one size fits all’ Western approach that leaves psychologists and psychiatrists practising in the region, labouring with psychological concepts and evidence with questionable applicability to Caribbean reality (*Perspectives in Caribbean Psychology* x).

presentations of expressions of anxiety that engage, consciously or reflexively, with the ethical discourse of bad-mindedness. The texts engage with peculiar anxieties/ethical queries that predominantly interrogate: the production of Antiguan/ Caribbean masculinities and femininities; notions of citizenship and belonging; and the foundational ethical concept of personhood. Individually, their queries register an engagement with the peculiar hostilities and malevolencies/evils, that is, the bad-mindedness that influences the interpellations of various Antiguan subjects. In concert, they articulate the bad-mindedness attendant to the island's location as, to borrow from Kincaid, 'a small place', and its continuing entanglement with its colonial past, and, in some cases, present processes of neo-colonization.

In this thesis, my use of bad-mindedness to provide a retooled account of anxiety also features an engagement with Freud's concept of 'realistic anxiety'. For Freud, 'realistic anxiety' is conceived as 'very rational and reasonable'; it is 'a reaction to the perception of an external danger- that is, of an injury which is expected and foreseen' (*The Complete Introductory Lectures* 393-394). The appearance of anxiety therefore depends, to a great extent, on an individual's, 'sense of power vis-à-vis the external world' as well as the state of his knowledge. In Freud's schema, the conventional reaction to danger is a mixture of the 'affect of anxiety' and defensive action (*The Complete* 394).

Thus, in my thesis, 'anxiety', as informed by Freudian and Caribbean thought, references the state of apprehension engendered by an informed awareness of peculiar susceptibility to autonomy/personhood-eroding bad-mindedness. I rely upon my refashioned account of anxiety, along with other Caribbean theories, to examine the texts' re-presentations of the 'affect of anxiety' as engendered by informed awareness of Antiguan and Caribbean susceptibility to three types of bad-mindedness. Firstly, the texts re-present expressions of anxiety as engendered by the awareness of susceptibility to the

built-in bad-mindedness attendant to the small size of the island, that is, the hostility inherent in the modest physical size and economy of the island, which functions to delimit and check the ambitions of its inhabitants. Secondly, the texts also re-present expressions of anxiety as occasioned by the awareness of susceptibility to the bad-mindedness attendant to the island's entanglement in its colonial past/present as well as its neo-colonial present. Thirdly, the texts explore the affect of anxiety as occasioned by the awareness of susceptibility to the epistemological and ontological bad-mindedness inherent in colonial, neo-colonial, and post-colonial nationalist discourses as levied against various Antiguan/Caribbean bodies.

Chapter I of this thesis advances a case for critical engagement with Antiguan literatures and literatures of the smaller territories as discrete corpuses within the regional tradition(s). Its discussion is underpinned by the concept of bad-mindedness, which I use to frame the evils that locate the smaller territory at the cultural periphery. It historicises the bad-mindedness inherent in Antigua's limited resources and the economic, political, and cultural interpellations of Antigua that have resulted in the subsumption of the smaller territory and in turn its literary identity into that of the wider Caribbean. It argues that the regional recuperative project that was meant to counter British colonialism and cultural imperialism itself encourages bad-minded taxonomies of the Caribbean, literatures from the region, and processes of canon formation that obscure narratives from the smaller territories. Overall, the chapter probes the singular cohesive and unilinear Caribbean canon(s) typically suggested by the dominant critical readings of literatures from the region. It also asserts the agency of locally produced canons and reads them as intervening into the dominant canons/maps of Caribbean literary traditions.

Chapter II examines Antiguan narratives' enunciations of the bad-mindedness inherent in the construction of the composite gendered identities of 19th century Creole

women, 20th century working-class Afro-Antiguan women and men, and 20th century proletarian Carib women. It refashions Erna Brodber's 'kumbla' trope, Kenneth Ramchand's notion of 'terrified consciousness', and Jamaica Kincaid's 'line' trope to elaborate these enunciations. The chapter explores Jamaica Kincaid and Queen Singing Althea's interventions into the praxes of bad-mindedness informing the differentiated location of 20th-century Afro-Antiguan working-class women in the nation. It also considers Cassin, Kincaid, and John's re-presentations of Creole and Carib women's hybrid bodies as problematising the hegemonic black/white and Caribbean/European racial and cultural paradigms. Finally, it explores the way in which Kincaid and Hillhouse effect intervention into the myths that produce Afro-Antiguan and Caribbean proletarian men as performers of a deformed masculinity via a demystification of the Afro-Antiguan working-class man's body.

Chapter III examines Afro-Antiguan sentiments on Antiguan identity as connected to the national question and as archived in Antiguan calypsos. It draws upon Charles Mill's theory of smadditization/ smadditizin' or the Afro-Caribbean struggle for recognition of personhood and Paget Henry's account of the dependency theory to analyse the calypsos' anxious insistence upon Afro-Antiguan personhood. It explores the calypsos' query of the bad-minded erosion of the autonomy of the Afro-Antiguan nation and sovereignty in the face of its continuing entanglement in British colonialism and neo-colonial relationships and processes. It also examines the calypsos' interrogation of the relationship between local political leaders and foreign capitalists as occurs in Antigua. Its final point of exploration is Antiguan calypsos' tendency to ground the re-invention of Afro-Antiguan self and nation in what Hall dubs the 'symbolic return to Africa' ('Negotiating' 31).

CHAPTER I:

THE TRADITION OF ANXIETY

Of course [an] Antiguan literary tradition exists, in my mind and outside my mind. (Kincaid 'Re: Question 7')

The Caribbean has always been at the mercy of the publishing world. It does not possess a critical mass of buyers that appeals to the contemporary publisher. It represents the exotica of small, far flung isles in the imagination of the larger world, simply there for sun, sand and other invented touristic pleasures. How Caribbean peoples and scholars have self-reflexively understood the visceral space is largely unimportant other than as a temporary diversion if the political or ecological event is considered sufficiently unique to deserve attention. ('About the Journal')

Introduction

The overarching intent of this chapter is to query the notion of a singular cohesive Caribbean canon that is suggested by Western and regional critical readings that subsume Antiguan narratives within an Anglophone Caribbean literary tradition. I offer an account of canonicity that interrogates conventional unilinear mapping of Caribbean literary traditions. My account intervenes into readings that deny the agency of the peoples and institutions of the smaller Caribbean territories, in particular, in processes of canon formation. It also queries critical unwillingness to engage with each territory's discrete negotiation of the national question as is present in literary expressions and indigenous literary theory and criticism. I demonstrate that the national question looms large as a pertinent concern, particularly for smaller territories such as Antigua, in a region still entangled in processes and queries of cultural imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, and nation-building.

I interpret the traditional obscuration of Antiguan narratives within readings of 'Caribbean literature' as both symptom and symbol of the typical exclusion of the small

nation from certain imaginings of the region¹⁷. It is also a metaphor for and an indicant of the deracination of the inequalities and subordination that attend Antigua within the group. I argue that Antigua's peripheralisation in readings of the Caribbean and literatures from the region is engendered by the nation's socio-economic and political location as, to invoke Jamaica Kincaid, 'a small place'. On these bases, I advance the argument that the [non]positioning of Antiguan narrative within the Anglophone and Anglo-Creole Caribbean traditions begs particular attention as a case study for Caribbean and postcolonial considerations of canonicity and literature's role as signifier of national identity.

The critical treatment of Antiguan narratives is peculiar to readings of literary products from the smaller territories within the region on three counts. On the first count, the narratives have received little to no critical recognition as belonging to a distinct national corpus. This neglect persists despite the texts' clear articulation of and engagement with peculiarly Antiguan sentiments/themes, experiences and settings, which I examine over the course of the next two chapters. This is largely owing to the critical tendency to catalogue or read literatures from Caribbean territories via a regional rather than a national or even transnational gaze.

Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin note the longevity of the regional model in the apprehension of literary products emerging from Caribbean territories—"West Indian" literature has almost always been considered regionally, rather than nationally.' According to them, this regional grouping occurs contra the classification of the majority of English literatures 'as individual, national enterprises forming and reflecting each country's culture' (17). They assert that 'West Indian literature' as a regional category has acquired acceptance in the region and is a classification derived from a discernible

¹⁷. Antiguan narratives here refer to both the texts and indigenous criticism.

group identity. Their observation is in keeping with traditional apprehension of countries of the region as constituting a single homogeneous and harmonious territory. Throughout this chapter, I query this notion of a collective Caribbean identity and examine the limitations of 'Caribbean literature' in the face of Caribbean insularities and differentiated territorial engagements with the national question. I demonstrate that, in practice, Antiguan and Caribbean engagement with regional identity is at odds with mainstream Western, global, and even Caribbean discourse and outlook on the homogeneity of the group.

Secondly, connected to the tendency to ignore Antiguan narratives' elaboration of a national literary tradition is a critical inclination to delineate literatures produced in the region as constituted, with few exceptions, by the literary products of the larger territories. This reflects the peripheral location of Antigua and other small territories in the regional grouping. This chapter demonstrates, as geographer Stephen Royle asserts in his discussion on small island insularity, that peripherality is relative. Royle's observations regarding the Falkland Islands rings true for the Caribbean archipelago. He notes that within the former, which, as a single entity, is already 'very peripheral at a world scale', exist 'variations in this peripherality' (48). For Antigua and the Caribbean, I examine the ways in which smaller economies delimit the overall economic power and cultural visibility of the 'small place' within and in turn outside of the group. A key element of my examination is a discussion of indigenous local and regional discourse on the topic of the smaller territories' regional as well as global peripherality.

On the third count, critical treatment of Antiguan narratives is marked by a reading of literary output of the island as restricted to the oeuvre of Antiguan-born and US-resident author, Jamaica Kincaid. This mirrors the like conventional contraction of, for example, the literary output of St. Lucia to the oeuvre of Derek Walcott, or Dominica

to, typically, that of Jean Rhys. I query Kincaid's positioning as, to adapt Harold Bloom, the solitary 'strong' Antiguan artist. My query is grounded in an insistence upon the existence of multiple literary canons/maps of literary traditions that adhere to a centre-periphery dichotomy. I argue that highly visible and dominant maps/canons are produced in and consecrated at regional and global centres that control, relative to their centrality, larger shares, to adapt Bourdieu, of the global field of cultural power/capital. In contrast, the less visible and subordinate canons/maps are those produced in and consecrated at the periphery, that is, the individual nations of the Caribbean, which control, relative to their peripheral status, smaller shares of the global field of cultural power/capital¹⁸.

My discussion in this chapter is underpinned by the concept of bad-mindedness. I apply the concept in two main ways. I use it to refer to the variety of evils with which the global field of cultural power confronts the small nation. Using this frame of reference, I apprehend bad-mindedness as the evil inherent in the smaller territory's limited resources and the differences in the material conditions and rules of, to borrow from Bourdieu, its field of cultural production¹⁹. I also use it to refer directly to the evil(s) informing the discourses and praxes, emanating from regional and global cultural centres, which locate the smaller territories and their inhabitants at the cultural periphery.

¹⁸. I reformulate Bourdieu's 'field of power' to reference the totality of global power relations as shaped by the variations in the cultural capital available to and controlled by distinct nations and regions. In Bourdieu's original formulation, the 'field of power' refers 'to a field of forces structurally determined by the state of relations of power among forms of power, or different forms of capital'. For him, it also references 'a gaming space in which those agents and institutions possessing enough specific capital (economic or cultural capital in particular) to be able to occupy the dominant positions within their respective fields confront each other using strategies aimed at preserving or transforming these relations of power' (*The State* 264, 264-5).

¹⁹. I find useful, particularly for the latter two sections of this chapter, Bourdieu's delineation of the cultural field of production as 'the site of struggles in which what is at stake is the power to impose the dominant definition of the writer and therefore to delimit the population of those entitled to take part in the struggle to define the writer'. Within Bourdieu's framework, the cultural field of production is situated within the larger field of power that is constituted by the political and economic fields, and is affected by its rules/laws even whilst retaining a degree of autonomy (*The Field* 42, 37-38).

My frames of reference for the concept of bad-mindedness produce Antiguan literary traditions as expressions of anxiety resulting from the smaller territory's susceptibility to the bad-mindedness informing the global field of cultural power. They also historicise and elaborate, to invoke Freud, the 'affect of anxiety' as imposed upon and experienced by inhabitants of the 'small place' who apprehend the peripheral status of their territory as engendered by its command of a negligible share of the different types of global capital. In this chapter, my use of bad-mind, bad-minded and bad-mindedness reference the range of denotations outlined in this thesis' introduction, with each case offering sufficient clues as to the intended meaning.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first—*The Anxieties of a Small Place*—intervenes into readings of the Caribbean as a single harmonious and homogeneous territory. It highlights the provincialism and cultural fractures that persist in the region. It also underscores the role of cultural and literary/art forms as sites of contest for the articulation of distinct national identities. I briefly examine two case studies that elaborate these latter two points. My intervention historicises the bad-minded economic, political, and cultural interpellations of Antigua. It also historicises the affect of anxiety as engendered by the bad-mindedness inherent in the modest physical and economic size of Antigua, which functions to delimit and check the ambitions of its inhabitants and the nation. I argue that the bad-mindedness inherent in Antigua's limited resources, and the bad-minded interpellations—issued from privileged sites of authority—have resulted in the subsumption of the smaller territory's identity into that of the wider Caribbean. This in turn has led to the exclusion of the island and its people from certain imaginings of the Caribbean.

The second section—*Anxious Taxonomies*—queries unilinear mapping of Caribbean literary traditions. It introduces the suggestion that literary expressions from

Antigua and the region are not well served by the conventional unilinear historical model. I contend that this model does not accommodate, to adapt Bloom, the multi-way ‘misreadings’ of ‘Antiguanness’ and ‘Caribbeanness’ marking the dominant critical apprehensions of Antiguan and Caribbean literary traditions. I map these misreadings as an account of the influence of the anxiety occasioned by the praxis of bad-mindedness that informed British colonialism and marks current Western outlook on the region. I highlight the regional anti-colonial/nationalist project to re-imagine/recuperate the Caribbean space and subject in the face of the epistemological and ontological bad-mindedness of British colonialism and cultural imperialism. I focus on six significant features marking extant classifications of literatures from the region as connected to this project, and their implications for Antiguan narratives. My main contention is that the regional recuperative project itself encourages bad-minded taxonomies of the Caribbean, literatures from the region, and processes of canon formation that obscure narratives from the smaller territories.

The third section—*Jamaica Kincaid and Antiguan Narratives*—engages with case studies of several Antiguan artists to account for Kincaid looming large as the premier artist from Antigua. I reinstate the agency of the ‘small place’ by highlighting locally produced canons that intervene into the dominant canons/maps of Caribbean literary traditions. This section examines the peculiarities marking the material conditions of Antigua’s cultural field of production. It demonstrates that these peculiarities foreground the immense inequalities between the small territory and the West’s access to/command of, what Bourdieu refers to as, ‘cultural capital’. They also underscore major differences between maps/canons produced at the centre and those at the periphery. I explore the influence of praxes of bad-mindedness on literary production and processes of canon formation at the centre as well as the periphery. Overall, this section enlarges the need to

query the notion of single cohesive regional canons—whether general or according to genres—and unilinear maps of Caribbean literary traditions.

I. The Anxieties of a Small Place

Historically, Antigua has been interpellated as a member of a number of regional groupings—most of which referenced its physical size as well as location. One such extant grouping is that of the ‘Lesser Antilles’, which denotes the long arc of territories in the eastern and southern section: from the Virgin Islands down to T&T and across to Aruba. The paired opposite of this group is the ‘Greater Antilles’ which comprises four considerably larger territories: Jamaica, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Hispaniola (now Haiti and the Dominican Republic). Even within the Lesser Antilles, the two larger and more densely populated Anglophone territories of Barbados and T&T came to be grouped, in terms of development, along with Jamaica, in the Greater Antilles, and Guyana, in South America, as the ‘Big Four’ (Thompson 3-4, 61).

The smaller territories of the Lesser Antilles have long found themselves at the receiving end of much condescension from those in the so-called Big Four group. In 1973, for example, then Prime Minister of Barbados, Errol Barrow, frustrated with the hesitancy of the smaller islands, and Antigua in particular, to sign the CARICOM treaty made clear his opinion on their demands and their overall utility to the group: ‘I have gone along with the proposals which have been made, not because we need their votes or anything like that, but for humanitarian reasons’²⁰. Tellingly, Barrow excluded his country from the Lesser Antilles grouping as he admonished: ‘I do not believe in molly-coddling what I describe as a geographical expression, the lesser [*sic*] Antilles’ (qtd. in Payne 158).

²⁰. CARICOM, meant to foster economic integration and cooperation amongst members, was established by the Treaty of Chaguaramas (1973) and signed by the **Big Four**, who were all by then independent territories.

The bad-minded delimiting of the smaller territories and their inhabitants may in fact be mapped as a tradition with late 15th century roots. Even the early peoples of the Lesser Antilles were identified as more subperson than their pre-Columbian counterparts in the Greater Antilles. From the fifteenth-century journals of Europeans to the Caribbean history texts prior to 1980 (and even beyond then), pre-Columbian settlement was erroneously simplified thus: the Lesser Antilles was occupied by the ‘war-like Caribs’, while the Greater Antilles was home to the ‘peaceful Arawaks’ (Honychurch, ‘Caribbean Culture Contacts’). In the 1950s and 60s, the popular Nelson’s reader, *History of the West Indian Peoples*, for example, noted of early Dominica: ‘This island was in the hands of the Caribs, and there were signs that they were cannibals’ (15). Thus, for centuries, the early Lesser Antillean was, and largely remains, delimited as ‘more “other” than the rest’²¹ (Roberts 27).

It is also instructive to note that from the late 17th century to present day, the economy of Antigua, typical to that of the smaller Caribbean territories, has been marked by dependency on a single industry; sugar in colonial times and now tourism in the postcolonial era²². Royle refers to this as the “‘all eggs in one basket” scenario’. He argues that it unavoidably rids small islands of any power with regards to global market prices since they are unable to manipulate prices, given their small contribution to the global supply (60). Monoculture—both as the dependency on one crop/industry and the dominance of a single set of tools—is a longstanding symbol of the bad-mindedness inherent to the ‘small place’. This inherent bad-mindedness is what Walcott intimates when he refers to the ‘one-towned’ and ‘doll-sized verandahs’ nature of the ‘small place’ (*What the Twilight Says*13). It is also what is re-presented in the Antigua of Kincaid’s *A*

²¹. I explore this construction of the early Lesser Antillean in detail in the third section of Chapter II.

²². The ALP’s 1960 manifesto lamented the ‘one crop mentality’ of the estate owners and made note of their ‘unwillingness to diversify and lack of initiative for Antigua’s food problems’ (7, 6).

Small Place, and exists in Antigua in reality. The island has but one public library—the completion of new facilities continues to suffer delay—, one college, one hospital, and et cetera, all of which are strained to meet the needs of the population.

Moreover, to link this directly to the pertinent issues of this chapter, this scenario is also re-produced within Caribbean and postcolonial anthologies and by canonisation processes. Contra the Big Four, Antiguan narratives are, as noted before, reduced to the oeuvre of Kincaid, as are St. Lucian narratives to the oeuvre of Derek Walcott, Dominican narratives to Jean Rhys, and so forth. It is worth pointing out that literary traditions of both the Big Four and the smaller territories tend to encounter a like contraction in the world market. For example, in 1991, Andrew Salkey was moved to bemoan British publishers' bad-mindedness towards all but one Caribbean author, V.S. Naipaul. Back then, Salkey complained: 'Don't think that I am blaming anybody like Vidia. But it's as though they found their man, their star, and they stopped looking' ("Bright as Blisters" 36). Salkey's lament brings to mind Huggan's like observation of the way in which the postcolonial 'industry' appears to privilege a handful of famous writers—Rushdie, Naipaul, and Achebe—and critics—Spivak, Said, and Bhabha²³ (4).

Returning to the topic of the country's economy, during the colonial period, Antigua's status as a 'small place' was fostered by its recurring existence as a poor relation of both the Big Four and the smaller territories in the region. Sheridan notes that the country's economy developed at a slow pace during the early colonial period. By the end of the 17th century, the island had moved ahead of the rest of the Leeward Islands, and eventually 'outstripped Barbados to become Britain's leading sugar island in the

²³. For Huggan, a possible account for this hierarchy can be articulated via Bourdieu's influential notion of 'cultural capital'.

Lesser Antilles’²⁴. According to him, the island, as compared to its neighbours in the Leeward Islands ‘had a more highly developed plantation economy’ that positioned it at the centre of politics, shipping, trade, finance, and the social life of that region. However, this did not save it from the economic crisis that struck other sugar colonies in the region on the eve of the emancipation of the slaves (184, 302, 206). In the early twentieth century, the island was being interpellated, by the British Colonial Office, as ‘the Cinderella of the West Indies’ (Lowes 32). Also, O’Loughlin, writing in 1968, asserted that poverty in Antigua had been the worst in the West Indies and that the country, until recently, was the ‘the poor relation of the Leeward Islands’ (25).

Politically, from colonial times to the present, Antigua has been situated within networks of relationships within the Anglophone Caribbean that have been marked by severe insularity. This insularity is a direct result of the bad-mindedness inherent in the region’s involvement in the British colonial project. Lowenthal notes that, ‘even appendages of the same European empire knew more of the mother country than of their West Indian neighbours’ (112-113). For his part, Eric Williams convincingly argues that the severe insularity in the region is owing to the manner in which the plantation system pitted territory against territory and thus ‘engendered and nurtured an inter-colonial rivalry, an isolationist outlook, a parochialism that is almost a disease’ (116). Payne corroborates Williams’s suggestion. He notes that each plantation was closely linked to a metropolitan merchant and had almost no relations with other plantations in the same island or in neighbouring territories. Thompson elaborates this by asserting that Caribbean insularity is ‘an historical experience and an emotional and psychological condition.’ According to him, formal political independence has increased insularity

²⁴ The ‘Leeward Islands’ refers to the former British colonies in the northern Lesser Antilles: Antigua, Barbuda, Montserrat, St. Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla, and the British Virgin Islands. These islands share a history of federation dating back to the 17th century.

within the region and even within multi-island states since territories ‘find it hard to concede a measure of it for the wider regional good’ (24).

It is useful to note that even the relationship between Antigua and its sister territory, Barbuda, has been and continues to be marked by severe insularity. During the 1980 constitutional conference, spokesman for the Barbudan delegation, Eric Burton, referred to Barbuda as ‘our unhappy little island’ and argued that Barbudans had ‘their own desires for a separate future’ from Antigua. Burton equalled the proposed formal annexation of Barbuda to Antigua to enslavement and accused the British government of being in cahoots with the Antiguan government to keep Barbudans ‘in a state of servitude forever’ (qtd. in *Antigua Constitutional* 29, 25). Indeed, the A&B case has been referred to as ‘the most extreme case of discontent’ between mainland and sister territory (Colin Clarke 124).

At the regional level, the insularity characterising the West Indies was most famously expressed in the 1962 dissolution of the short-lived West Indian Federation. In 1958, ten territories united as the West Indies Federation—A&B, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, what was then St Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St Vincent, and T&T. The hopes of what this amalgamation would mean for the smaller territories in particular is referenced in the Grenadian-born, Trinidadian-resident calypsonian, Small Island Pride’s, 1956 parodic offering ‘Federation’²⁵. In the calypso’s chorus, a Grenadian woman responding to taunts of ‘Small Island, go back to your land’, advises her Trinidadian jeerer: ‘Lillian, change your plan / Next year is Federation / There’ll be no discrimination between a Trinidadian and a Grenadian!’ However, five years later, a Jamaican referendum resulted in that country’s withdrawing from the Federation and pursuing independence on its own. T&T followed shortly. According to

²⁵. This calypsonian’s moniker, along with his offering, was meant as a response to the xenophobic sentiments residents originally from the smaller territories faced in Trinidad.

economist W. Arthur Lewis, after Jamaica's departure, most of Eric Williams's close associates 'were fed up to the teeth with the small island leaders; wanted to have no more to do with them; were urging that Trinidad should go on to independence alone' (218). Following a failed attempt by the so-called 'Little Eight' to continue the integration effort, each territory then turned its focus to negotiating its future on its own²⁶.

The inter-island acerbity that marked the federal project is immortalised in Grenadian-born, Trinidadian-bred King Mighty Sparrow's 1962 'Federation'. 'Federation' is infused with much anti-Jamaican sentiment. Jamaica is limned as the 'blasted traitor' who thwarted the regional independence project—'But if they know they didn't want federation / . . . Independence was at the door, why didn't they speak before? / This is no time to say you eh federating no more' (chorus). Importantly, the calypso records what many felt accounted for Jamaica's withdrawal, namely that the federal capital was located in T&T—'When they didn't get the capital site that nearly cause big fight'—and that the premier was a non-Jamaican, the Barbadian Grantley Adams—'When Sir Grantley took up his post that even made things worse / So the grumbling went on and on to a big referendum' (verse 2).

The intense historical and contemporary insularity characterising relationships within the Anglophone Caribbean is therefore clearly at odds with readings of the Caribbean as a single harmonious and homogeneous territory. As I will demonstrate more clearly in the final pages of this section, the region, true to Walcott's description, is indeed an archipelago fragmented into nations with each keen on asserting traits of a distinct national identity ('The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry' 257). Moreover, the anxieties attending the insularity of the region are doubly intensified for Antigua as a smaller territory within the regional groupings.

²⁶. A&B, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, then St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

O'Loughlin provides the telling example of Dominica who in 1940, resentful of being administered from the smaller Antigua, withdrew from the Federation of the British Leeward Islands that was formed in 1870. Even more telling is O'Loughlin's declaration that it is the Leeward Islands which, though the smallest, 'and in that sense *the least qualified to consider themselves as potential national entities*', have exhibited the least willingness to sacrifice island sovereignties (12, 15, emphasis added). Kincaid references similar sentiments on the smaller territories' anxiety concerning their sovereignty. In *A Small Place*, she foregrounds Antigua's small physical size with the repeated delineation 'nine-by-twelve-mile-long' to underscore Antiguan's seemingly preposterous claim to nationhood. She observes of the tri-island nation:

When Antiguan talk about 'The Nation' (and they say 'The Nation' without irony), they are referring to the nine-by-twelve-mile-long, drought-ridden island of Antigua; they are referring to Barbuda, an island even smaller than Antigua . . . and they are referring to a barren little rock, where only booby birds live, Redonda. (51)

This description, along with O'Loughlin's declaration, sums up the longstanding interpellation of the smaller territories as having a lesser claim to sovereignty/nationhood than the Big Four.

This is not to suggest that the countries of the Big Four have been exempt from the question of the legitimacy of small nations' claims to nationhood and political autonomy. Rather, as Lowenthal and Clarke reminds us, prior to the 1960s, the British colonial office regarded it as 'clearly impossible in the modern world for the present separate [West Indian] communities, small and isolated as most of them are, to achieve and maintain full self-government on their own' ('Report on Closer Association' qtd. in Lowenthal and Clarke 293). According to Lowenthal and Clarke,

few expected Jamaica and Trinidad to gain independence on their own, let alone Guyana and Barbados. Not until 1960, when Prime Minister Norman Manley was told that Jamaica could achieve independence within the Commonwealth, did political leaders anywhere in the English-speaking

Caribbean envisage separate nationhood. . . . Egged on by the UN Decolonization Commission, colonial territories however small or poor found it desirable to throw off imperial bonds. Each new national creation led other islands to ask, why not us? (293-294)

Decades later, both the Big Four and the smaller territories continue to express, in localised self-affirming aphorisms, anxiety over extant questioning of the legitimacy of their claims to nationhood. By way of example, the Jamaican adage ‘wi likkle but wi tallawa’ is frequently employed to intervene into international scepticism of Jamaican nationhood and sovereignty to assert the agency and resilience of the small nation²⁷.

Outside of the Leeward Islands, even greater anxieties exist for Antigua as a smaller territory constantly defined in relation to the Big Four. The Big Four label has been used to bad-mindedly define and exclude Antigua, and other smaller territories, as less developed and in turn its inhabitants as lesser peoples—in intelligence, sporting prowess, and the like. According to Payne, in 1967, regional discussions about closer economic integration saw the smaller territories being: ‘granted formal recognition as less developed territories in implied contrast to the more developed countries of Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados and Guyana’ (92-93). Payne notes that the two terms ‘less developed countries’ (LDCs) and ‘more developed countries’ (MDCs) soon became staples in the lexicon of the Caribbean integration movement. This effectively meant that within the region, the smaller territories were excluded from definitions or imaginings of the Caribbean as a progressive/ developing space²⁸.

As noted earlier, over the years, the Big Four countries have directed much condescension towards the smaller islands of the Lesser Antilles. The governments of the former have in fact settled into a pattern of generosity, within the wider Caribbean, tempered with condescending or bad-minded statements, that has made for uneasy

²⁷. ‘We are little but tallawa’. Allsopp notes that ‘tallawa’ is usually an adjective used in reference to a person. It means ‘Tough-minded; forceful in character; not to be trifled with’ (*Dictionary* 546).

²⁸. In Chapter III, I dedicate some space to analysing Antiguan narratives’ intervention into Western discourses of development and United Nations’ designations such as LDC and MDC.

relationships with Antigua and other smaller territories. In 1973, it was not only the Barbadian prime minister who voiced his annoyance with the reluctance of Antigua and the smaller territories' to sign the CARICOM treaty. Then Trinidadian Prime Minister Eric Williams also observed 'Who don't sign, don't sign', before intimating that the smaller territories were helpless without the Big Four: 'but I want to know where they are going to go' (qtd. in Payne 158).

For his part, Prime Minister Barrow was critical of the economic burden being placed on the Big Four. His statements invited a reading of the smaller territories as parasites. He argued that the leaders of the smaller territories had done nothing to develop their economies and were instead expecting the larger territories to 'do what God and the British Government [*sic*] did not do for 300 years'. He also expressed concern that integration with the smaller territories would not work since those territories were enjoying 'all the advantages of being in a Common Market with none of the responsibilities' (qtd. in Payne, 158). According to Payne, Barrow's outburst 'did dramatically illustrate the superior and condescending attitude with which the MDCs viewed their poorer, less fortunate brethren in the other islands'. He asserts that for the Big Four, the 'LDCs were to be pitied, helped where possible, but not allowed to divert MDCs from the pursuit of their basic interests' (159).

Evidence supporting Payne's assertions quoted above was put on public display as recently as July 2010 when Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar of T&T expressed concern that her nation's generosity was being abused by less developed CARICOM members. At a CARICOM summit in Jamaica, the Prime Minister of the commonly tagged 'oil-rich' T&T warned that her country could not continue operating as the regional ATM card (qtd. in 'Not Us'). P.J Patterson, the former prime minister of Jamaica, was later keen to displace his country—and his country only—from what was

viewed in the region as a rather bad-minded interpellation of the other territories by T&T. He assured T&T and the region: ‘I would have to say that we did not line up or benefit from any ATM machine and I confine that remark to Jamaica’ (qtd. in ‘Not Us’).

It is important to note that charges by the Big Four such as those Persad-Bissessar brought against resources-poor territories like Antigua are not totally without merit. In times of financial and other distress, the so-called LDCs have often turned to the MDCs for aid. Indeed, a 1980 calypso by King The Mighty Swallow, which would undoubtedly leave today’s sovereign-minded Antiguan cringing, testifies to the dependency of the smaller (and even the larger) territories on T&T during that era. In ‘Trinidad the Godfather’, the calypsonian depicts T&T as an overly generous godfather figure who ‘hardly say[s] no’ to solicitations from other Caribbean territories. In the chorus, he declares: ‘She does lend the other nations money like rain / From Jamaica right down to Guyana / . . . Trinidad! Our big brother, is the Caribbean godfather!’ This view of T&T is also referenced by Naipaul’s Mr. Mackay, who, as their vessel approaches Trinidad, observes of the passengers from the smaller territories: ‘I hope Immigration keep an eye on these fellers. Trinidad is a sort of second paradise to them, you know. Give them the chance and half of them jump the ship right here’ (*The Middle Passage* 37).

However, King Swallow’s 1980 exuberance for T&T’s generosity and Naipaul’s Mr. Mackay must be checked with the reminder that the relationship between the LDCs and MDCs is, at least in today’s Caribbean, characterised by a greater degree of co-dependency than allowed by Persad-Bissessar’s 2010 statements. This would account for the regional consensus in 2010 that the T&T prime minister had issued a particularly insulting and bad-minded statement. By way of example, former Antiguan diplomat, Ronald Sanders, took issue with Persad-Bissessar, noting that the relationship between T&T and particularly the smaller territories of the OECS ‘is far more mutually beneficial

than is conveyed by the analogy of the “ATM machine”’. He pointed to the CARICOM Treaty which afforded products from T&T ‘lucrative and protected markets’ in other CARICOM countries, noting that had it not been for CARICOM, ‘these countries could purchase most of what they buy from Trinidad and Tobago at cheaper prices elsewhere in the world’ (qtd. in ‘Kamla’s Clampdown’).

A main point I wish to foreground in this section, and one to which I will return frequently in the following sections, is that definitions or interpellations such as ‘Big Four’, ‘small island’/ ‘small-islander’, ‘MDCs’ and ‘LDCs’ have all been forged from privileged sites of authority. The ‘small island’ or ‘LDC’ label has in fact overseen the exclusion of Antigua and the Antiguan, as well as other ‘small islanders’, from certain imaginings of the Caribbean. I move to bring this section to a close by briefly examining two such exclusions that have articulated Antigua and the smaller territories’ [non]positioning within the region: the exclusion from the cricketing Caribbean, and the exclusion from the Caribbean calypso fraternity. I choose these two cultural arenas because of the significant role they have played and continue to play in the articulation of national identity and anti-colonial as well as post-colonial nationalism. Historically, both cricket and calypso operate, to adapt Bourdieu, as crucial sites of the struggle to impose the authoritative definition of ‘Caribbeanness’, in opposition to ‘Englishness’, and to demarcate the group(s) allowed to participate in this definitive struggle²⁹.

From the introduction of cricket to the region in the late 19th century until at least the 1970s, the smaller territories were excluded from the imaginings of the wider cricketing Caribbean. I argue that this exclusion may be read as an expulsion of the smaller territories from the wider Caribbean struggle to unseat British imperialism and in turn as a displacement of their petition for recognition of nationhood. I make this link

²⁹. I elaborate the struggle to define the Caribbean and delimit those who may define and elaborate ‘Caribbeanness’, via the literary field, in the following section. I also engage more fully with calypso’s role in articulating the boundaries of the nation and delineating the nation’s spokespersons in Chapter III.

given the wealth of evidence that points to cricket's pivotal role in articulating West Indian nationalism and 'West Indianness' as distinct and autonomous from 'Englishness'. According to Stoddart, cricket was so highly regarded as 'a benchmark of English culture and civilised behaviour' that, in the early 20th century, Afro West Indian communities 'naturally turned to it in their search for cultural distinction' (242). Culturally, it came to be 'redefined away from its colonial foundations as a "gentleman's game" into a proud signifier of colonial hybridity and resistance' (Lewis, 'Unpacking' 118). Both of these latter claims are corroborated by Joanne C. Hillhouse's character, Uncle Wellie, in *Dancing Nude*. For Uncle Wellie, West Indies cricket is about 'beating England at her own game, reclaiming some of what had been taken, in the most gentlemanly of ways' (10).

Early attempts at organising the sport at the regional level was marked by a delimitation of the Caribbean to the Big Four territories and the consequent snubbing of the quality of the cricket and the cricketers of the smaller territories (Marshall, 18). According to Marshall, the Creole elites of the Big Four restricted 'their initial association to those with whom they had something in common- their relative wealth'. They considered the smaller territories 'backwaters and quite unlikely to improve their status in the near future' (18). Beckles supports this account and offers the example of Leeward Island cricketers being viewed as 'neophytes' by a Barbadian team of masters and students from Harrison College, who won all the games during their tour of St. Kitts and Antigua in 1879. He also offers the example of the 1886 West Indian team that was assembled to tour North America which was, as expected, drawn exclusively from the Big Four ('The Making of the First' 193). Indeed, even the West Indian team that achieved the historic series win over England at Lord's in 1950 comprised three

Jamaicans, one Guyanese, and six players each from Barbados and Trinidad (Stoddart 239-240).

It was only in the 1970s during the tenure of Frank Worrell, the Barbadian captain, that the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) began correcting its neglect of cricketers from the smaller territories. According to Sandiford, Worrell brought an end to the ‘stifling system of quotas which had long formed the basis of selecting teams to represent the West Indies abroad’. Under the quota system, each of the Big Four was guaranteed an equal number of players on the team (132-133). Whilst Worrell’s move did pave the path for small-island cricketers’ selection into the team, it did not obliterate the bad-mindedness against small-island cricketing culture. At the turn of the 1990s, the famous Antiguan cricketer, Vivian Richards, observed that though the regional cricketing culture had come a long way with regards to its treatment of small-island cricketers, there was ‘still a lot of political wrangling’. He pointed to the composition of the WICB itself, noting that calls have been made for more ‘power and recognition at top level for representatives from the smaller islands’³⁰ (185,186).

For my discussion of the exclusion of Antigua from the Caribbean calypso fraternity, I analyse the response of veteran Trinidadian calypsonian and calypso critic, Hollis ‘King Chalkdust’ Liverpool, to Antigua’s victory in the 2006 CARIFESTA calypso finals. In an article written after the event, King Chalkdust offers a bad-minded and nationalistic account of the competition that limns King Young Destroyer’s win as a major source of shame for Trinidad³¹. His response articulates the insularity that this section has demonstrated characterises regional relationships. It also underscores the burden that cultural/literary products bear as the site of contest for the articulation of national identities. King Young Destroyer is employed as a metonym for Antiguan

³⁰. Marshall describes the WICB, formed in 1926 by the Big Four, as being a ‘dictatorship of the elite’ in the years prior to the 1950s (19).

³¹. T&T is generally accepted to be the birthplace of the modern calypso.

calypso tradition and nation, which are both interpellated by King Chalkdust as inferior copies of their Trinidadian counterparts. Within King Chalkdust's account of Antiguan inferiority and mimicry is both an exclusion of the smaller territories' from the imaginings of the regional calypso tradition and a denial of their discrete narrative space as nations.

Throughout the article, King Chalkdust charges the Antiguan calypsonian and calypso tradition with, to cite Bloom, 'immense anxieties of indebtedness' and feelings of belatedness to the Trinidadian calypsonian and calypso tradition (5). King Young Destroyer, re-produced as a metonym for the Antiguan calypso tradition, is portrayed as having had to wrestle with both the elder Trinidadians in the competition and the entire T&T calypso tradition in a bid to clear, to adapt Bloom, an 'imaginative space' for the Antiguan calypsonian (5). King Chalkdust asserts that, in the past, the quality of T&T compositions was such that to most 'Northerners of the Caribbean, every Trinidadian was a calypsonian and Trinidad . . . was synonymous with good calypso'. Therefore, the win by the Antiguan calypsonian 'with his mother's milk still flowing in his arteries' was 'a night of shame for the Trinidadians and the Trinidad Calypso in particular'. The major source of the shame is the fact that the win occurred on Trinidadian soil. King Chalkdust laments, 'never in the history of the art form had an "outsider" beaten Trinidad in calypso in the land of calypso'. The sentiment behind this lament is referenced in a *Trinidad Guardian* article of the same period. The article noted that while the consensus was that King Young Destroyer deserved the title, for 'the local calypso stalwarts in the audience, the results were difficult to swallow' (Nero).

Tellingly, added to King Chalkdust's condescending statement that the Antiguan nation 'in terms of the art form . . . has come of age' is the fact that a major argument of the article is that the current deterioration of the T&T art form allowed for King Young

Destroyer's win. Early in the article, King Chalkdust facetiously wonders: 'Should I congratulate Young Destroyer for his masterful victory over Trinidad?' The suggestion in this question is one repeated throughout the article—the Trinidadian/Trinidad is the final arbiter of the calypso and calypso traditions. This is particularly evident in King Chalkdust's repeated references to Trinidadian calypsonians' ridicule of the belated calypsonians from the smaller territories:

Space hinders me from providing readers with the number of Trinidadian calypsonians such as Mudada, Lord Invader, Unknown, Radio, Wonder and Viking who have all laughed at and denigrated in song the quasi-art forms of our northern brothers and sisters. How then the standard of the art form has dropped so low in Trinidad and risen so high in the other islands that they are laughing at us now?

He shares an anecdote, specific to Antigua, in which a Trinidadian calypsonian, Young Killer, refused to participate in a calypso contest in Antigua against top Antiguan calypsonians in the 1960s. According to him, Young Killer was convinced that the Antiguan calypsonian was inferior to even the third class Trinidadian calypsonian. Similarly, he tells of the famous calypsonian King Lord Kitchener refusing to participate in a show in St. Lucia on the basis that the St. Lucian calypsonian was a 'Jooking Board', that is, a 'quack'. Resurrecting Lord Kitchener's insult, King Chalkdust poses the rhetorical question: 'How then in 2006, Lord Jooking Board could destroy the Calypso King of Trinidad?'

Furthermore and importantly, King Chalkdust also points to Trinidadians who 'used their musicianship to make decent calypsonians of Swallow in Antigua, Arrow in Montserrat and Becket in St. Vincent'. By his estimation, the calypso traditions of the smaller territories are indebted to Trinidadians for acquiring 'respectability'. He in fact positions himself as one of the figures whose contributions aided in the maturation of the Antiguan calypso. He relates that prior to the CARIFESTA calypso competition he was the facilitator of calypso courses in not just Antigua but St. Kitts, Anguilla, Dominica,

and St. Thomas. He slyly observes, ‘No need for me to state that calypsonian Destroyer and his son Young Destroyer were participants of my training programme in Antigua’.

This response from King Chalkdust, a respected authority on the calypso, gives us pause to consider the personal investments those located at privileged sites of authority have in the struggle to define the writer/cultural producer³². His foregrounding of calypso as a peculiarly Trinidadian product that smaller territories have appropriated not only delimits who may be defined as a calypsonian, but also, true to Bourdieu’s delineation of the field of cultural production, which parties may engage in the effort to define the calypsonian. King Chalkdust’s response suggests that both roles are best served by Trinidadians. His response references the role nationalisms continue to play in shaping the value judgments of literary/cultural critics who constitute, to borrow a term from Fish, ‘interpretive communities’ directly involved in processes of canon formation. It also highlights the bad-mindedness inherent in critical readings of literatures from the Caribbean. I address and elaborate the latter two points in the following section.

II. Anxious Taxonomies

In this section, I highlight the nationalist and anti-colonial/decolonising project to re-imagine/recuperate the Caribbean space and subject, as undertaken from privileged sites of literary authority in the mid to late twentieth century. I acknowledge, to cite Donnell, that ‘bonafide figures of Caribbeanness’ were articulated at ‘certain critical moments’ and that ‘in these moments, only they have been allowed to occupy the place of the ethical or redemptive subject’ (*Twentieth-Century* 6). In recognition of this, I historicise the affect of anxiety and accompanying defensive actions that informed notions of ‘Caribbeanness’ and in turn the resulting taxonomies imposed upon literatures from the region. In other

³². He is, inter alia, the winner of multiple calypso crowns, both in T&T and the US Virgin Islands, academic, and author of several oft cited monographs on the [Trinidad] calypso.

words, I explore the manner in which the region's peculiar involvement with an anti-colonial/decolonising project influenced notions of 'Caribbeanness' as pertaining to literatures from the region.

The main argument I advance is that recuperative attempts, meant to counter the epistemological and ontological bad-mindedness of British colonialism and European discourse, persist in encouraging taxonomies that themselves exhibit bad-mindedness towards Antiguan narratives. I examine six significant features marking the categorisations of Caribbean literatures and the implications they spell for the [non]apprehension of Antiguan narratives. I focus on the way in which literatures from the region are re-presented as: a) delineating a homogenous regional space; b) constituted by the literary products of the Big Four; c) constituted by written traditions; d) necessarily preoccupied with limning the region as an Afro-Caribbean proletarian space; e) an Afro-Caribbean male space; and f) having only properly emerged in the 1950s. Leading from this, I query accounts of regional literary canons that rely upon a conventional unilinear historical model that typically ground the 1950s as the birthing point of literatures from the region. I argue that such a model does not allow for, to adapt Bloom, the multi-way *misreadings* of 'Caribbeanness'/'Antiguanness' influencing canon formation, and as influenced by the praxes of bad-mindedness outlined in this section.

The inherent bad-mindedness against engagement with territorial corpuses and negotiations of the national question is one of the most visible traits marking the categorisation of literatures from the region. This bad-mindedness is particularly discernible in the content and slant of the majority of literary anthologies and critical writings produced up to present day. Admittedly, it would be erroneous to suggest that there has been a total lack of engagement with territorial corpuses. Waters reminds us that the 1980s saw a flourishing of anthologies and the proliferation of national anthologies

from, for example, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and the Bahamas (580). Breiner too notes attempts at national anthologies such as Pamela Mordecai and Mervyn Morris's *Jamaican Woman* (1980) and T&T's Margaret Watts' *Washer Woman Hangs her Poems in the Sun* (1990). Certainly, even the regional anthology, *Her True Name* (1989), organised entries according to the writers' country of origin. Also, Rosenberg's intervention into conventional West Indian literary historiography points to the emergence of movements in the Big Four in the early 20th century that 'claimed a multiracial and multiclass purview and placed a priority on the formation of national literature'. According to her, Jamaica led the way in the first decade of the 20th century with intellectuals in the remaining three territories establishing parallel movements between the 1920s and 1940s³³ (2-3). Moreover, critical material on the calypso has tended to be territorial/national in its focus with texts authored by Gordon Rohlehr, Keith Warner, Jocelyne Guilbault, Louis Regis, and others, typically offering exclusive analyses of the Trinidadian calypso tradition.

However, of the two gazes—national versus regional—it is the latter which has been privileged, proliferates, and has monopolised the attention of influential critics and Anglo/American metropolitan publishers. This is discernible in the earlier preoccupation of critics such as Kenneth Ramchand, Bruce King, C.L.R James, George Lamming, and others with definitions of the West Indian writer and West Indian writing. By way of example, while Bruce King acknowledged the existence of territorial differences, he apprehended the territories as one region, the West Indies, which 'is a place', and expressed the certainty that 'there is something West Indian' (*West Indian*, 1995 3). Likewise, for C.L.R James, the 'national audience' for whom the West Indian artist must write was 'at home', and in his view, home was the region, the West Indies ('Artist' 35).

³³. Her text in fact focuses on Jamaica and Trinidad as 'two of the larger countries in the region that had strong literary and political movements in the early twentieth century' (9).

As I will demonstrate throughout this section, the question of ‘West Indianness’ or ‘Caribbeanness’ is one that continues, for the most part, to engross critics.

For their part, influential metropolitan publishers such as Penguin, Faber and Faber, Oxford University Press, and Routledge, have all produced eponymous collections that have come to be regarded as definitive anthologies of ‘Caribbean Literature’. Conventionally, the prefaces and introductions of such anthologies, or what Genette refers to as the ‘paratext’, indicate their engagement with ‘authentic’ West Indian literature and assert their readings of regional negotiations of the national question as the proper way to apprehend literatures from the region. Thus, *West Indian Literature* (1979) indicates that the Macmillan series in which the text is included, ‘are literary and historical guides to the major “new” literatures in English’. It also proposes the texts’ usefulness as pedagogical tools and asserts that general readers will discover them ‘ideal guides to the ‘regional’ literatures which interest them’. Likewise, the *Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories* (1999) is keen to assure that stories were chosen ‘from across the wider Caribbean- . . . from “the cricket playing West Indies”’ and were ‘both distinctly ‘of’ the region and yet accessible to a wide readership’ (xii). For its part, Nelson’s *West Indian Narrative* (1966) assures that the four non-West Indian writers included in the collection ‘help to tell the story of the West Indies at a time when there were no West Indians able to tell it’ (7).

The overall bad-mindedness critics and publishers exhibit towards territorial corpuses is, undoubtedly a symptom of the typical collapsing of the region into a single entity as committed, for example by ‘people from Western Europe and North America’ (Sheller 7-8). In his analysis of the impact of global market forces on the form and content of the Trinidad calypso, Gordon Rohlehr bemoans the ‘the beleaguered culture of the small neocolonial state’ struggling ‘to affirm its identity and distinctness within the

homogenizing space of the foreign marketplace' ('We Getting' 84). Pattullo too points out that various territories have had to struggle against the 'narrow image of the region and the inability of potential visitors to differentiate between different islands' (147). In the Antiguan case, this struggle is reflected in, for example, the anxiety of tourism and carnival officials to both embrace and displace the Caribbean in their various billings of the island's annual carnival as the 'Caribbean greatest summer festival'.

I argue that the bad-mindedness critics and publishers practice against territorial corpuses is also largely engendered by the form of early anti-colonial efforts in the region, in which writers and critics played an indispensable role. During the earlier period of the rise of Caribbean nationalism in the first half of the 20th century, regional insularities aside, it was considered unfathomable that each territory could successfully attempt the anti-colonial/nationalist project on its own. This was a sentiment that was propagated even after each of the Big Four had gained independence. By way of example, in King Short Shirt's 1977 'Illusion', the assertion is made: 'But independent in this region don't mean one damn / If we can't be independent as one' (see page 300). This accounts for the territories' agreement to engage with the federal project as well as the resulting regional infrastructure that was put in place to facilitate regional integration. The University College of the West Indies (1948) and the West Indies Shipping Service (1962) were two such examples.

As Rosenberg notes, West Indian writers participated in a regional literary movement that fuelled the region's involvement with the anti-colonial/decolonisation project. According to her, literature and literary criticism in the region have always 'been the products of nationalist discourses designed to extend the political rights of Caribbeans'. She notes that British and West Indian intellectuals alike viewed literature as 'evidence of a people's cultural legacy and political competence'. Thus, during

colonial 20th century Caribbean, indigenous literature was advanced in support of regional readiness for political autonomy. She observes that the region's writers were motivated by an anxiety to forge a peculiarly Caribbean literature as a means of intervening into European discourses that delineated the region as 'uncivilized and primitive, the antithesis of a modern nation' (3, 5). One would suppose, given the energies spent on definitions of the West Indies and West Indian literature, that the region's writers and literary critics were also keen to recuperate the region from the fragmented state engendered by the plantation system.

The discussion in the previous section demonstrates that the reality of regional insularities and national differences is at odds with critics and anthologies' treatment of the region. There is no disputing that the territories share a common history of involvement with British colonialism, and anti-colonial nationalism. Yet, this hardly warrants the neglect or displacement of territorial differences—which the literatures from these territories do articulate—as it regards peculiar engagement with both of the latter, as well as post-colonial nationalism. In the two chapters that follow, I demonstrate that Antiguan narratives engage with a peculiar recuperative project that articulates the island's involvement with all three and probes the ontological and epistemological bad-mindedness inherent in the construction of Antiguan bodies within colonial/neo-colonial and postcolonial discourses.

I am therefore in agreement with Knight that the 'separate political identities of the Caribbean are as patently strong as they are inescapable'. I share his opinion that these discrete identities cannot be easily vanquished (xvi). Certainly, the presences of distinct national governments, economic and legal systems, flags, anthems, mottoes, and the like are the markers of distinct national identities within the region (Smith, *National Identity* 16-17). Moreover, as Girvan aptly argues, the definition of the Caribbean or a

common Caribbean identity was originally imposed from without and is an intellectual or political creation that the people of the region have treated with ambivalence (6). In the case of the Caribbean, regionalism has proven itself frequently unable to ‘sustain the mobilization of its populations with their separate grievances and unique problems’ (Smith, *National Identity* 4).

Tellingly, recent critical readings and anthologies have interrogated the notion of a homogenous regional identity via linguistic—as in Mordecai and Wilson’s *Her True Name*—, gender—as in Davies and Fido’s *Out of the Kumbula*—, ethnic—as in O’Callaghan’s *Women Writing the West Indies*—, sexuality—as in Glave’s *Our Caribbean*—, and other lenses. My thesis joins these interventionist accounts by arguing against the displacement of territorial narratives within the regional. I suggest that a correction of this neglect will bring us a step closer to providing a fuller/richer account of the ‘many Caribbeans in the Caribbean’ (Torres-Saïllant 16).

The proclivity of critical readings to re-present literatures from the region as constituted by the Big Four is just as discernible a trend, which simultaneously interpellates the smaller territories as secondary one-author domains. Again, anthologies of ‘Caribbean literature’, which unarguably play an important role in Caribbean canon formation, prove complicit in the [non]articulation of the literary identity of the smaller territories. Such anthologies, with titles declaring them to be ‘Caribbean’ or ‘West Indian’, and accompanied by the weight of reputable metropolitan publishing houses, are typically dominated by multiple writers from the Big Four. Within these texts, smaller territories like Antigua are often represented by but one artist—normally the same solitary artist who monopolises the attention of critical readings of the smaller territories’ literary traditions.

This trend has been perpetuated in, for example, Faber's *West Indian Stories* (1960) and its *Book of Contemporary Caribbean Short Stories* (1990), Heinemann's *Her True Name* (1989), Oxford University Press' *The Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories* (1991), and Penguin's *Book of Caribbean Short Stories* (1996). Longman's *Caribbean Literature in English* (1999) is a particularly distinct example of the bad-mindedness inherent in interpellations of the small place and construction of the smaller territories' literary identities. It not only writes the literary outputs of the Big Four as definitive of literatures from the region but re-presents the literary identity of the smaller territories under a collective subdivision of Caribbean literary identity. Whilst the Big Four are invented as distinct narrative spaces, the smaller territories are grouped with one of the Big Four, Barbados, in a chapter entitled 'Barbados and the Lesser Antilles'. The anthology also goes a step further to interpellate Dominica—with Jean Rhys and Phyllis Allfrey—and St. Lucia—with Derek Walcott and Garth St. Omer—as more literary than the other smaller territories.

The *Oxford Book of Caribbean Short Stories* and Faber's *West Indian Stories* engage with a like discourse of hybridity that both advocates and displaces the notion of Caribbean diversity. The preface of the former, speaks to the distinctiveness of the various territories, but displaces the smaller territories from its imagining of the Caribbean. It asserts that 'British colonialism provided- for better or worse' a degree of 'shared cultural values, some parameters' that make it possible to 'compare the achievement of individual writers from places as otherwise distinct as Jamaica and Trinidad, Barbados and Guyana' (xiv). As for the latter, its introduction suggests that its selection of authors from the Big Four sufficiently represent the smaller territories as well. It invents the Big Four as ventriloquist for the smaller territories. It insists that the Big Four authors capture, inter alia, 'the Dominican's inventiveness', 'the St. Lucian's

lyrical melancholy’ and the ‘feeling of inferiority shared by most of the “small islands”’ (11). I suggest that all of this corroborates Puri’s persuasive argument concerning the potential of discourses of hybridity to ‘manage’ contradictions and enact ‘dehistoricizing conflation’ in the Caribbean (48, 3).

The bad-mindedness levied against smaller territories like Antigua is accounted for by their peripherality in the regional field of cultural production. One such example of their peripheral status is the fact that the three campuses of the regional university, the UWI, are based within the Big Four group with ‘centres’ located within the smaller territories³⁴. Added to this, a glance at the ‘Caribbean literature’ category of the latest UWI Press’s catalogue reveals a preponderance of published works and critical readings of authors from the Big Four.

Two observations can be made on the latter two points. Firstly, the regional campus placements translate to differentiated access by residents of the Big Four versus those of the smaller territories. Evidence of this appears in the 2011-2012 report of the UWI’s Barbadian campus, Cave Hill, that identified Barbadian students as accounting for around 83% of the total student population and dominating the student body at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (Beckles, ‘Principal’s’ 7). This is not simply a reflection of the presence of the campus in Barbadians’ ‘backyard’. Rather it is also, in large part, evidence of the country’s control of significant economic capital, bearing in mind its government’s longstanding policy to offer free university education across all three campuses to Barbadian nationals³⁵.

³⁴. The three campus territories are Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad. Guyana has its own University of Guyana.

³⁵. Meanwhile, students from smaller territories have to rely upon either their own funds or the limited number of national scholarships offered by their governments. In 2013, the Barbadian government, citing difficult economic times, announced that, as of the 2014/2015 academic year, nationals will now be liable for their tuition fees. It would be interesting to trace the changes in Barbadian enrolment over the next several years as a result of this new policy.

Secondly, leading from the first observation, the UWI's position in the region as the premier institution for tertiary education marks it as an entrance point into 'respectable' literature/ 'high culture'—the writing and reading of it as well as its dissemination and circulation. It therefore plays a significant role in the national and regional literary and cultural machinery. With its, inter alia, annual crop of students from around the region, renown literary critics as staff, own press, and links to the political and business Caribbean, it controls and allows access to immense cultural capital for those able to access its facilities.

The importance of access to important cultural institutions and substantial cultural/economic capital is highlighted by the fact that the literary magazines conventionally credited with playing a significant role in the development of West Indian Literature are products of the Big Four: *The Beacon* (Trinidad), *Bim* (Barbados), *Focus* (Jamaica), and *Kyk-over-al* (Guyana) (Sander 39-41). It also manifests itself in, for example, Antiguan calypsonians having to journey to recording studios in one of the Big Four territories, usually Trinidad, or even the US to access 'good [quality] sound recording' and 'more professional musicians, more professional arrangers' (Emmanuel, Personal; Philo, Personal).

As the examples above illustrate, the smaller territories like Antigua typically lack the material conditions and access to economic or cultural capital that would in turn allow it access to the kind of cultural legitimacy or, to borrow a Bourdieuan term, 'symbolic capital' possessed/accessed by those of the larger territories. For Bourdieu, 'symbolic capital', is 'the form that the various species of capital assume when they are perceived and recognized as legitimate' ('Social Space' 17). I find persuasive Guillory's suggestion that canon formation is 'best understood as a problem in the constitution and distribution of cultural capital or more specifically, a problem of access to the means of literary

production and consumption³⁶ (ix). In Antigua's case, its limited material conditions, that is, the absence of institutions such as the UWI or infrastructure such as literary magazines, recording studios, and publishing houses restricts its access to symbolic capital, which in turn engenders its peripherality in 'distributing, or regulating access to, the forms of cultural capital'(Guillory vii).

It is to this schema Naipaul pessimistically refers when he assures, with regards to the region's peripherality, that 'island blacks will continue to be dependent on the books, films, and goods of others' since they 'are without material resources' and, in his view, 'will never develop the higher skills' ('Power to the People' 367). For her part, Antiguan writer Joanne Hillhouse addresses directly the implications of the island's limited economic and institutional resources and its resulting cultural peripherality on local cultural producers, in a more measured fashion. She bemoans the small-island writer's status in the global field of cultural production: 'That's the first challenge for a Caribbean writer, I think- when your 108 square miles is so far from the world where books are made and dreaming impossible dreams is encouraged' ('Writing' n.pag).

In light of the above, the tendency to privilege written over oral traditions is even more troublesome for Antiguan narrators and the nation's literary traditions. This bad-minded aspect of conventional categorisation of Caribbean literature translates to a neglect of the calypso tradition, a rich and vibrant tradition that has been nurtured by hundreds of works since pre-independence Antigua. It is especially worrisome for the Antiguan calypsonian who continues, as discussed in the first section, to face charges of being an inferior copy of his/her Trinidadian counterpart. The Antiguan calypsonian finds him/herself doubly silenced. He/she is obscured in the shadow of the Trinidadian calypsonian within the Caribbean calypso tradition. He/she is also obscured by the

³⁶. In the original work, Guillory's focus is on the role the school's literary syllabus plays in canon formation and how it 'constitutes capital' (ix).

persisting readings of literatures from the region as constituted primarily by the written traditions.

This is not to suggest that Caribbeanists have not critically engaged with the calypso and other oral traditions. Critics such as Rohlehr, Warner, Regis, Mahabir, Liverpool, and Guilbault have made significant contributions to the tradition of critical commentary on the texts and performances of the calypso—typically the Trinidadian calypso. Brief passages on Antigua’s top calypsonians, King Short Shirt, King Swallow, and King Obstinate have also appeared in texts such as Rudolph Ottley and Curwen Best’s, *Calypsonians from now till then* and *Culture @ the Cutting Edge*, respectively. Recently also, a monograph dedicated to Antiguan calypso appeared in the latter half of 2013 in the form of a Hansib published biography of King Short Shirt, written by Antiguan critic Dorbrene O’Marde. Moreover, outside of calypso, the works of dub/performance poets such as Jamaicans Jean ‘Binta’ Breeze and Louise Bennett and Trinidadian Paul Keen Douglas have appeared in print and received critical attention. Jamaican dancehall and reggae are also examples of oral traditions that have been the recipients of scholarly attention from Caribbeanists such as Carolyn Cooper and Donna Hope.

However, as far as the prevailing readings of Caribbean literatures are concerned and as anthologies of Caribbean literatures demonstrate, the focus has been on written forms. By way of example, Ramchand and Gray’s *West Indian Poetry* (1989) combines both written and oral forms but commits significantly less space to the latter. As another example, Paula Burnett’s *Penguin Book of Caribbean Verse* (1986), ‘came under fire for separating oral from the literary tradition’ (Breiner 77). Of special note is the Brown, Morris, and Rohlehr edited *Voiceprint* (1989) which features a collection of, inter alia, calypsos, poems, parang, dub, and folk songs. Texts analysing oral forms are often

situated as a hybrid of literary and cultural studies rather than as purely literary studies. Also, despite critical attempts to bring into sharp focus, ‘the interplay between speech and writing, orality and literacy’ that marks literatures from the region, the tendency remains to refer to a ‘dialectical relationship between oral and scribal discourse’ and a ‘tortured relationship between writing and orality’ (Ramchand, ‘West Indian Literary History’ 106; Cooper 2; Glissant 147).

The bad-mindedness confronting oral forms like the calypso is undoubtedly a legacy of European colonial discourse’s bad-minded privileging of writing, as Gates reminds us, as a visible sign of reason, and in turn of human/personhood (‘Introduction’ 8). In Kincaid’s ‘Girl’, *Annie John*, and *Lucy*, written accounts of European ‘discovery’ of the New World as well as English literary texts are privileged by the re-presented Antigua societies whilst benna and calypso are treated as antithetical to colonial notions of respectability. King Short Shirt corroborates Kincaid’s re-presentation of this dichotomy of respectability. He notes of past disapproval of calypso and benna:

You know people coming out of slavery had a different mentality There were so many things you couldn’t do as a boy not because of your parents were that foolish but they looking for respect and to find respect they do anything they can to keep you in line Their mentality was so different. Calypso is something that you could have always used, music in general is something you could have always used but they was told for some reason, they said benna, and that it is bad to sing that [*sic*]. (Personal interview)

Judgements regarding the ‘badness’ of calypso and benna were based not just on their typically bawdy lyrics but also the conventional delivery in non-Standard English. Hodge has observed that though ‘the appearance of Creole [English] on the page is a long-standing Caribbean tradition’, it is ‘still occasionally challenged by the anti-“broken English” brigade’ (‘The Writer’ 144). This observation is borne out in, for example, King Short Shirt’s assessment of Queen Ivena as a calypsonian: ‘People like her, nothing

wrong with that. . . . Maybe her bad language or speaking may deter me a little bit too, but I don't find her no great singer' (Personal interview).

The preoccupation with recovery of West Indian personhood, as a crucial part of the anti-colonial project, accounts for the extant tendency to re-present literatures from the region as necessarily engaged with limning the region as an Afro-Caribbean space. 'Black'/Afro-Caribbean authors are typically interpellated as producers of the 'authentic' Caribbean voice. 'Black'/Afro-Caribbean folk/proletarian experiences are also limned as the 'authentic' subject with which worthwhile literary works from the region must preoccupy themselves. In this regard, Antiguan critic Tim Hector's response to Margaret G. Lockett's 2003 *Antigua Then* and his apprehension of West Indian literature via an ethno-class prism are instructive. Hector takes issue with Lockett's text on account of its 'white' heroine and 'black' caricatures. For him, it is a 'strange book' which is 'perhaps not even racist' but something that is, in his estimation, worse—'white' ('Antigua' n.pag). He envisions West Indian literature as being 'about the fishermen, the washerwomen, and the clerk in their morning at the office, and their struggle to be other than'. For him, the West Indian folk/peasantry 'commanded true artistic expression of themselves in West Indian literature' because they are the 'first class of persons to emerge in our territories, with a definite set of interests as a class. They were a new personality, the West Indian as creators' ('Why').

It is these Afrocentric criteria which account, in large part, for example, for the exclusion of texts such as Frieda Cassin's re-discovered 19th-century text, *With Silent Tread*, from both imaginings of the Antiguan tradition and the regional corpus. As O'Callaghan aptly observes, texts like Cassin's featuring 'the narratives of privileged white women' are viewed as marked by an 'implicitly colonialist vision' and 'have been considered irrelevant and thus ignored' by Caribbean critics preoccupied with 'redressing

the balance of centuries of colonial exploitation and racism, and with the promotion of the voice of the oppressed' ('Introduction' 6-7). In recent times, critics and writers alike have interrogated the conventional Afrocentric re-presentations of literatures from the region. Peter Hulme, for example, was moved in the 1990s to indict West Indian scholars for the earlier exclusion of Jean Rhys, a Creole, from the regional canon on the basis of her 'race'. His main target was Brathwaite's 1970's skepticism of Wally Look Lai's 'hopeful and optimistic' summation of Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*³⁷ (Brathwaite, *Contradictory Omens* 38). Similarly, Brinda Mehta's *Diasporic (Dis)locations* (2004) intervenes into the 'particular literary and cultural eclipsing of Indo-Caribbean women writers by their black counterparts'(1). Likewise, writers such as Jamaica Kincaid and Marie-Elena John have also intervened to give an account of the long mis-treated and neglected Carib experience, in novels such as *T.A.O.M.M* (1996) and *Unburnable* (2006), respectively.

The calypso tradition also exhibits the tendency to interpellate the Afro-Caribbean artist and/or 'black'/Afro-Caribbean proletarian concerns as the 'authentic' Caribbean voice and subject. Guilbault provides an apt description of the Trinidad tradition as designated as an Afro-Trinidadian space with singers of other ethnic backgrounds such as Chinese-Trinidadian singers Rex West and Dr. Soca often executing the 'role of the joker' performing what Warner calls the anti-calypso, that is, the off-beat calypso with 'lyrics barely intelligible . . . no recognizable melody . . . no noticeable rhythm of movement' (Guilbault, *Governing* 53; Warner, *Kaiso!* 120). Guilbault also notes that Creole-Trinidadians 'rarely appear on the calypso stage' since 'they have often been looked upon with suspicion, in tandem with their middle-class socioeconomic background' (*Governing* 53).

³⁷. The subsequent debate, which unfolded within the pages of *Wasafiri*, grew to involve Brathwaite, Hulme, O'Callaghan, and Elaine Savory with Brathwaite labelling Rhys as 'the Helen of Our Wars'.

Similarly, in the Antiguan case, the calypso art form is defined as a working-class Afro-Antiguan space and the expectation is that calypsonians preoccupy themselves with proletarian Afro-Antiguan concerns. Like the Trinidadian tradition, the Antiguan has also had its anti-calypsonian ‘outsiders’ in the form of the Indian female calypsonian, Si Kamala, and the ‘white’ female Canadian calypsonian, Calypso Val. In 2000, the latter, after years of struggling in the calypso arena, eventually earned one of the top three spots in the annual female calypso competition. Instructively, what was considered her stronger calypso in the 2000 competition was a song entitled ‘Our Destiny’ that protested American neo-colonialism as experienced by Caribbean states and peoples.

Equally as instructive is the response an Afro-Antiguan calypsonian and calypso monarch, King Zachari, aroused in 2012 with ‘A Place Called Freedom’—a tribute song to former South African President Nelson Mandela. Many calypso fans believed that Zachari’s offering was neither topical nor amply connected to current local ‘black’ disenchantment with living conditions on the island. That is, many felt that the calypsonian was not sufficiently preoccupied with the appropriate ‘black’ concern. Public sentiment regarding Zachari’s calypso was summed up in King De Bear’s 2012 ‘Freedom for Mandela Again’. On the night of the calypso finals, as a prelude to his performance of this song, King De Bear scolded an offstage King Zachari: ‘Zachari! You mean fuh (to) tell me, so much tings ah happen inna Antigua and you come here go talk ‘bout “freedom for Mandela”?’ (Government of Antigua and Barbuda, ‘De Bear’) Within the calypso, he advises King Zachari: ‘I am black conscious and I love Africa / But Mandela done get he freedom... / Oh Lord, Zachari, do Antigua ah big favour / Ask Mandela to come help free Antigua!’ (See page 323)

Critics such as Rosenberg map the preoccupation with the Afro-Caribbean proletarian experience back to ‘Lamming’s dated definition of the West Indian novel as

the peasant novel'. According to her, this definition 'achieved dominance in the Caribbean literary academy in the early 1970s and has proved surprisingly resilient' (4). For her part, Edmondson argues that earlier Caribbean intellectuals' view that 'black Caribbean culture constitutes the basis of an indigenous literary tradition' was driven by a particular anxiety in the discourse on 'race' and authenticity (59). According to her,

Indeed, much of what has now become West Indian canonical literature has been concerned specifically with this return to the 'real' Caribbean; that is, the African-based culture of the uneducated (meaning not formally educated), often rural, folk or peasant societies of the region. (59-60)

I argue that this is in keeping with what Gellner describes as a feature of nationalism, that is, that it 'usually conquers in the name of a putative folk culture' (*Nations and Nationalism* 56). In the case of the apprehension of literatures from the region, non-'black', and particularly 'white' narratives, as Hector puts it, such as Lockett's or Cassin's, are not representative of what, to invoke Smith, is considered a 'useable ethnic past' (*The Antiquity of Nations* 227).

Connected to the narrative that re-presents West Indian literature as necessarily adhering to a particular ethno-class experience is the typical reading of the literatures as constituting an Afro-Caribbean male space. The latter tendency persists even in the face of a literary gush of female voices in the 1980s, and the publication of a number of critical texts on Caribbean women's writing such as *Out of the Kumbla*, *Women Writing the West Indies*, and *Caribbean Women Writers* since then. The visibility of Antiguan narratives is, thus, at least quadruply reduced within typical maps of Caribbean literature. They are subsumed within the 'Caribbean' label and the interpellation of the Big Four as the Caribbean. The calypso narratives, though dominated by male voices, are largely neglected as belonging to an oral form. Then there are the narratives of female writers, like Jamaica Kincaid, that are treated collectively within a Caribbean female literary tradition.

Donnell rightly observes that male writers, such as Brathwaite, Naipaul and Walcott, have ‘retained distinct, individual identities’ whilst women writers, ‘although critically well attended to, tend to be designated as such, under a collective gendered identity’. According to her, the convention has been to approach the diverse regional tradition in one of three ways. First, by centring a few eminent male writers. Second, by proffering a generally chronological account of the tradition and affixing but a solitary chapter on female writers. Or third, via an examination of female Caribbean writings and locating them ‘within the paradigm of “black women’s writing”’ (*Twentieth-Century* 4).

I agree with Torres-Saillant’s assertion that this is an effect of the dominant reading of Caribbean experience as ‘a sequence of actions performed by men’ (72). He persuasively argues that Caribbean thinkers, in giving shape to a discourse of ‘Antillean liberation and cultural emancipation around Caliban’s self-assertiveness tend to uphold ‘one tradition of oppression, that which excludes women from the realm of constructive action’ (70). Edmondson concurs, observing that ‘West Indianness’ was created out of ‘not-Englishness’ in both geographical and social terms. According to her, since the ‘taming’ of the Caribbean had been identified in European discourse as a masculine enterprise, the return to the ‘real’ was in turn conceptualised as a ‘competing masculine enterprise’ by indigenous scholars (60).

In light of the above, it is telling that West Indian writer and critic, David Dabydeen, names no female Caribbean writer in his list of Caribbean writers who have earned his respect and fear (‘West Indian Writers in Britain’ 63). Just as revealing is Kincaid’s recollection that Derek Walcott, in an attempt to acquaint her with literatures from the region, proffered a list of names that did not include any female writers. According to her: ‘There were no women on the list but I didn’t object to that because I didn’t know I should object to that’ (Kincaid, ‘Re: Question 5’).

Moreover, with regards to the Afro-Caribbean male dominated space of the calypso, top Antiguan calypsonian King Obstinate's response as to whether or not the female calypsonians were 'taking over' the art form corroborates the bad-minded perception of that literary space as an Afro-Antiguan male space. He bemoans male calypsonians, having allowed 'their thing' to 'get away from them' ('Calypso Profile' 53). Similarly, the language and implications of King Swallow's account of attitudes such as King Obstinate's reveal the ethno-androcentrism marking critical readings of literary expressions—'there was a time when we believed that calypsos was only for the *men* but since a few ladies breakthrough in Trinidad, then we picked up here and the *girls* came through too' (Personal interview, emphasis added).

Finally, the tendency to identify the 1950s as the point of emergence for literatures from the region obviously has clear implications for the apprehension and [non]/positioning of Cassin's 19th century text as well as other Antiguan narratives published before the 1950s. Pacquet notes that it is commonplace to identify this decade as the one in which West Indian literature 'emerged as a recognizable entity' ('The Fifties' 51). Indeed, critics like King often associate the 1950s with an 'outburst of good writing' and the 'take-off' of West Indian literature (*West Indian Literature*, 1995 3). Interestingly, in the first edition of his influential *West Indian Literature*, King in fact acknowledges that 'West Indian creative writing has existed from the eighteenth century onwards'. However, he asserts that 'it was not until the first quarter of the present century that authors of real ability began to appear' (1).

Donnell offers three astute observations regarding the conventional delineation of the 1950s as the genesis of West Indian literature. She observes that pre-1950 writing and criticism are not accorded the same level of respect because, unlike the writings of the 1950s onward, they did not place a like stress on grounding 'a new connection between

the Caribbean writer and his or her place, voice and audience'. She also argues that there were rather few cases of significant connection, during the pre-1950s period of great regional unrest, 'between the intellectual/artistic responses to mass displays of public discontent and frustration'. Moreover, she spotlights the influence the groundwork of critics of the 1960s and 70s had on the first significant forays into canon formation/literary criticism. According to her, these initial attempts at giving shape to a West Indian canon and engaging with regional literary criticism took their cues from the delineation/ prescriptions of/for regional cultural production as established by aforementioned critics (*Twentieth-Century* 14-15).

Donnell's observations regarding typical perception of the pre-1950 writers and critics are corroborated by the value judgements Caribbean critics such as Anthony Boxill levies, for example, against writings in the 18th-to early-20th-century West Indies. For Boxill, a major shortfall of writers and poets during this period is that their competence at describing the Caribbean landscape did not coincide with a connection to the West Indian experience and the masses. According to him, they were unable to view life with 'West Indian eyes, experienced West Indians though they were' and so tried to 'force the West Indian experience into the poetic diction and into the rhythms of English verse'. Boxill's assertion reflects the previously discussed proclivity to re-present West Indian literature as necessarily preoccupied with limning the Caribbean in line with a specific ethno-class gaze. This is made clear by his exemption of 19th century Guyanese poetry from charges of being disconnected from 'the West Indian experience'. Of this group, he notes that many were 'black' and therefore 'understood better what it meant to be enslaved and oppressed' (29).

In recent times, there have been interventionist accounts that interrogate the bad-minded neglect of pre-1950s texts. According to Breiner, recent developments in tracing

West Indian literary history have engendered growing interest in recuperating ‘neglected and endangered texts’. He notes that this accounts for the rediscovery of Mary Prince and others (85). Indeed, Ramchand, as early as 1970, named *Beckra’s Buckra Baby* (1903) by Jamaican Tom Redcam as the earliest West Indian novel. In 1997, Cudjoe registered a similar case for Trinidadian Michel Maxwell’s *Emanuel Appadocca* (1854). O’Callaghan too, instrumental in reviving Cassin’s text, has been a fervent campaigner against the neglect of 19th-century female writings.

In the Antigua case, as recently as 2012, *The Antigua and Barbuda Review of Books* argued for an Antiguan poetry tradition with 18th century roots. It highlights the existence of 18th and 19th century poetry of settler Antiguan as well as poetry about Antigua that re-presented anti-slavery elements of plantation Antigua. It also references the earliest non-European Antiguan poets; all were female and all migrated to Europe with some being returned to Antigua after their legal status was contested by English law. The *Review*’s intervention mirrors that of Moira Ferguson, who has engaged with pioneering work on the 19th-century literary endeavours of Antiguan-born sisters Elizabeth Hart Thwaites and Anne Hart Gilbert³⁸. According to Ferguson, the corpus of work between the two sisters ‘tackled a wide range of genres from biography and religious history to poetry and letters’ with some work doubling as ‘political manifestos and antislavery polemics’ (*The Hart Sisters* 1).

Added to the above are other interventionist accounts that interrogate the various aspects of the bad-mindedness inherent in the classifications of literatures from the region. Chin Timothy, Thomas Glave, and others, for example, interrogate the traditional silence in the Caribbean on gay and lesbian sexuality and argue for ‘a critical practice that goes beyond simple dichotomies- us/them, native/foreign, natural/unnatural’ (Chin 94).

³⁸. She engages with this query as editor of the anthologies *The Hart Sisters* (1993) and *Nine Black Women* (1998).

Nadia Ellis notes that critics have amplified the ‘regional remit of the “Caribbean”’. According to her, critics now, ‘think about the obfuscations of nationalism, and use sexuality, and increasingly queer sexuality, as a way to understand the process of instantiating, maintaining and transforming West Indian nations’. She notes that queries of the ‘nation’, in and of itself, have preoccupied recent work critiquing Caribbean literature (136).

What such queries of the praxes of bad-mindedness inherent in the taxonomies of ‘Caribbean literature’ reveal is the instability of and biases embedded within proposed unilinear historical maps of Caribbean literary history/ tradition. Certainly, the disparities between the ‘small place’s’ and the Big Four or metropolitan centres’ access to cultural capital demands, as I will next explore, reconsideration of the notion of a single authoritative Caribbean canon. I contend that both unilinear historical maps and an insistence upon a single authoritative Caribbean canon—accounting for all genres or organised according to genre—fail to accommodate, to adapt Bloom, the multi-way *misreadings* of ‘Caribbeanness’/ ‘Antiguanness’ influencing canon formation, and as influenced by the praxes of bad-mindedness outlined thus far.

III. Jamaica Kincaid and Antiguan Narratives

I broaden my critique of the obscuration of Antiguan narratives to interrogate, from a slightly different angle, the notion of single coherent Caribbean canons as encouraged, for example, by critical/fiction anthologies such as those identified in the previous section. I agree with Michiel van Kempen’s persuasive argument that reliance upon a singular canon to account for the literary products of multicultural societies ‘reduces the picture too strongly’ (264). I suggest that the nature/character of the material conditions guiding apprehensions of literary traditions in Antigua differs from that guiding readings as established by scholarly sites of authority in the *Big Four*, North America, and Europe. I

postulate that the Caribbean canon(s) consecrated by these sites in the latter three does not correlate to the canon(s) consecrated by both local cultural/literary institutions and Antiguan audiences.

In the global field of cultural production, it is undoubtedly the canon produced by influential regional and international literary/cultural apparatuses that enjoys treatment as the authoritative version. Similarly, it is also the solitary artist, as in the case of Jamaica Kincaid, produced by these same apparatuses, who is apprehended as the ‘strong’ artist from Antigua. What this translates to is the obscuration of canons as produced by local Antiguan institutions and audiences within the local field of cultural production. It also foregrounds the hegemony enjoyed by the global cultural centres as privileged sites with the authority to define the writer.

Importantly, canons consecrated within Antigua by local institutions and audiences tend, for the most part, to adhere to what Kempen calls an ‘oral canon... a common understanding within a postcolonial community of what is important in literature’ (Kempen 264). These local canons, the shape of which may change very abruptly, particularly in the case of the calypso, are informed by ‘an understanding of literary importance that is passed on from generation to generation’, and are heavily influenced by the value judgements of local [state] institutions and proletarian Antiguan audiences (Kempen 264). It is also important to remember that calypsos are mainly produced for and circulated within the local market—a peripheral market as compared to the North American/European market. To neglect this is to ignore the differentiated nature of material conditions of production, dissemination, and interpretation and the overall differentiated operation of the cultural field of production of the periphery versus that of the centre. Such neglect in turn displaces the immense differences and inequalities

present in the distribution of/access to global cultural capital between the ‘big places’ at the regional and international centres and ‘small places’ like Antigua at the periphery.

My discussion of these immense differences and inequalities engages with case studies of several Antiguan artists alongside Jamaica Kincaid to account for the latter looming large as the premier artist from Antigua within the regional canon. I examine the role exile from Antigua has played and continues to play in Kincaid’s success. I juxtapose this with the role the bad-mindedness inherent to Antigua’s peripheral status in the global field of cultural production plays in the career of artists operating within/from the local field of production. I also explore the peculiar ways in which the material conditions constituting Antigua’s cultural field of production lend shape to local/national apprehensions of a local or national canon(s). My underlying contention is that the bad-mindedness inherent to both the local and global fields of cultural production is at odds with unilinear historical accounts of Caribbean canons.

Antiguan artists, like other West Indian artists and intellectuals in general, have not been reticent in elaborating the bad-mindedness inherent in the modest material conditions of ‘home’ that function to delimit or check their ambitions as related to their definition as artists and the development of their craft. Those who attempt to hone their craft while based at home are keenly aware of the disadvantages of, as Joanne Hillhouse puts it, ‘being off the map’. Hillhouse demonstrates a keen awareness of an existing tradition of dependency in which the writer from the ‘small place’ is made to rely upon the global cultural centres for definition and success as a writer. For her, being off the map’, that is, residing as a ‘Caribbean writer . . . so far from the world where books are made’, is at the root of the bad-mindedness that hinders ‘the Claiming, capital C. I am a Writer, capital W’ (‘Writing’).

Hillhouse unhesitatingly establishes her location ‘off the map’ as marked by severely restricted access to the kind of literary/cultural infrastructure present in places better situated on the literary map. She acknowledges the hostility of her 108-square-mile country, which provides little or no grooming opportunities for those interested in the literary arts. There are, for example, no writers’ workshops or retreats and no resident, mature writing community—common trappings of a literary society. She also laments the peripheral status of Antigua and the region that denies writers a well-developed local publishing infrastructure and presents immense difficulties in accessing or holding the interest of publishers and agents located so far away in ‘the vast land of publishing’ outside of Antigua (‘Writing’ n.pag).

Hillhouse’s outline of her woes as a writer from Antigua and dependency on the West for definition is in line with complaints of the bad-mindedness of the ‘small place’ as have been issued by other Antiguan and West Indian writers, including Jamaica Kincaid. Dennis and Khan note that, for now-established writers, ‘there was no place to be other than in the West. There they would find publishers, the critics, the readers and the global markets’ (2). Low corroborates this, noting that the careers of many now canonical postcolonial Anglophone Caribbean (as well as West African) writers were established with texts published in London in the 1950s and 60s (xiii). Indeed, Derek Walcott, who has been repeatedly credited as a canonical writer ‘who stayed at “home”’, has in fact split his time between the Caribbean and the US. Brouillette capably argues that it is Walcott’s consecration in the US that allowed for his canonical status in the Caribbean and internationally (32). Certainly, Walcott himself speaks of his dependency on America as a ‘professional writer’ (‘The Caribbean’ 257).

Importantly, Antiguan writers’ lament regarding the limitations home places on them and their craft is accompanied by a wariness of the global centres’ hegemony as

privileged sites of authority in defining the writer. On one hand, Sandra Pacquet constructs the US, for example, as ‘a site of dissemination’ that occupies ‘the enviable position of mediating Caribbean literary and cultural production to the Caribbean region, to the United States and to the world’ (‘Borders’ 106). On the other, Hillhouse laments the bad-minded value judgements the publishing world of the West levies against the Antiguan and Caribbean writer. She opines that the global marketplace appears ‘intent on keeping the wider audience (...on the prowl for new material)’ out of her reach with its definitions of ‘Caribbeanness’, delimiting labels, and its interpellation of writers from the region as a homogenous group. She elaborates: ‘we write sci-fi and romance and romantic histories and comedies and dramas and thrillers...readers in these genres might find us interesting, if they knew we existed’ (‘Writing’).

Marie-Elena John similarly elaborates her sense of the rigidity of interpellations of the ‘Caribbean writer’ issued by the global publishing centres. She reveals that her original intent with *Unburnable* was to produce ‘something Afro-American oriented’. Having spent twenty years in an ‘Afro-American context’, she considered herself more culturally connected to the latter than to a Caribbean context. Her editors thought otherwise:

I would have not said I was a Caribbean writer before I went through the editing process. I went through the editing process and was soundly told and understood it. I see that that is really kind of where my authentic voice is and so yes, I see myself as a Caribbean writer and, I identify very strongly to being Antiguan. (Personal interview)

Instructively, although John allows that her writing portrays ‘a different type of confidence’ when exploring Caribbean as opposed to Afro-American experiences, she also suggests that her Afro-American editors might not have been very appreciative of her outsider’s depiction/grasp of African American ‘reality’ (Personal interview).

For her part, Kincaid, resident in the US since the 1960s, highlights the importance of the role that the publishing world outside of Antigua has played in her career. She is certain that a writing career would have been difficult, if not impossible, had she remained in Antigua. Her published sentiments on this topic typically pinpoint Antiguan culture as hostile to the writer. The writer is a body that is out of line with the performances prescribed for the Antiguan; a body that draws scorn and laughter ('Interview with Allan Vorda' 59). In an interview published in 1991, she laments of Antigua and the region: 'we don't come from a culture that values us, and we don't know what else to do with ourselves' ('From Antigua' 143). Paquet validates this opinion noting that earlier, in the 1950s, the restrictions at 'home' led 'many artists to seek a more receptive environment abroad, and to win the support of an international audience until such a time as an appreciative West Indian response could be realized' ('The Fifties' 51). Cobham offers a similar corroboration noting that 'few writers could have survived in the islands where writing was seen as an indulgence for the rich or mentally ill' (19).

Marie-Elena John details the bad-mindedness inherent to Antigua in a broader way. She admits that even prior to harbouring any thoughts of becoming a writer, she felt confined by the tininess of the island. She recalls:

When I left Antigua, I felt like I would never come back. ... I went and within a couple of weeks, I felt like I had been missing the whole picture. Like Antigua was this tiny place that I didn't realise I wasn't able to be the person that I felt that I was now, now that I was in this enormous, anonymous environment. (Personal interview)

Hillhouse, who has had a longer career attempting a living as a writer, views the confinement of the small place in a more specific way. She acknowledges: 'Living here is hard; being a working writer in Antigua is hard... financially hard, creatively hard... it would probably make more sense to move'. However, she admits her hesitancy to migrate. She proffers several explanations for this which include her unwillingness to

‘start over somewhere else’, an indifference to chasing ‘the American dream’, and a reluctance ‘to be a sufferer in somebody else’s country’. Importantly, her view of the ideal compromise—to do ‘stints, even extensive stints, elsewhere . . . and still take care of obligations at home’—highlights the antithetic figure/ anomaly the successful resident writer is to the Antiguan landscape (‘Closing’).

Also, the differences between Hillhouse’s and Kincaid’s perceptions of and/or experiences with publication houses reveal much about the disadvantages of being located in a confining small space ‘off the map’. On one hand, Kincaid’s employment at *The New Yorker* and her short stories enjoyed the readership of this esteemed publication, which she was able to use as a conduit to other publishers. She relates ignoring requests from publishing houses and successfully waiting for the notice of the publishing house of her choice, the celebrated FSG (‘Re: Question 1’). Her now long-standing relationship with FSG, a literary imprint that Squires would describe as being influential in defining the literary versus popular fiction, signals to audiences and critics in the global literary marketplace her worthiness as a canonical writer (1-2). It also places her texts in, to borrow a phrase from Foucault, a ‘system of references’ to other FSG texts, among which are Pulitzer and Nobel Prize winners (25).

On the other hand, Hillhouse relates writing stories and the frustrating process of ‘getting a publisher to read and get excited’. She bemoans: ‘It would be nice to be courted, but that hasn’t been my lot’. For Hillhouse, who has had a publisher, Macmillan, ‘losing faith’ in two of her books, her ambition is restricted to a publication house that will allow her a ‘fair deal’ or a ‘better than fair deal’ that allows her ‘the freedom to just write for a while’ (‘Closing’).

By way of another example, when *The New Yorker* rejected *A Small Place* for being ‘too angry’, Kincaid was able to access the support of the former editor of the

magazine, William Shawn, who recommended the text to Roger Strauss of FSG, which led to her essay being published as a book ('Re: Question 6'). For her part, Hillhouse acknowledges having received assistance from African-American writers Christine Lincoln and Eric Jerome Dickey, as well as Canadian-resident and Antiguan-born author Althea Prince. However, their assistance, as far as they appeared able to afford it, came in the form of recommending agents/literary fellowships, and re-reading her manuscripts. Thousands of miles away from the centres of the literary world, Hillhouse ponders: 'It's quite possible that I'm doing it all wrong...I mean it shouldn't be this hard right?' ('Closing My Eyes'). Importantly, whilst she recognises that her struggles are possibly representative of 'any writer's yoke', she is convinced that they are hers and other Caribbean writers' 'a little more so for being off the map' ('Writing').

Antiguan calypsonians are not exempt from the anxiety occasioned by the bad-mindedness inherent in the humble material conditions of a field of production located 'off the map'. Unlike their counterparts in the written tradition, calypsonians in Antigua and around the region, particularly in the smaller territories, must contend with the mostly seasonal nature of the art form. O'Marde refers to this as the 'carnival-calypso complex'. He aptly describes the art form as having become 'dependent on carnival for its live-audience exposure and its most significant pay-day' (*Nobody* 34). Certainly, added to its location as an oral form, it is the calypso's seasonal character that accounts for it being viewed, particularly in the past, as unworthy of academic attention. Warner, writing in the early 1980s, notes that implicit in the reaction to news that he was writing a calypso monograph was the sentiment that there was 'little to write about these popular ditties or about their composers, those happy-go-lucky characters who surface once a year during the calypso season' (*Kaiso!* 5).

It is instructive that King Young Destroyer's complaint about the seasonal nature of the art form in Antigua echoes Kincaid and others regarding the complicity of the 'small place' in marginalizing its artists³⁹. For him, the plan is to 'hit the road as a calypsonian' and his ultimate ambition is to 'have shows all over the world'. However, he laments the limitations the nature of the art form in Antigua places on its producers:

In Antigua, after carnival, calypsonians go back home. I'm not planning to go back home to a regular nine-to-five job from this point on. I'm planning to market myself so people can know who is this 2006 King of the World [sic]. (Qtd. in Nero)

Furthermore, he elaborates the bad-mindedness that the annual Antiguan calypso monarch competition levies against calypsonians who do not emerge victorious. He bemoans: 'I have been a finalist...for the past six years. But I've never won the title. They wouldn't give me my just due'. Very importantly, he points to the influence calypso titles won outside of Antigua, particularly in the larger Trinidad, can have on an Antiguan calypsonian's positioning within the local canon back home: 'I always thought I would come out and win something and maybe from there on, they would recognise my talent' (qtd. in Nero).

King Swallow too acknowledges the shadow the Trinidad tradition casts over the Antiguan calypsonian. He suggests that Trinidad's positioning as the 'mecca' of calypso accounts for many contemporary Antiguan calypsonians' reliance on Trinidadian writers. According to him, 'they believe they'd be stronger and they believe to sing a song from Trinidad is the best way'. For his part, it was the totality of the Trinidadian calypso infrastructure—arrangers, recording studios, available gigs within and outside of Trinidad, and the like—that facilitated/mediated his exposure to a regional and diasporic

³⁹. The calypsonian's statements were issued during an interview with the *Trinidad Guardian* after his 2006 CARIFESTA win in Trinidad.

audience outside of the local annual carnival season and many times the size of that in his native Antigua (Personal interview).

Certainly, the audience resident in Trinidad alone represents a much larger market than Antigua's. King Swallow speaks with pride of Trinidadians accepting him 'very much as a Trinidadian' to the point of co-opting him for Trinidad: 'I have heard persons, with my own ears, saying, 'I grow up with Swallow, man!'' He also addresses the utility of the Trinidadian recording studios to the Antiguan calypsonians: 'We usually go to Trinidad because Trinidad had the better, even until now, they have the better equipment and studios and so on. We don't have a proper studio here'. He also points to other material conditions beyond the studios: 'And you have more professional musician, more professional arrangers. So, it was just a stone's throw—you get a ticket and you go down to Trinidad' (Personal interview).

King Short Shirt too, who has also spent time on the Trinidadian calypso circuit, though he is adamant that the calypsonian from the smaller territories could 'take off' without being 'on the stage in Trinidad', at the same time admits to a dependency on outside infrastructure. He acknowledges the significant role Trinidadian arrangers Art DeCoteau and Leston Paul, as well as Vincentian Frankie McIntosh, played in his career. In addition, King Short Shirt admits to travelling to New York, 'ninety-nine per cent of the time', to record his calypsos. He outlines a clear hierarchy between the level of the calypso infrastructure available on the small-island and that available outside. He acknowledges, 'The guys here are trying their best They recording the local guys and so on, which is good'. For him however, the more seasoned calypsonian requires more: 'You just don't want to do something unless you're gonna get that quality that you deserve. . . .so I would go outside and it costs you more, but you get a better job' (Personal interview).

Another important aspect of the bad-mindedness inherent in the local field of cultural production is the value judgments of local cultural institutions and audiences and their differentiated effects on the career of the artist residing at home versus that of the artist stationed abroad. For their parts, artists in the written tradition have to contend with not only a small readership but also with the prevailing association of their product with ‘high culture’. The already small population of Antigua is constricted even further by a local phenomenon summed up in a local saying—‘Antigua ah nah wan reading public’⁴⁰. Local writers not only have to contend with the longstanding delineation of Antigua and Antiguan as indifferent to written literary works but they also have to battle within the already limited local market with the latest American popular fiction bestseller.

By way of example, Hillhouse recalls a friend admitting surprise at how enjoyable a read her *Dancing Nude* proved to be, and comparing it to the work of American popular culture writers like Danielle Steele or Sidney Sheldon. She observes,

what I extrapolate from that is that some people, when they hear Caribbean novel, they have a certain fixed idea and based on that idea wouldn’t give it a chance (you know, this is something you study in universities, not something you read for fun. . . . (‘Re: Quick’ 2010)

Marie-Elena John corroborates the notion of such a dichotomy existing in the minds of local readers with reference to her own treatment of Antiguan and Caribbean literary works: ‘there was no sense of, let me seek out Caribbean writers, let me read Jamaica Kincaid. . . . It was popular books. . . . And then, little by little, now, as time opened up, I started reading more literary books’ (Personal interview).

The common delineation of written works as ‘high culture’ has resulted in an intriguing dichotomy between local apprehensions of the calypso and written literature. The nationalisation of calypso—complete with annual calypso competitions and the

⁴⁰. This is the Creole English version of the now popular reported assertion by the late former Prime Minister V. C. Bird that ‘Antigua is not a reading public’.

selection of kings and queens—has engendered a bias in favour of the calypso tradition with regards to local canon formation and local apprehension of local canons.

This may be regarded as another aspect of the bad-mindedness that the material conditions of the local field of cultural production levies against the practitioners in the written tradition. It is certainly evidence that the ‘small place’ is not without agency in canon formation processes. There is a clear dichotomy between the regional and global cultural/scholarly centres’ privileging of the written tradition over the oral and local Antiguan marginalisation of the written in favour of the oral. I argue that this dichotomy is forged, on the Antiguan end, in large part, by the traditional roles the calypsonian as ‘the voice of the people’ and the calypso as ‘the people’s newspaper’ perform in Antiguan society⁴¹. The calypsonian is a familiar, traditional, and visible figure in the Antiguan landscape; the same cannot be said for the fiction writer.

Hillhouse attests to the existence of the dichotomy described above. She notes that for many outside of Antigua, Kincaid is ‘the beginning and end of literary Antigua and that Antigua’s oral literature typically suffers from a lack of critical attention, even within the region. Interestingly, she traces the calypso tradition as a pedagogic tool for artists in the written tradition:

I realize that in retrospect that that music helped to inform what I understood the role of a writer to be in rendering the world of its characters authentically and in [an] authentically Antiguan way. (‘Closing’)

Relating her own experiences, she recollects that before becoming aware of Kincaid, it was the calypsos of artists such as King Short Shirt and Shelly Tobitt that taught her ‘by osmosis something of the Antiguan literary canon’ (‘Closing’). Her experience is not dissimilar to that of thousands of Antiguans who not only grew up listening to local calypsos but typically engage with the lyrics of particularly profound offerings as

⁴¹. I elaborate on these roles and the overall import of calypso as a tool of resistance in Chapter III.

expressions of home-grown philosophy that adequately describe local and human experiences/realities⁴².

Significantly, Hillhouse queries the typical privileging of the written tradition as occurs outside of Antigua: ‘So, yes, I think it exists, an Antiguan literary tradition but it doesn’t begin between the pages of a book nor with the obvious voices’. Even more importantly, she persuasively recuperates agency for the ‘small place’ by highlighting a calypso by Solo—‘We bigger than them’—noting that her longstanding understanding of the idea expressed in that calypso was that it communicated to the outside world ‘that they may not see us but we know we’re here and we’ve got something to say’ (‘Closing’).

Thus it is that Kincaid herself, looming large as she might in literary canons validated outside of Antigua, has long been relegated, by local value judgements, to the periphery of the local canons. The bad-mindedness attendant to her local [non]positioning is evidence of a mixture of the *affect of anxiety* and defensive action as engendered by what is viewed as the praxis of bad-mindedness in her accounts of Afro-Antiguan experience. Hillhouse’s anecdote of an acquaintance ‘innocently’ asking, ‘Is Jamaica Kincaid from here?’ is evidence of both the confusion her adopted forename engenders and of her obscurity within local canons (‘Reflections’). Many Antiguan, elites and proletarians alike, refuse to read Kincaid given her tendency to, as they see it, smear, from afar, both her family and the country’s reputation. In fact, some are quick to point to her mother’s Dominican origins in an effort to deny her Antiguan citizenship and exclude her from imaginings of the Afro-Antiguan experience and literary traditions. Her *A Small Place* was in fact banned in Antigua for a lengthy period by the then Bird-led Government.

⁴². This is evident in the tendency of many Antiguan to cite calypsos to bolster or end an argument or sum up both every day and peculiar situations/happenings.

Marie-Elena John, recalling the earlier reception of Kincaid's texts in Antigua, notes that many felt that the author had 'put shame in her mother's eye': 'It was seen as more than disrespectful. It wasn't really about respect. It was more being capitalising—making money in a way that would shame your family' (Personal interview). Hillhouse too speaks of encountering Antiguan, some who 'plainly denounce' Kincaid and 'question her motives, even the truth of her experiences' and 'others who are conflicted-wondering why she can't just let go of the past' ('Reflections'). Instructively, Hillhouse expresses her own desire to 'avoid self-censorship', noting it to be 'another of those challenges for writers writing from a small place—just ask Kincaid' ('Writing'). For John, self-censorship is necessary though she observes that it is authors like Kincaid whose writing 'ends up being the strongest and the purest . . . because they have no boundaries and no self-censorship' (Personal interview).

Kincaid herself is aware of the prevailing negative tone of the value judgments that Antiguan have levied against her texts. She acknowledges the bad-mindedness Antiguan saw at work in *A Small Place*: 'Everybody in Antigua, including my own mother, denounced the book. People said to me, to my face, 'it's true but did you have to say it?'. She also admits to desperately wanting the validation of Antiguan. Addressing the national award given to her by the government in 2006, she shares her belief that this gesture was but to 'counterbalance' the ALP's recommendation of American investor Allen Stanford for a knighthood. She had, at the time, been highly critical of Stanford's knighthood. But she observes: 'I didn't know that at the time but I am always so eager to be liked by Antiguan that I accepted the honour without thinking about it'. She admits: 'I despise Knighthoods [*sic*] and all that kind of shit but I thought it was so nice that Antiguan wanted to say something kind about me and them' ('Re: Question 6').

The antagonistic or anxiety-ridden relationship between Kincaid and Antigua, whilst injurious to her local reputation and positioning in local canons, has, undoubtedly, aided her success in the literary world outside of Antigua. This is hinted at in her recall of the writer-mentor relationship she shared with then editor of *The New Yorker*, William Shawn. She reveals having written the essay that would later become *A Small Place* ‘as a letter’ to Shawn ‘to explain’ herself to him. She recollects: ‘he was a person worthy of making the attempt to . . . tell him the secret of my world. In my case, it was the secret of the world as I knew it’. She also recalls his excitement upon reading the essay and him comparing it ‘to some pretty important things *The New Yorker* had published before’ (‘Re: Question 6’).

Kincaid’s referencing of *A Small Place* as ‘the secret of the world’ as she knew it brings to mind Huggan’s concept of the ‘postcolonial exotic’, that is, ‘the global commodification of cultural difference’ (vii). It also reminds us of Brouillette’s observation of the way in which the angst between home and self can itself become a commodity in the global literary marketplace⁴³. For Brouillette, the postcolonial writer ‘has emerged as a profoundly complicit and compromised figure’ (2). She argues that the authority of the writer ‘rests, however uncomfortably, in the nature of his connection to the specificity of a given political location’ (2-3). Using Walcott as an example, she insists that his angst ‘is central’ to his oeuvre, noting that ‘its being so has been a path to the poet’s success rather than a detriment to it’ (43).

For Kincaid, the elements that Genette identify as ‘factual paratext’ and ‘peritexts’ function as ‘a sales-tag in the context of today’s globalised commodity culture’ (7, 5; Huggan ix). The factual paratext—knowledge that the various angsts explored in her

⁴³. Whilst I find Huggan’s argument as outlined in *The Post-Colonial Exotic* useful, like Brouillette, I disagree with any suggestion that it offers a full account for the dissemination and reception of postcolonial literature in the West. See Brouillette, 19-24.

texts are either autobiographical or heavily reliant upon autobiographical details —along with the accompanying peritext —titles, such as *My Brother* or cover photos of family members or Antiguan scenes—function to corroborate the authenticity of her voice as writer from the margins. Leigh aptly describes Kincaid as a ‘serial autobiographer’ who returns in each text to attend to a ‘body’ that ‘requires further attention—be it ‘her own, her mother’s, Antigua’s, the body of childhood’ (97).

Certainly, the licence that Kincaid exercises with her depictions of Antiguan experiences and her various peculiar enunciations of angst-ridden Afro-Antiguan identities play a large role in, to adapt Bourdieu, enunciating her difference as a producer within the global literary marketplace. This has proven particularly useful in ‘creating a new position beyond the positions presently occupied’ in Caribbean canons (Bourdieu 106). That this is the intent of her publishers is made obvious when one examines, for instance, the back cover of the 2000 paperback edition of *A Small Place*. We are told that the text ‘magnifies our vision of one small place’ and that the essay ‘candidly appraises the ten-by-twelve-mile island’ where Kincaid grew up. These statements are further validated by blurbs of praise from renowned postcolonial writers Salman Rushdie and Caryl Phillips, the latter of whom asserts: ‘Kincaid is a witness to what is happening in our West Indian back yards. And I trust her’.

The positioning of Kincaid as a ‘witness’ brings to mind Brouillette’s observation that within the global literary marketplace, postcolonial writers ‘become representatives of their purported societies, “cultures”, nationalities or subnationalities’ (70). I find particularly instructive John’s recollection of gaining recognition of exactly this during the process of editing *Unburnable*. She opines that the editors’ disapproval of her handling of the African-American experience was partly informed by the fact that she was an ‘outsider writing about internal things’. Tellingly, she notes of their approval of

her depiction of the Caribbean experience: ‘I was kind of allowed to write anything about the Caribbean. I had that licence. I could say it because that was who I was seen to be’ (Personal interview).

John’s experience signals both the peripherality of the region and the peculiar rules applying to the commodification of this peripherality. The peripheral status of the region within US and global context affords Caribbean writers greater licence to re-present the world(s) from which they originate as they perceive it/them with reduced chances of penalisation by the global marketplace for any ‘inaccuracies’ or unfavourable re-presentations. As natives of peripheral worlds, they are accepted as authorities on Caribbean experiences and their statements are received as the ‘truth’. Challenges made by any or blocs of the small group of dedicated Caribbeanists at the centre or the periphery—as has been the case with Kincaid—are unlikely to be particularly damaging or career-ending. The same obviously would not attend attempts to re-present African-American, or any or any other experiences peculiar to the centre that do not share an equally peripheral status as the Caribbean. In such cases, the authenticity of such expressions is likely to be tested against the large corpus of existing work and the philosophies of an immensely larger group of academics/critics.

For their part, calypsonians in Antigua are not exempt from local value judgements and must contend with, *inter alia*, censorship as occurs within the machinery of the state-organised calypso competitions. Reports of calypsonians being eliminated from/ overlooked within competitions, denied gigs or refused airplay on government-owned media due to the political content of their songs are not unusual. The calypso tradition itself is marked by a significant number of calypsos exploring the theme of victimisation of the calypsonian by local politicians and the elites. King Short Shirt’s 1976 ‘Nobody Go Run Me’, for instance, catalogues threats to his personhood and

livelihood as a calypsonian that he endured as a result of daring to express political views countering those of the ruling party of the day and the island's elites.

The impact of the inherent bad-mindedness of the local calypso infrastructure, as informed by its relations with and location within the local economic and political fields, on the calypsonian's career is worth elaboration. The calypso tradition represents the site at which Antigua's agency in canon formation processes is most evident. The peculiarity of local canon formation processes articulate the different character of the material conditions of the periphery and the particular praxis of bad-mindedness operating within the smaller territory's cultural field of production. Also, the largely nationalised status of the art form and its explicit purpose of enunciating the nation make it a useful case study for analysing the prescribed role(s) of the artist in postcolonial nations and literature's role as signifier of national identity.

Unlike the foreign-based Kincaid, for example, local calypsonians are particularly vulnerable to financial and other fallouts of incurring the wrath of Antiguan politicians and/or disapproval of certain members of the Antiguan public. In the 'small place', where people's lives are immensely interconnected, disapprobation meant for an individual or small group is more than likely to translate to disapprobation for a much larger group. Also, the domination of the island by a single political party means that everyone, calypsonian and writers included, 'depends on the government for something, however small, so most are reluctant to offend it' (W. Arthur Lewis 220). That 'it' includes not just the formal government but also its supporters, and discrimination occurs within as well as outside of the public sector.

Ryan reminds that whilst the small size of territories may engender 'social cohesion and harmonious mediation of conflicting interests'. It also 'often serves to intensify individual and group rivalry which serves to fragment and paralyze a

community and its basic institutions'. This is because policy matters are viewed 'in terms of how they affect key personalities and primary relationships in the system' (76). He aptly describes this problem as being even more complicated where the 'commanding heights' of the private sector 'dominate the same community'. According to him, persons and groups develop a keen interest in having the parties they support retain office 'in perpetuity' whilst the political parties 'develop a corresponding interest in the monopolistic retention of office' (78).

Short Shirt elaborates all of the above in 'Nobody Go Run Me'. The calypso explores the haphazard nature of life in a place where amplified political divisions ruin friendships and political allegiances determine whether or not an individual's bid for recognition of personhood is acknowledged or denied. In it, Short Shirt reveals attempts made to ostracise him from his important fan base in the Point community, the village that has been the most vociferous in supporting him, as its calypsonian- the voice and champion of the urban ghetto. He also reveals that attempts were made by 'those high in society' to have him dismissed from the hotel gigs that provided him with employment as a calypsonian outside of the carnival season (see page 298).

Queen Ivena, for her part, is convinced that the current dwindling popularity of the calypso competitions is a direct result of the 'government itself . . . kind of undermining calypsonians and putting soca on a pedestal⁴⁴.' She asserts: 'The government they have a problem with you saying what you see' (Personal interview). She also reveals being requested by the 'authorities' to alter her attitude and the anti-government themes of particular songs: 'Well, authorities...let's just leave it there, they were telling me that I couldn't, I shouldn't do that' (Personal interview).

⁴⁴. The Soca Monarch competition, with its 'Groovy' and 'Jumpy' segments, feature 'party' songs whose contents are unlike the typically incendiary lyrics featured in the Calypso Monarch competition.

O'Marde also provides the example of King Progress who attempted to defend his 1984 crown with the 1985 'Message from the Throne', which was delivered as 'a stern socio-political commentary encoded in a supposed throne speech'. According to O'Marde, those 'who know calypso' felt Progress 'was one of the best defences of a crown they had seen for years'. Not only did the calypsonian not place in the competition's top three but he was ranked in ninth place. O'Marde asserts: 'Their decision had nothing to do with calypso performance. It was a public political spanking, a chastisement' (*Nobody* 163).

King Smarty Jr.'s career provides an excellent case study that foregrounds not only the peculiarity of calypso's canon formation processes but also the expectations of the calypsonian's role in the postcolonial small nation. During the early to mid-1990s, King Smarty Jr., who won the calypso crown on three consecutive occasions, earned a reputation for anti-government songs aimed at the then ruling ALP. A main theme of his 1990s calypsos was the ALP's collusion with foreign investors to depersonise the Afro-Antiguan and undermine the island's political sovereignty. The 1991 edition of the local magazine *Calypso Talk* echoed popular sentiments of the calypsonian's worth: 'he is talented, observant and has a unique style, one that separates him from others' and forecast that 'this artiste is going to be here for a while' (qtd. in O'Marde, *Nobody* 185).

However, popular assessment of King Smarty Jr.'s worth as a calypsonian changed abruptly in the late 1990s when, after losses in the calypso competition and migrating to North America, he returned to the calypso scene, in 1999 with the election calypso, 'Change of Heart'. 'Change of Heart' shocked his former supporters and, arguably, even ALP supporters who had not been too enthused about his normal fare in the past. In 'Change of Heart', the calypsonian not only positively catalogued the achievements of the ALP but also assured bewildered Antiguan audiences: 'On election

day, I'm voting Labour all the Way!' 2004 saw a repeat of this performance with King Smarty Jr. not only casting his support for the ALP but also attacking King Short Shirt, advising him that he should be 'thanking Labour, not trying to destroy' ('Give Credit').

O'Marde observations regarding King Smarty Jr.'s 1999 decision and his value judgment on the calypsonian's worth post-1999 are telling. They highlight the bad-mindedness that tends to be levied against the calypsonian who enacts a performance considered contradictory to the role of the calypsonian in post-colonial Antigua. He describes 'Change of Heart' as a 'hollow apology to the Lester Bird/ ALP' and is convinced that the calypso 'and the hypocrisy of its message dimmed his [King Smarty Jr.'s] legacy'. According to O'Marde, King Smarty Jr.'s later attempts in the calypso competition were 'rebuffed by the judges and a cold national response'. The popular sentiment was that 'Political money had reached to him' (*Nobody* 185-186).

Just as telling were the responses of local critics and disc jockeys to my inquiries into King Smarty Jr.'s whereabouts and copies of his calypsos. The responses were either largely dismissive or wistful; the clear implication was that Smarty Jr. had not only written himself out of the canon but that as a calypsonian—the purported 'voice of the people'—he had abandoned the necessary query of the government's performance of post-colonial nationalism and so no longer had anything worthy or credible to offer. Indeed, the consensus seemed to be that the calypsonian had written himself out of the Afro-Antiguan community. This latter charge, as my discussion in the final chapter of this thesis underscores, is one that has significant implications not only for a calypsonian's placement in the canon but also for his/her calypsonian's personhood as attached to the Afro-Antiguan nation.

Queen Ivena too has been forced to appreciate the fickle nature of canonisation processes as influenced by the value judgements of audience and authoritative figures in

local institutions. Like King Smarty Jr., she was initially celebrated for her query of the ALP's performance of post-colonial nationalism. In fact, in 2005, the new Prime Minister, Baldwin Spencer, of the UPP, consecrated her position in both the female and male calypso canons in his written message in the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission newsletter. He declared: 'Ivena's achievement is without precedent and without parallel. She has gone where no calypsonian, no performer, has gone before' (4). He also positioned her alongside Kincaid in Antiguan apprehension of an Antiguan female literary canon. He expressed confidence that Queen Ivena was 'richly deserving of national recognition' for consistently producing 'socio-political commentaries that rank with anything any other Antiguan woman, Jamaica Kincaid included, has produced'. (4)

Years later, Ivena now finds herself at odds with the ruling political party, the Ministry of Culture that oversees the local carnival and calypso competitions, and many of her former fans. She observes of UPP politicians, 'Well, every time you try to say something . . . the politicians don't want to hear about politics'. She also shares that the current Minister of Culture has recently been antagonistic towards her and reasons, 'he was for it when I used to sing about Labour [ALP], so I don't see the reason why I can't sing it about him now'. Moreover, Ivena blames her dwindling popularity on the kind of calypsos UPP politicians and proletarian party supporters expect from her: 'you [the calypsonian] must turn a blind eye to it, because Labour Party was doing it for 27 years... "Oh, turn a blind eye to it and give UPP a chance. Don't say anything". That is the feeling I get from the society right now' (Personal interview).

The local calypso canons tend to be peopled by calypsonians who have persisted in their defence of 'the people' and have been consistently vociferous in their disapprobation of local/foreign elites and their hegemonic performance of post-colonial

nationalism. This is hardly surprising given local consensus that the calypsonian is ‘the voice of the people’ and the unofficial opposition party. Richie Francis’s 2012 ‘Sacred Duty’ addresses the issue of the calypsonian’s power. It asserts calypso’s licence to: ‘bring politicians to dey knees / expose all dey lies and hypocrisies’. It gloats at local politicians / elites—‘we never need a licence for we mouth’, and admonishes those calypsonians who ‘for thirty pieces of silvers...selling out’ (see page 327).

I have provided examples of attempts made by those within the calypso machinery to ostracise calypsonians whose songs feature political views that are at odds with the ruling party in particular. It should however be noted that attempts to stifle the calypsonian and the various forms in which they appear at the time of the publication of the calypso — unofficial or official bans, denied airplay on local broadcasting stations or denied gigs inside and outside of the carnival season, losses in the state-organised competitions and the like—do not necessarily translate to obscurity in the local canons. Rather, there are at least two alternative routes via which such calypsonians may be entered into the canons.

Firstly, calypsonians may find themselves being situated in the local canons via their positioning within the category known as ‘the people’s king’. This category is evidence of the agency of the calypso audience in canon formation processes. It is reserved for those who, for example, are deemed by a large number of proletarian calypso fans to have published a ‘solid’ calypso but have been bad-mindedly and, in some cases, repeatedly overlooked within calypso competitions due to personal grudges or what they view as incompetent judging. Whilst these calypsonians’ names might not be listed with in the Carnival Development Committee’s archive of winners or appear in the press releases following the competition, on the streets/in letters to the editors/over radio talk shows, they are hailed as ‘King’ or ‘Queen’ and offered sympathies in the months or, in

some cases, years after a particular calypso show, for the bad-mindedness levied against them.

The Road-March competition has also been utilised in the past by calypso audiences to either show their disapproval of the Calypso Monarch results or ensure that a deserving calypsonian receive some reward. For example, if the calypsonian in question has a 'party' or 'jumpy' offering, a tendency has been to ensure that he wins that year's road-march title by having his song played repeatedly at the judging points on the parade route. This is in keeping with what Warner has aptly noted of the T&T road-march competition that it is 'In many respects . . . the people's competition, their chance to show 'the judges' what a good, peppy calypso really is' (*Kaiso!* 19). Conversely, the audience also exercises its agency to target calypsonians whom they think judges have wrongly identified as being worthy of the Monarch title. Two such examples are that of King Onyan and King Bankers' victories in the late 1990s. Of these calypsonians' wins from 1996 to 2000, 1996 and 1997 are considered by calypso fans as extreme low points in the tradition and many routinely reference these years to define the anti-calypso and anti-calypsonian.

Secondly, and crucially, from time to time, calypsos are also positioned within the canons belatedly. It is not uncommon for forgotten calypsonians of the 1960s-1980s, especially those who were overshadowed by the King Swallow-King Obstinate-King Short Shirt rivalry of that period, to be recouped, on special occasions, for example near the island's anniversary of independence. Then, radio stations take to consecrating their peculiar list of top 50 or 100 calypso songs, which, more often than not, attempt to recover, for example, the now faded exuberance with which many Antiguans greeted the 1981 Independence. Forgotten calypsonians are also often recovered with the intent to demonstrate the present state of decline into which the tradition has fallen. In these

instances, these calypsos are positioned within distinct canons— for example, an ‘Independence calypso canon’, ‘ole time calypso’ canon’, and the like.

Moreover, it is not rare for calypsonians once shunned and calypsos that once earned the disdain and disapproval of politicians of a ruling party to be redeemed, for example, after that political party loses elections. Short Shirt himself refers to the belated recuperation of his calypsos, expressing bemusement at the ALP’s recent redemption of some of his most devastating anti-government/ALP songs as anthems at political rallies (Personal interview). It is in fact telling that the majority of Short Shirt calypsos now considered in Antigua, as well as around the calypso world, as his true classics do not necessarily coincide with those calypsos legitimised by his 15 calypso monarch victories.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to underline the need to trouble the notion of a single cohesive regional canon and indeed that of a singular local canon. It has also attempted to query the utility of maps of Caribbean literary traditions/history informed by the unilinear historical model. The impact of the praxis of bad-mindedness on the traditions as apprehended from inside as well as outside of Antigua makes void any notion of canons unfolding naturally over time. What I have demonstrated in this chapter is that shifting definitions of ‘Antiguanness’, ‘Caribbeanness’, as set by various influential interpretive communities inside and outside of Antigua have established and continue to establish and re-draw the ‘boundaries of the acceptable’ disrupting the linearity of time as far as the awarding of canonical status is concerned (Fish 343). The Antiguan aphorism ‘where goat tie, a dey dem feed’ (a goat feeds where it is tethered) comes to mind. Certainly canons and readings of literary traditions are informed by particular aspect of bad-mindedness inherent in the peculiar critical prisms via which ‘Caribbean’ and ‘literature’ are read.

The disruption of linear time, as resulting from praxes of bad-mindedness outlined in this chapter is what accounts, for example, for Niesen de Abruna's claiming Jean Rhys to be the first published among Caribbean women writers to re-present the conflicted daughter relationship as part of the 'full range of women's experiences in the Caribbean', when Cassin's *With Silent Tread* had done the same over seventy years prior (173). It is also what accounts for Kincaid being made to loom large as the first or only Antiguan writer when there is in fact a tradition of literature in Antigua that precedes her by centuries. Certainly, it is what accounts for Kincaid being repeatedly referred to as the island's most prolific writer when calypsonians like King Short Shirt and King Swallow, who both precede her, have been producing calypso albums for half a century and radio stations are able to publish top 100 songs list for each.

I close this chapter on a point that sums up the argument of this chapter—the role of 'chance' in processes of canon formation. It is difficult to argue with Kermode's assertion that 'chance' exists as an element in canonicity. According to him, 'chance' as assisted by 'individual formation and the vagaries of personal interest along with the interests of interpretive communities' may result in diversions which 'in the long run, ensure the total neglect of the road not taken' (18). I suggest that for the small place, chance, as both fortune and opportunity, is in fact a major element associated with and affected by the praxis of bad-mindedness. The bad-mindedness inherent in the small place and the bad-minded interpellations of the small place are essentially about the disparity in the fortunes or opportunities made available to the small-islander at the periphery, versus inhabitants from the big places at the centre. Kincaid herself admits to the significant role chance—as fortune and opportunity—played in her career as a writer. She acknowledges:

The chance in my career, my success as a writer is that as I went along, I met people, in particular a man named George W.S Trow who was then a

staff writer at *The New Yorker*, and they were kind to me and would allow me to do something that I asked to do. ('Re: Question 4')

She also cautions: 'Chance is one of the best friends anybody can have as long as you don't count on it' ('Re: Question 4'). The discussion in this chapter makes clear that this latter statement is undoubtedly something that literary artists, operating at the periphery—'off the map' as Hillhouse phrases it—know all too well.

CHAPTER II:

THE BAKER'S WOMEN

'Two man crab can't live in de same hole'

(Afro-Antiguan proverb)

Introduction

In this chapter, I examine Antiguan narratives' enunciations of the bad-mindedness inherent in the construction of the composite gendered identities of 19th-century Creole women, 20th-century working-class Afro-Antiguan women and men, and 20th-century proletarian Carib women. I demonstrate that Antiguan texts persist with peculiar recuperative and deconstructive projects that intervene into the ontological and epistemological bad-mindedness of colonial, neo-colonial, and nationalist discourses. Their singular engagement with the [re]construction of autochthonous Antiguan and Caribbean identities signals the viability and exhorts the elaboration of an Antiguan literary tradition.

The selected texts in which the theme of Afro-Antiguan girl/womanhood predominates re-present Antiguan femininity as scripted by a Manichean ethics that functions bad-mindedly to delimit Afro-Antiguan women as immobile performers of either of two modes of possibilities—the 'baker's woman' or the 'slut'. The 'baker's woman' is a term I have coined to refer to the prescribed/hegemonic model of respectable femininity and performances that are in line with it. The term is inspired by Jamaica Kincaid's 'Girl', in which the figure of the baker is represented as the final judge and producer of Afro-Antiguan female respectability. I employ the term 'slut' to refer to subversive performances of Antiguan femininity, as elaborated in Kincaid's 'Girl', *Annie John* and *Lucy*. The 'slut' is the antithetical figure to the baker's woman who engages in

‘not simply sexual but also a social defiance of the role of deferential womanhood’ (Edmondson 159).

Similarly, Antiguan narratives that explore Afro-Antiguan manhood insist upon the existence of a discernible hierarchy of Antiguan masculinity that interpellates Antiguan men as subscribers to a variation of either of two modes of masculinities: the ‘baker’ or the ‘wharf-rat’. This hierarchy is re-presented as being itself informed primarily by ‘racial’ and class biases that function to interpellate the Antiguan proletarian man as a reproducer of the latter model. As used in this chapter, the figure of the baker, inspired by Kincaid’s baker, refers to the hegemonic non-‘black’ masculinity performed by elite ‘non-black’/ ‘white’ male members of Antiguan society. The baker, situated within the top tier of the hierarchy of Antiguan patriarchy and society is arbiter and producer of both male and female respectability. The wharf-rat, also drawn from Kincaid’s ‘Girl’, refers to the expressions of ‘black’ masculinity expected of the Afro-Antiguan men situated within the lower tiers of the hierarchy of Antiguan patriarchy and society.

For their parts, the selected texts that explore 19th- and 20th-Century Creole and Carib female experiences intervene belatedly into the neglect/mistreatment of these female subjectivities by West Indian literary criticism and West Indian as well as Western historical narratives. They query the bad-mindedness inherent in the construction of Creole and Carib identities within colonial discourses. The texts providing accounts of 20th-Century Carib identity and experiences also scrutinise the bad-mindedness levied against the Carib body by Caribbean nationalist discourses. Overall, the texts re-present the femininities scripted for Carib and Creole women as problematised by their hybrid bodies, which trouble the hegemonic black/white and Caribbean/European ‘racial’ and cultural paradigms.

This chapter is divided into four sections—‘Girl’, ‘Cassin’s Creole’, ‘Carib Revision’, and ‘Boy’. ‘Girl’ focuses primarily on Kincaid’s ‘Girl’, *Annie John*, and *Lucy* and Queen Singing Althea’s ‘Woman’s Plight’, ‘Women of Today’, and ‘Violence’. In it, I enlist the Caribbean feminist literary construct, the ‘coming-out of the kumbla’, to guide my examination of Jamaica Kincaid and Queen Singing Althea’s interventions into the praxes of bad-mindedness informing the experiences and location of Afro-Antiguan working-class women in Antiguan society and the nation.

The ‘coming-out of the kumbla’ trope is inspired by the kumbla metaphor that appears in Erna Brodber’s 1980 novel *J&L*. It has been used to reference the rite of passage Caribbean literary girls complete before emerging as autonomous wholes. Coming-out of the kumbla is understood as an ‘articulation process’ marking the ‘movement from confinement to visibility’ (Davies and Fido, ‘Introduction’ 19). In Brodber’s novel, the kumbla/calabash is a protective device, but it also confines and disfigures its female dweller: ‘the trouble with the kumbla is the getting out of the kumbla. It is a protective device. If you dwell too long in it, it makes you delicate. . . . Weak, thin, tired like a breach baby’ (*J&L* 130).

I frame the ‘kumbla’ as the confining gender moulds prescribed for Afro-Antiguan proletarian women. Throughout the section, I refer to Juneja’s useful descriptive model of the stages of a successful emergence from the kumbla that are pertinent to my discussion. According to Juneja’s model, the journey to self-possession involves the protagonist learning to interrogate familial authority and coming to grips with female sexuality. The latter stage is marked by a ‘new freedom to explore her needs and desires’ as well as ‘a new capacity for self-assertion’. Following these two stages, the protagonist comes into an awareness that the realities of Caribbean female experience are at odds with ‘the rigid sexual codes associated with the church, middle-class and

colonial notions of respectability'. In the final stage, the female protagonist 'learns to balance her various inheritances—but most especially reclaims her roots—at least culturally and sometimes even more radically through political intervention' ('Contemporary Women Writers' 92-93).

In 'Cassin's Creole' and 'Carib Re-vision', I focus primarily on Frieda Cassin's *With Silent Tread* and Kincaid's and Marie-Elena John's *T.A.O.M.M* and *Unburnable*, respectively. I retool Kenneth Ramchand's concept of 'terrified consciousness' to guide my examination of the authors' re-presentations of the anxieties engendered by the hybrid Creole and Carib bodies. In Ramchand's original formulation, 'terrified consciousness' is framed as the 'natural stance of the White West Indian' that accounted for the presence of certain continuities in literary works by West Indian Creole writers (*The West Indian Novel* 224). According to Ramchand, 'terrified consciousness suggests the White minority's sensations of shock and disorientation as a massive and smouldering Black population is released into awareness of its power' (225). He identifies a number of traits peculiar to texts informed by this consciousness that include 'references to an outer socio-economic situation that is recognizable as the fall of the planter class' (224).

In 'Cassin's Creole', I employ 'terrified consciousness' to refer to Cassin's re-presentation of 'white' 'shock and disorientation' occasioned by the literal and figurative degeneration of the Creole body as a result of its proximity to the 'black' body and Creole apathy. I commit to a similar retooling in 'Carib Re-vision' in which I employ Ramchand's concept to refer to the re-presented anxiety of colonial and postcolonial societies faced with the Carib body's claim for rights to/of representation in the narratives of a nation eager to exclude or subsume it.

In the final section, 'Boy', I focus on Jamaica Kincaid's *My Brother* and Joanne C. Hillhouse's *Dancing Nude* as case studies alongside other select Antiguan texts that

deconstruct Antiguan patriarchy. I employ Kincaid's trope of the line, as it appears in *Mr. Potter*, to frame Antiguan narratives' re-presentations of the confinement and the erosion of autonomy that the prescribed wharf-rat modes of masculinity promises Afro-Antiguan proletarian men. In *Mr. Potter*, Kincaid repeatedly references the line drawn in the column headed "Name of Father" on the birth certificates of Antiguan new-borns born out of wedlock or whose fathers deny paternity. In that text, the literal line operates as a figurative ineffaceable scar altering the body and scripting the fate of the Antiguan boy who inherits it. Kincaid, the narrator in *Mr Potter*, explains:

...when Mr. Potter died his death seemed deserved, his death seemed a punishment, his death was accepted with an impatient gratitude, for a line had been drawn through him and he had no way of erasing it, he did not even know that this line, which passed through him, existed. (101-102)

The 'line', like the kumbla, functions strictly to delimit and to confine not only the Antiguan male but also his posterity: "And the wayward boys with the line drawn through them thrived in numbers and as individuals, and they grew up to be wayward men and had children, many children, and all of their children had a line drawn through them" (102-103). In 'Boy', my engagement with *Dancing Nude* and *My Brother* reveals enunciations of differently enabling negotiations of this line.

I.

GIRL

Introduction

This section engages with Antiguan narratives' peculiar re-presentations of mid-to-late-20th century Afro-Antiguan proletarian female experiences. The selected narratives are marked by a preoccupation with the theme of Afro-Antiguan working-class girl/womanhood. They feature similar accounts of Afro-Antiguan working-class femininities as produced/scripted by a hegemonic patriarchal society. These accounts are marked by a central scrutiny of the praxes of bad-mindedness that inform the experiences and location of Afro-Antiguan working-class women in Antiguan society and the nation. I read in the selected Antiguan narratives a central engagement with, to adapt Kandiyoti, 'women's differential and often tentative integration into national projects' (430). I contend that singly, and in concert, Antiguan narratives intervene into this bad-minded limning of the national space(s) by undertaking a twinned deconstructive and recuperative project that reconfigures, to adapt Boehmer, the 'gendered mould' of past and contemporary Antiguan and Caribbean nationalist ideologies (22).

The deconstructive project that is undertaken by Antiguan narratives interrogate the manner in which Afro-Antiguan femininities, as scripted by a Manichean ethics, function bad-mindedly to delimit or disavow individual female subjectivity. They insist that Afro-Antiguan working-class women are interpellated as immobile and subjugated performers of a variation of either of two modes of femininities—the [superscript] baker's woman model or the [subscript] slut model. However, Antiguan narratives also persist with a simultaneous recuperative project that enunciates Afro-Antiguan proletarian women's enabling negotiations and subversions of the bad-minded delimitations or delineations inscribed in the scripted hierarchy of Antiguan womanhood. The texts'

enunciations of these enabling performances in turn articulate a reinsertion of Afro-Antiguan proletarian women into the nation. This reinsertion revises the tendency to exclude them from roles alongside their male counterparts in the *drama of nationalism* and to position them ‘*outside* the central script of national self-emergence’ (Boehmer 28-29).

My discussion in this section focuses, primarily, on Jamaica Kincaid’s ‘Girl’, *Annie John*, and *Lucy and Queen Singing Althea*’s ‘Woman’s Plight’, ‘Women of Today’ and ‘Violence’. Over the course of my discussion, I examine the texts’ re-presentations of colonial, neo-colonial, and nationalist discourses’ bad-minded interpellation of Afro-Antiguan proletarian women. I read these re-presented interpellations as socio-political kumblas that threaten the personal and political will/ autonomy of the latter. These kumblas are limned as designed to ensure the epistemological, ontological, and political confinement and dis-figuration of the Afro-Antiguan working-class woman’s body and experiences in particular and, in some cases, the Afro-Antiguan body and experiences in general.

In the first subsection, I analyse the texts’ accounts of the role the persisting nexus between sexual difference and power plays in the differentiated experiences of Afro-Antiguan proletarian women, as compared to their male counterparts. I read the texts’ accounts as commentary on, to invoke Kandiyoti, the dissimilar trajectory that informs the integration of the group into the nation (429). In turn I engage with the enunciated enabling negotiations and subversions undertaken by Afro-Antiguan proletarian women as corrective relocation or recasting of the group within the nation. My discussion of the above is executed via an examination of the texts’ elaboration of the functioning of what are re-presented as the two most central and pervasive socio-political kumblas in Antiguan society. First, that of the burdened sexuality prescribed for Afro-Antiguan

proletarian women. Second, that of the assignment of Afro-Antiguan working-class women to subordinate positions within the domestic and public spheres of Antiguan society.

In the second subsection, I engage with Antiguan narratives' positive configuration of the slut as author of enabling feminist nationalist interventions into colonial, neo-/post-colonial, and nationalist discourses. I examine the sluts' rejection of and enabling insertions into the socio-political kumblas imposed upon the bodies and experiences of Afro-Antiguan working-class women in particular and, in some cases, Afro-Antiguan bodies and experiences in general. My discussion is focused on three such rejections and enabling acts of insertion. First, the rejection of the ontological and epistemological kumblas constructed by master texts and the sluts' insertion and privileging of their native texts. Second, the rejection of the kumbla of the amnesiac and the sluts' introduction of memory. Third, the kumbla of silence that is challenged by the sluts' insertion of speech/voice.

I. 'That's a woman's plight'

The selected texts elaborate scholars such as Boehmer, Kandiyoti, and Smith's observations regarding the emblematic use of women's bodies in nationalist discourses and the iconographies of post-colonial nationalism⁴⁵. They also elaborate, to borrow from Kandiyoti's discussion, the reaffirmation of women's centrality to the nation that is demonstrated by patriarchal society's intense engrossment in regulating women's sexual conduct⁴⁶ (430). Both Jamaica Kincaid and Queen Singing Althea engage with the ways in which, to cite Faith Smith,

⁴⁵. Boehmer, for example, notes the way in which the postcolonial female body is made to assume 'an emblematic status as a symbol of maternal self-sacrifice or of the nation's fierce, "virginal" pride' (28-29).

⁴⁶. In the following section—'Cassin's Creole'—I demonstrate that this anxiety over women's sexual conduct is typically centred upon women's expected performance as reproducers of patriarchy, as in the case of the heavily policed bodies of 19th century Creole women.

notions of sexuality are deeply inflected by colonial and imperial inheritances that have framed nationalism's discourses and silences and continue to inform, more or less, the structures of feeling of the region's people. (2)

Afro-Antiguan proletarian women's sexuality is re-presented as intensely policed by Antiguan patriarchal society. The texts elaborate an intricate and pervasive network of surveillance—family, school, church, and state—and spotlights the way in which it functions to encourage/engender compliance with the scripted normative [non]expressions of Afro-Antiguan working-class female sexuality. The latter in turn is articulated as informed by a model femininity that is in line with the influential Victorian model of female moral respectability, as centred upon motherhood and the family.

Significantly, the texts also delineate the kumbla of the prescribed female sexuality as underpinned by a dichotomy of sexuality that sustains Antiguan patriarchy and Afro-Antiguan female subjugation. On one hand, Afro-Antiguan male sexuality is re-presented as marked by an expectancy of public expressions of a hyper-heterosexuality⁴⁷. On the other, Afro-Antiguan female [hetero]sexuality is delineated as marked by an expectancy of expressions of chastity or, perhaps more aptly, the non-expression of sexuality. It is 'shrouded in secrecy and shame' and portrayed as having burdensome or 'negative consequences for the woman's economic, social and psychological well being' (O'Callaghan, 'Compulsory Heterosexuality' 297)⁴⁸. Overall, however, the selected texts also enunciate Afro-Antiguan proletarian women's agency as retrievable via a subversive and positive claiming of female sexuality. In this way, the texts match Juneja's observation of the crucial role coming to terms with female sexuality

⁴⁷ . I examine expressions and expectations of Afro-Antiguan male sexuality in more depth in the final section of this chapter—'Boy'.

⁴⁸ . O'Callaghan notes these characteristics as marks of the re-presentations of female sexuality in the work of West Indian women prose writers.

plays as an element in the coming-out of the kumbla process and the authoring of female self ('Contemporary' 93).

Kincaid's *Annie John* foregrounds all of the above. In *Annie John*, the young girl's body is re-presented as under constant and strict surveillance by a tripartite unit constituted by the church, school, and her home. As in 'Girl', the mother is re-presented as anxious to re-produce her daughter in the puritanical mould of the baker's woman and steer her away from that of the subversive slut. The mother's anxiety is re-presented, to borrow from Paravisini-Gebert, as stemming 'from a need to guide the daughter's behavior toward conforming to social and sexual patterns she has imbued from Antigua's English colonizers' (51). Hence her preoccupation with ensuring that Annie is trained in the 'young-lady' business, as the young girl disdainfully refers to being made to attend piano and etiquette classes (27).

In *Annie John*, the myth of the Victorian family, which articulates the model Victorian femininity, functions as a central plot device used by Kincaid to both historicise and deconstruct the model Antiguan female sexuality. It is re-presented as a prescribed model that is at odds with the realities underpinning expressions of Antiguan sexuality; it distorts and disfigures rather than elaborates Afro-Antiguan experiences. In agreement with Juneja's descriptive model of the coming-out of the kumbla process, the text charts Annie development of an awareness of the conflict between the realities of female experience in Antigua and the exacting sexual codes associated with the church, middle-class, and colonial ideas of respectability ('Contemporary' 93).

The portrait of Annie's family that appears in the early pages of the text—the father adored by the mother, and the mother and daughter located together in 'paradise'—is imbued with echoes of the Victorian 'social myth of the family in the garden' (Renk 29). According to Renk, this myth 'flowered during the nineteenth century and

culminated in the rhetoric of John Ruskin in ‘Of Queen’s Gardens’ (29). The myth confined the mother and children within the protective kumbala of the ‘garden’ where the passive mother, a subordinate figure to the father, indoctrinates her children into Christian morality (Renk 36). Renk describes the Victorian mythical family itself as a ‘central narrative of colonialist discourse’ that served as ‘an idealized social institution’ and a ‘transmitter of English culture’. According to her, the myth of the family ‘exerted control over what the patriarchy considered the “unmanageable”, the “Other”: white women, slaves of both sexes, and the colonies’ (8-9). The constituents of the mythical family were ‘the moral and intellectual father, the angelic, asexual mother, and the dutiful child whose character has been shaped by the moral strength of his parents’ (8).

Kincaid economically troubles Annie’s blissful family portrait and destabilises the echoes of the Victorian mythical family in it. She incorporates evidence of Antiguan sexual and cultural mores into everyday activities undertaken by the mother-daughter dyad. References to ‘illegitimate’ children and pre-marital sexual unions, for example, disrupt the young girl’s family’s performance of the model Victorian family⁴⁹. These references corroborate Hodge’s assertion that despite the extant belief in the region that ‘a “real” family consists of husband, wife and children, with husband as head, and . . . any variation on this model is an anomaly’, it is the ‘anomaly which we live’ (‘Challenges’ 205). By way of illustration, Annie recollects that their mother-daughter bath time sometimes involved ‘special’ baths meant to ward off the Obeah curses one of Annie’s father’s many ex-lovers—with whom he had children but never married—was suspected of placing on Annie and her mother. Similarly, trips the duo takes to the market are

⁴⁹. This reminds of Merle Hodge’s assertion that, on the whole, Caribbean family forms shun storybook prescriptions. According to her, ‘the head of the family can be female or male; legal marriage is not mandatory; the family spills beyond one household to include . . . even godparents as functional members of a family’ (205).

punctuated by ‘an angry voice saying angry things’—again an ex-lover of Annie’s father—and Annie’s mother hastening along with Annie in a protective embrace (17).

It is not insignificant that Kincaid portrays Annie’s father as unaffected by his ex-lovers—that is, he is neither the target of their hostility nor does he acknowledge their existence. Kincaid has the young Annie innocently observe: ‘they must have loved my father very much, for not once did any of them ever try to hurt him, and whenever he passed them on the street it was as if he and these women had never met’ (17). I interpret this as commentary on the differentiated gender expectations and experiences engendered by the bad-minded dichotomy of Antiguan sexuality. Annie’s father’s unhindered neglect of his children’s mothers, and presumably, his children as well, is indicant that female sexuality is constructed as immensely more [consequence] burdened than the male.

I agree with Pyne-Timothy’s suggestion that Annie’s father’s treatment of his former lovers invests the young Annie ‘with a subliminal sense that there is something shameful in a sexual relationship’ (238). I also suggest that the hostility with which the women treat Annie and her mother in fact spotlights for the young girl the way in which the entire community of women are implicated in the shame, angst, and stigmatisation of expressions of female sexuality that follow from heterosexual encounters. This brings to mind Davies’ commentary on the larger Caribbean society’s attitudes towards male-female sexual relations. She expresses her disappointment with Caribbean mothers, for example, sanctioning their sons’ performance of the scripted hyper-masculinity via utterance of the aphorism: ‘I’ve let out my cocks so watch your hens’ (Davies and Fido, ‘Preface’ xiv).

The stigmatisation of expressions of Afro-Antiguan proletarian women’s sexuality is the central theme of Queen Singing Althea’s 1994 calypso ‘Woman’s Plight’. In this offering, the calypsonian asserts that a dichotomy of honour and shame underpins Afro-

Antiguan proletarian heterosexual encounters. Significantly, she identifies the state as complicit in sustaining this dichotomy and public patriarchy⁵⁰. She spotlights the way in which the judicial system shames Antiguan women and frustrates their efforts to gain financial support for their children. Establishment of paternity includes the woman's recounting of her sexual encounters with the biological father of her child. Moreover, a successful claim results in the awarding of an insultingly small sum:

You go to arrange for child support
 You have to establish paternity in court
 Before the court could authorise a cent
 You have to say how, when and where you went
 Twenty dollars a week the court awards
 For the kids, and he still find it hard
 Is these type ah things we have to fight
 That's a woman's plight (repeat). (2nd chorus. See page 311)

The latter four lines above also reference the peculiarities marking the expected performance of 'fathering' in Antigua. According to Lazarus-Black, Antiguan kinship norms script for Antiguan men a great degree of flexibility with regards to their support of their offspring. Significantly, she notes that this support is perceived as a 'gift', even when it is made in compliance with an order by the courts ('My Mother' 394).

'Woman's Plight' depicts Afro-Antiguan proletarian female sexuality as particularly susceptible to communal shaming and stigmatisation. This is clearly expressed in the calypso's indictment of the Afro-Antiguan man with the following lines: 'Some of the times they make you shame / The way how they scandalise your name / Telling you friends what you does do / But they never confess they does do it too'. These lines reference socially sanctioned male bragging about sexual encounters, which imparts

⁵⁰ Walby identifies two main forms of patriarchy—private and public. According to her, in the latter, women have access to both private and public arenas: 'They are not barred from public arenas, but are nonetheless subordinated within them. The expropriation of women is performed more collectively than by individual patriarchs. The house-hold may remain a site of patriarchal oppression, but it is no longer the main place where women are present' ('From Private to Public Patriarchy' 178).

honour to expressions of male sexuality while hypocritically shaming even like expressions of female sexuality⁵¹. I also read them as a gesturing towards the way in which men's voices have been made to dominate conversations on sex and sexuality in Antigua—as occurs, for example, in the male-dominated calypso/soca arena.

Furthermore, Queen Singing Althea, like Kincaid in *Annie John*, depicts the sexual performances of [some] Antiguan men as at odds with the influential myth of the Victorian family. These performances are also in turn depicted as disruptive to the expressions of female sexuality and the performances of femininity patriarchal Antigua prescribes as ideal for Afro-Antiguan proletarian women. For example, expressions of Antiguan men's sexuality are limned as prone to an initial duplicitous engagement with the myth of the family and notions of respectability: 'They call you angel on the street . . . / They bring you a present every day / But this is before they get their way / They tell you it's you they want to wed / But hear what happen after they get you in bed' (verse 1). The calypso re-presents the respectability typically accorded to marriage in Antigua and Caribbean society as reframed by the anti-matrimonial behaviours of [some] Antiguan men. Matrimony is revised as an unfortunate state/fate for Afro-Antiguan proletarian women: 'If you unlucky and marry some of them / That is de start of you problem / . . . They flirt with every woman that they meet / . . . Instead of living a life ah matrimony / They prefer to pay you alimony' (verse 3).

Queen Singing Althea counters the bad-mindedness inherent in the prescribed performance of female sexuality by enunciating a positive [re]claiming of female sexuality that recasts the Afro-Antiguan female in a role analogous to that of Kincaid's

⁵¹ . This brings to mind Hector's observation that the 'burden of guilt is always on women in a patriarchal society, while glory and honour, except as a mother, is exclusively a male preserve'. With reference to Antiguan society, he notes 'It is, in this patriarchal society, only 'women' who go with 'a married man', not the other way around' ('The Matriarch of Matriarchs').

*baker*⁵². She interpellates women across the Caribbean as a community that must be rescued from the ‘woman’s plight’, and re-inscribes their body with agency—‘So women across the Caribbean / I am calling on you to take a stand’. Her calypso enacts a significant re-framing of the expected/prescribed expressions of female chastity that untwines the latter from the expected male hyper-heterosexuality. Female chastity is relocated as an expression of agency rather than a burden of expectancy: ‘Scrutinise the young men that you meet / To see if they are real or counterfeit / Put them through a rigid litmus test / Take your own time to raise your dress’ (3rd chorus).

Kincaid’s eponymous Lucy engages with a similar recuperative project as Queen Singing Althea. However, unlike the calypsonian, Lucy’s enabling negotiation/subversion of the kumbla of burdened female sexuality is enacted through a performance of the slut as a primarily sexual positioning. Her performance of the slut as marked by a studied emotional detachment from her sexual partners is not insignificant. I read this as an attempt to subvert the socially sanctioned contradictions she, in keeping with Juneja’s formulation, comes to realise exist between the rigid sexual conventions burdening the Afro-Antiguan female body and the realities they are subjected to as far as male hyper-heterosexuality is concerned. Throughout the novel, Kincaid re-presents Lucy as keen on ensuring that the balance of power in her sexual relationships is in her favour. This performance is depicted as having its starting point in her early teenage years in Antigua. She relates, for example, committing to kissing a boy she no longer cared about ‘just to see how undone he could become’ (83). By another and more significant example, she also relates denying being a virgin following her first sexual encounter, after having grasped how much ‘triumph’ or honour her male partner, Tanner, intended to derive from being her first lover (82).

⁵². She enacts a similar recasting in her ‘A Good Man’ (2004) in which she positions herself as the ultimate judge of male respectability. She derides currently accepted performances of male sexuality and masculinity—‘Dem ain’ no man at all/Dem is boy’.

I interpret Lucy's continued dedication to performance of the slut in her American relationships as a subversive appropriation and claiming of the hyper-heterosexuality that Antiguan patriarchal society typically reserves for the Afro-Antiguan male. It mirrors the performances expected of her male siblings and enacted by her father who himself had 'perhaps 30 children' but 'did not know for sure' (80). Like the men in Althea's 'Woman's Plight', she boasts of her sexual encounters to others—in her case, her American female employer, Mariah—thereby revising the expected silence of women on issues of sex and sexuality⁵³. Her involvement of Mariah in her subversive performance of Afro-Antiguan proletarian female sexuality therefore dislocates female sexuality as a site of self-censorship⁵⁴. It also dislocates female sexuality as the site for hostile encounters between women, as occurs, for example, between Annie John's mother and her father's ex-lovers.

Furthermore, I also understand Lucy's performance of the slut as emotionally detached from her lovers as a defensive posture developed to counter the fear and trauma occasioned by her mother's emotional neglect of her in favour of her brothers. In the novel, the unreliability of Lucy as a narrator is a major device utilised by Kincaid to explore the disunities between the mother-daughter dyad as occasioned by the mother's complicity with Antiguan patriarchy to bad-mindedly delimit her. Lucy's insistence on emotional vacuity is revealed as fiction and, importantly, an attempt to cope with what she views as her decade long 'mourning the end of a love affair' with her mother, Miss Annie, who was 'perhaps the only true love' she would know (132). I consider her

⁵³. She enacts a similar revision of the prescribed silence with her friend Peggy whom she meets in the park to ogle men, paying 'careful attention to their bottoms, their legs, and their shoulders, and their faces, especially their mouths' (89).

⁵⁴. Lucy recalls, for example, her mother showing her how to make a potion 'to bring on a reluctant period' without communicating what might cause such an event, and disguising the potion as 'a way to strengthen the womb' (69-70).

revelation to Mariah of her biological mother's preferential treatment of her brothers as a parallel of the island mother's preferential treatment of her male citizens.

The latter point above accounts for my further reading of Lucy's performance of the slut as an attempt to elide the scripted boundaries between Afro-Antiguan male and female sexuality, and, as a result, undermine male privilege. In an angry letter to Miss Annie, she in fact frames her expression of the slut as a counter to her mother's previous attempts to script her [Lucy's] body in accordance with the deferential and respectable baker's woman model — 'I then gave a brief description of my personal life, offering each detail as evidence that my upbringing had been a failure and that, in fact, life as a slut was quite enjoyable. . . ' (128). Lucy's positive claiming of the slut, as done in the letter to her mother, represents an engagement with negating the shame attached to Afro-Antiguan women's expression of sexuality⁵⁵. She, as Bouson aptly puts it, employs 'the defense of shamelessness' to counteract the deeply ingrained sense of shame her Antiguan society has engendered in her regarding her/female sexuality (83).

For her part, Annie John's engagement with the shame associated with expressions of female sexuality evolves into a positive claiming of her sexuality as a maternal inheritance. By way of example, when her mother repeatedly accuses her of engaging in slut-like behaviour that shamed her, Annie, 'drowning' in the word 'slut' repeated so many times, frames the claiming of the body of the slut as a way to save herself. I agree with Ferguson that the young woman's 'Like father like son, like mother like daughter' signals the claiming of the 'charged sexuality as parental heritage' (*Jamaica Kincaid* 64). It also signals the recasting of the Afro-Antiguan proletarian family as the antithesis of the model Victorian family with its 'angelic, asexual mother', 'dutiful child' and 'moral' father (Renk 8). I suggest that this ultimately points to Annie's

⁵⁵. It also reminds of Miss Peggy's shameless claiming of the 'whore' in Althea Prince's 'Ladies of the Night' and her retort to those who attempted to shame her—'It takes one to know one' (10).

privileging and acceptance of the realities of the Afro-Antiguan family experience and the rejection of the fantasy/fiction of the imposed Victorian model.

Annie's positive claiming of the slut is also grounded in a reassembling of self that occurs via a bold articulation of her 'right to her own sexuality' (Ferguson, *Jamaica Kincaid* 68). This claiming comes, symbolically, after a period of illness during which Annie's body reverts to an almost infantile state. The fragmentation Annie undergoes mirrors the process Katrak describes as 'internalized exile'. For Katrak, 'internalized exile' occurs when the female 'body feels disconnected from itself, as though it does not belong to it and has no agency'⁵⁶ (2). Indeed, prior to her physical breakdown, Annie looking at her reflection in a store window experiences a sense of disconnection from her body: 'I saw myself among all these things, but I didn't know that it was I, for I had got so strange' (94). In Katrak's formulation, female protagonists, resist this 'exile' with varying degrees of success via silence, speech, starvation, or, as in Annie's case, illness (2).

The success of Annie's reconnection to her body and her claiming of her own sexuality and right to it is made evident in the incident in which a bout of delirium leads her to bathe a number of family portraits. Her particular treatment of the photographs represents an attempt to erase the shame associated with sexuality and to enact an assertion/affirmation of self. For example, she erases her parents from the waist down in a photo in which they appear together, her father with his hand wrapped tightly around her mother's waist. This represents, as Paravisini-Gebert suggests, Annie's attempt to

⁵⁶ . In her text, Katrak's readings of postcolonial women's literary and non-literary texts lead her to assert that in the regions of Africa, the Caribbean and India that her study covers, 'the female body is in a state of exile including self-exile and self-censorship, outsidership, and un-belonging to itself within indigenous patriarchy. . . strengthened by British racialized colonial practices'. For her 'exile' includes 'literal and metaphoric connotations of exile . . . internal exile of the female body from patriarchy, and external exile as manifest in migration and geographical relocation' (2).

obscure the sexuality that she found problematic⁵⁷ (103). In contrast, her washing of her confirmation photograph erases all of her except her shoes—with ‘a decorative cutout on the sides’—that her mother had thought too sexually bold for ‘a young lady...being received into the church’ (*Annie John* 119). I agree with Ferguson that this symbolises the young girl’s reservation of her right to her own sexuality and her ‘confirming’ of ‘herself according to her own sexual (as it were) dictates’ (*Jamaica Kincaid*, 68).

The selected texts’ engagement with the kumbla of burdened female sexuality is also twinned with a simultaneous preoccupation with the similarly pervasive kumbla of female confinement within subordinated roles in the domestic and public spheres. The texts elaborate scholars such as Walby’s, Alexander’s, and Boehmer’s observations regarding patriarchal society’s scripting of women as performers within ‘either private spaces or the peripheries of public, national space’ (Boehmer 106). For the most part, Antiguan society is re-presented as marked by an adherence to a public form of patriarchy—women have access to both public and private spheres of society, but are subordinated in both. This reflects Walby’s assertion that 20th-century Afro-Caribbean women are more prone to experiencing public rather than private patriarchy (‘Woman and Nation’ 89).

The texts’ peculiar re-presentations of Antigua as a public patriarchy is also in line with Hector’s limning of the island as host to a ‘funny patriarchal society’ (‘The Matriarch’ n.pag). For Hector, and as the texts themselves protest, the oddity, that is, the bad-mindedness of Antiguan patriarchy lies in the differential and lesser/unequal benefits women accrue from the national dividend, given the central role they play in the nation:

⁵⁷ . Earlier in the text, she had stumbled upon her mother engaged in coitus with her father. Pyne-Timothy rightly observes that Kincaid’s juxtaposition of Annie’s discovery of her parents making love with her return from Sunday school is not insignificant. She argues that for Annie, ‘there is a complicated clash of eschatological systems which she cannot articulate. She can only feel that some important principle has been violated which she attributes to her mother’s hypocrisy’ (240).

Here men rule. But it is women who run things. Here there are more female heads of families than there are male heads. And it was always so. But it is men who rule. Men alone are elected. Men alone have been elected under a limited franchise or under full adult-suffrage. Always men. Thus half of society is left out. . . . Not only do men rule here, but the rule of men is taken as the excluded natural, no, the Divine order of things, even by women⁵⁸. ('The Matriarch' n.pag)

Kincaid and Queen Singing Althea both author Afro-Antiguan proletarian women as equals to their male counterparts in intellectual and other capabilities. Within their texts, they elaborate Hector's observations by deconstructing the ways in which Antiguan patriarchy functions to bad-mindedly delimit Afro-Antiguan proletarian women's ambitions.

The selected texts also re-present the same intricate and pervasive network of surveillance that engenders compliance with the prescribed female sexuality as functioning to elicit female compliance with the prescribed deferential and subordinate baker's woman mode of femininity. However, overall, both Queen Singing Althea and Kincaid enunciate enabling Afro-Antiguan female negotiations of patriarchal bad-mindedness. They depict Afro-Antiguan proletarian female agency as retrievable via a querying of patriarchal authority and subsequent outright rejection or subversion of the prescribed submissive/ deferential womanhood. I suggest that the querying of patriarchal authority and following rejection or subversion of the baker's woman model correlates to Juneja's observation of the significant role the questioning of familial authority plays in the coming-out of the kumbla process⁵⁹.

Kincaid's 'Girl' is an excellent example of an enabling query of patriarchal authority that is attended by a subversion of the baker's woman model. 'Girl', at first glance, appears to be an indictment of the Afro-Antiguan proletarian mother for her explicit collusion with Antiguan patriarchal society. Throughout the story, the mother's

⁵⁸. One female has since been elected to the House of Representatives.

⁵⁹. I read 'familial authority' here as both biological and national.

advice on *inter alia*, laundering, gardening, needlework, and relationships with men recommend the girl's location and confinement within the domestic sphere. In addition, the mother's 'is it true that you sing *benna* in Sunday school?' clearly suggests that the girl's body is under constant surveillance—maternal as well as ecclesiastical⁶⁰.

Moreover, in 'Girl', men are situated as central figures within the girl's life—some she must avoid as with the 'wharf-rats', some she must serve as with her father, and Antiguan patriarchy on the whole, as represented in the figure of the male baker who is the ultimate judge of female respectability.

'Girl', however, does not sustain a full indictment of the Afro-Antiguan mother for explicit complicity with patriarchal society. Throughout the near-monologue, the mother's attempt to discipline the daughter's body away from the slut and into the *kumbla* of the domestic sphere that the baker's woman model represents is tempered by subversive advice. These pieces of advice in fact destabilise the *kumbla* of prescribed domesticity and subordination. They also trouble the prescribed role of the Afro-Antiguan mother as the 'angelic' or 'asexual' Victorian mother (Renk 8). By way of example, the mother articulates a crucial subversion of the baker's woman model in her schooling of her daughter on how 'to make a good medicine to throw away a child before it even becomes a child' (5).

I consider Paravisini-Gebert's suggestion that the mother only sanctions the act of aborting a foetus as a means of 'concealing violations of the sexual rules that could result in social or class ostracism' too reductive a reading of the subversive act (53). The mother's sanction is better read as the suggestion of gynaecological resistance as a purposeful and enabling means of undermining the bad-mindedness of patriarchal

60. Antiguan folk music, the precursor to the calypso, which normally dealt with the bawdy and the scandalous. The mother's ban on singing *benna* writes the native culture as incongruous with the model Victorian femininity sanctioned by the church and the Afro-Antiguan mother. Also, it is not insignificant that *benna* was a public art form typically dominated by Afro-Antiguan men.

Antigua and the dichotomy of honour and shame underpinning Afro-Antiguan sexuality. Its suggestion that the girl masks the body of the slut at opportune moments, a consistent suggestion in the story, destabilises hegemonic notions of respectability. It encourages the blurring of the boundary between the slut and the baker's woman. I interpret this as the mother's intent to signal to her daughter the options available for self-possession in a bad-minded society that relegates her to the domestic sphere and confinement as occasioned by an event such as entry into motherhood⁶¹.

For its part, Queen Singing Althea's 'Women of Today' (1996) is an apt example of the enunciation of outright rejection of the kumbula of deferential/submissive womanhood. The calypso elaborates the bad-mindedness Hector asserts marks Antigua's 'funny patriarchal society'. It re-presents Afro-Antiguan men as a homogenous bloc anxious to subjugate Afro-Antiguan women, out of envy and fear of the latter's superior intellectual capabilities and leadership skills:

Men contrive and connive
 Just to keep us down
 It's about time we turn
 All these things around
 And El Capitán
 Down to its every crew
 Women dey pushing de men,
 Way ahead of you. (Verse 1, see page 312)

This framing of Antiguan patriarchy references the conventional linkage of the concept of bad-mind to jealousy and the concept of 'grudgeful', the latter of which 'embodies revenge', in Antiguan and Caribbean phenomenology⁶² (Hickling and James 479). The calypso issues significant epistemological, ontological, and moral challenges that revise women's confinement within subordinate positions in the domestic and public spheres.

⁶¹. Gynaecological resistance as a route to female personal autonomy is a recurring theme in Kincaid's texts. It is also useful to note that this strategy was heavily utilised by enslaved 'black' women in the Caribbean to re-claim bodies ravaged by labour, sexual and other forms of exploitation. In the last quarter of the 18th century enslavers began offering incentives (such as granting freedom to women after they bore the 6th child) to deter enslaved women from the practice (Beckles, 'Perfect Property' 155).

⁶². 'Maliciously envious' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 271).

Firstly, it undertakes an epistemological disinvestment of the androcentric narrative of the Antiguan family and nation/nation-state. It re-writes the narrative of Afro-Antiguan male leadership of the latter two units as a fiction designed to obscure Afro-Antiguan women's true position as long-time leaders within Antiguan society. It also ultimately [re]inserts the Afro-Antiguan proletarian woman in a prominent position in the narrative of the nation/nation-state and the family. This [re]insertion is facilitated via a direct rejection of the amnesia Antiguan patriarchal discourse of 20th century women's progress encourages: 'I hate to hear men say / That women of today / Have really come a long way / . . . Dey can never convince / Because I know / We have been leaders from ever since' (verse 1).

Secondly, 'Women of Today' undertakes a curious ontological subversion of the confining intent of the kumbla of domesticity and subordination. At one level, the calypso rejects the interpellation of Afro-Antiguan women as immobile performers of domesticity as is required by their prescribed role as mothers. It also troubles the differentiated language of the masculine-unfeminine dichotomy of gender that negatively describes women's expressions of leadership: 'We must not only be seen / As man's child bearer / So let's lead from the front / And make a better life / Turn a deaf ear to those who brand you / A commanding wife' (verse 2).

At another level, the calypso destabilises the boundary between private and public spheres—the home and the nation-state. It in turn queries and dismisses the conventional delineations of dominant versus subordinate gender roles. It manages both of these undertakings by [re]configuring the home, to adapt Boehmer, as a 'national house' (107). The duties women undertake in the home are re-presented as paralleling those in the government ministries at which Afro-Antiguan male politicians consistently fail:

So many things in life
Wouldn't constantly go wrong

If we were in de front
 Because
 Women really strong
 At home we control de finance
 We control legally
 Cleaner and bottle washer
 Minister of all utility. (Verse 3)

The calypso enacts an enabling [re]insertion of the Afro-Antiguan proletarian woman into the nation that subverts ‘the macho syndrome’, which dictates that ‘a woman’s / Place is in the home’ (verse 3). She is [re]located as a superior performer of the body of the citizen, politician, and nation-builder: ‘P.M. / When you have problems you never encounter / Forget those men, turn to us / To get the real answer’ (verse 3). This positioning runs counter to the public-private dichotomy underpinning conventional Afro-Caribbean gendered construction of the nation. According to this public-private dichotomy, males are patriots ‘rendering public service to the country’ while their female counterparts are the compliant upholders of a reputable femininity and protectors of the respectability of the nuclear family and femininity (Alexander 366-367).

Thirdly, ‘Women of Today’s’ framing of Antiguan patriarchy as a morally unjust socio-political system subverts the expectancy of women’s complicity with the system and acceptance, as Hector notes, of men’s ‘natural’ right to rule. Crucially, the calypso locates Afro-Antiguan women’s resistance of Antiguan patriarchy within an international ‘black’ feminist tradition of successful anti-patriarchy activism. The discrimination practiced by Afro-Antiguan male patriarchy is re-presented as a parallel of the discriminatory practices of ‘white’ American patriarchy against which the Afro-American activist, Rosa Parks, made a stand. Similarly, the differential treatment Afro-Antiguan women receive in Antigua is paralleled with the discrimination suffered by blacks of Parks’ era—‘Let us use Rosa Parks / As a lesson for us / She beg blacks not to ride / In de back of de bus’ (verse 2). The bad-mindedness of Antiguan patriarchy is ultimately

framed as a human rights issue—'She convinced us all / To take de front seat / . . . Strive for your right- / ful place here in Antigua' (verse 2).

With regards to the 'rightful place' of Afro-Antiguan women in Antigua, Queen Singing Althea depicts the group as more deserving of a larger share of the national dividend than their male counterparts. Her rationale for this lies in the presence of the former as a community of academic and skilled elites that not only outnumbers the community of like trained men but betters their potential as performers of citizenship:

And dat isn't fair
Dat isn't right
Women of today
We are not dumb
We are bright
And we getting
More passes in CXC
And have much more university degree
In all spheres of work
We have ability
But dey want to hire us
Only as their secretary. (Chorus)

Her spotlighting of the bad-mindedness marking men's expressions of patriarchy, as summed up particularly in the last four lines, reminds of Lucy's quarrel with her mother for attempts to confine her within the baker's woman model of domesticity and subordination.

In *Lucy*, the questioning of the differential treatment received by men and women in general indicate that the protagonist's quarrel with her mother is to be read as a microcosm of women's quarrel with their nations. In the novel, Miss Annie is reproduced as colluding with her husband and Antiguan patriarchy in the differentiated delimitation of her daughter's ambitions, as compared to her sons. By way of example, Lucy relates her mother's expectation that she would ultimately occupy a position within the periphery of the public sphere as a nurse—'a badly paid person . . . who was forced to be in awe of someone above her (a doctor)'. In contrast, each of her male siblings was

expected ‘to become a doctor or lawyer or someone who would occupy an important and influential position in society’ (130).

As with ‘Women of Today’, female intellectual capabilities —‘As a child I had always been told what a good mind I had’—is presented by Lucy as evidence of Antiguan society’s unfair impulse to locate the Afro-Antiguan proletarian woman within the kumbla of domesticity and subordination. Ultimately, the young woman rejects the deferential womanhood characterising the baker’s woman model by, *inter alia*, deciding to cease attending night school or studying to become a nurse. Crucially, her rejection of the model writes her as naturally subversive—‘I was not good at taking orders from anyone, not good at waiting on other people’ (92). This suggestion, like the subversive and enabling accounts presented in ‘Girl’ and ‘Women of Today’, runs counter to expectations of Afro-Caribbean women’s subservience as guardians of the domestic sphere and transmitters ‘of a fixed set of proper values to the nation’ (Alexander 366). In these accounts, Kincaid and Queen Singing Althea re-present Afro-Antiguan proletarian women’s backs as turned, like Annie John’s to her friend Gwen—the embodiment of the compliant female—in rejection of the kumbla of the baker’s woman model.

II. Enabling Acts of Insertions

Kincaid and Queen Singing Althea offer positive renderings of the slut as an expression of Afro-Antiguan proletarian female agency—the enabled non-deferential woman. Their renderings disrupt women’s obscuration within local and regional traditions of anti-colonial resistance. They also intervene into Afro-Antiguan and Caribbean nationalist discourse’s conventional limning of nation scripting as an exclusively male project. The selected texts situate Afro-Antiguan working-class women as authors of enabling national scripts that intervene into the bad-mindedness of colonial and neo-colonial discourses. They also position women as editors of pre-existing Antiguan male authored/sanctioned

national scripts that bad-mindedly cast women as naturally inferior performers of citizenship.

The selected texts' enabling accounts of the slut engage in a crucial destabilisation of the disabling epistemological and ontological kumblas constructed by colonial master texts. The sluts' countering of these kumblas, which promise disfiguring subjugation of Afro-Antiguan women's bodies, articulates a positive feminist nationalist rescript that asserts both Afro-Antiguan female personhood and cultural agency. This feminist nationalist rescript is underpinned by a privileging of native texts over colonial master texts. The selected texts re-present this privileging as resulting in the authoring of enabling Antiguan epistemologies that better describe the experiences, realities, and consciousness of Afro-Antiguan women in particular and Afro-Antiguans in general.

Kincaid's 'Girl' offers a pertinent example of the slut's undertaking of positive feminist nationalist re-scripting. In its case, the mother as slut rejects the master text of model Victorian femininity as imposed upon the Afro-Antiguan female body. It inserts in its place a subversive hybrid home-grown model better suited to negotiating the peculiar bad-mindedness of Antiguan patriarchy. Crucially, the mother also re-scripts the prominence of the imposed master text of Western Christianity. She subverts the authority of the Christian Church over her benna singing daughter via a privileging of the peculiarly Afro-Antiguan and West Indian hybrid religious text of Obeah. Obeah, rather than Christianity, is authored as a phenomenological descriptor to account for bad-mindedness or evil that might befall the unsuspecting Afro-Antiguan woman. By way of example, the girl is instructed not to stone black birds since 'it might not be a blackbird after all'⁶³ (5).

⁶³. This references the Obeah belief that souls of the dead appear as ghosts in animal as well as human form (Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert, 2003 141).

Similarly, it is Obeah and not Christianity that is scripted as an enabling tool that the Afro-Antiguan woman may utilise to negotiate or subvert the bad-mindedness with which Antiguan patriarchy surrounds her. By way of example, the mother suggests the subversive use of Obeah to control a mate—‘this is how to love a man, and if this doesn’t work there are other ways’⁶⁴ (5). I suggest that the mother’s overall reliance upon Obeah is not insignificant given the history of the hybrid belief system as a subversive and enabling force for the enslaved in Antigua and the region. Historically, Obeah was perceived as an African/non-European evil and as a threat to sanctioned Christian practices and the stability of plantation society. According to Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert, Obeah, like other creolised Caribbean religions, ‘allowed the most oppressed sectors of colonial society to manifest their spirituality, express cultural and political practices suppressed by colonial force. . .’⁶⁵ (2003 3). I therefore read the mother’s positive scripting of Obeah as an empowering [re]claiming of cultural roots, which Juneja asserts is an important element of the coming-out of the kumbla trope and process.

Annie John too offers a significant enunciation of the slut’s enabling feminist nationalist rejection of the colonial master texts. In the novel, Annie, as slut, privileges the feminist script authored by her mother over European discourse on the discovery and development of the ‘New World’ as articulated in her history textbook and sanctioned by her tutors. By way of illustration, her most seditious act of resistance, according to her school’s scale of transgression, takes the form of her disfiguration of her *History of the West Indies* textbook. Encountering an illustration of Christopher Columbus in chains at the bottom of a ship with the caption ‘Columbus in Chains’, she re-inscribes the scene with her own derisive narrative: ‘The Great Man Can No Longer Just Get Up and Go’

⁶⁴. Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert note that in the Caribbean Obeah was frequently used to ‘effect some change in male-female relationships’ (2003, 139).

⁶⁵. Its potential to facilitate resistance, inclusive of the fact that Obeah practitioners were viewed as possible leaders of slave revolts, led to Obeah being outlawed in most of the West Indies in the early 18th century (Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert, 2003 15).

(78). It is not insignificant that she opts to pen her inscription in the Old English lettering script that she ‘had recently mastered’. It reminds of Shakespeare’s Caliban’s oft-quoted subversive self-assertion ‘You taught me language; / and my profit on’t / Is, I know how to curse’ (lines 362-363, 121).

It is also not insignificant that the words she inscribes in the text are taken verbatim from her mother’s reaction to hearing about her own tyrannical Dominican father’s failing health. Annie’s enabling rescript not only elaborates a feminist tradition of resistance against patriarchy—‘white’ and ‘black’; Caribbean and European—but also privileges the indigenous text—her mother’s words—as the source for her understanding of her Antiguan reality. Her privileging of her mother’s words also in turn represents, to invoke Glissant, the ‘revenge’ of the local oral tradition over the written European word, which is conventionally limned as superior (101). Her insistence upon privileging indigenous over Eurocentric texts is exhibited in another moment in which she leads her fellow school girls in singing ‘bad songs’—most likely benna or calypso—on the tombstones of former slave owners at the back of a churchyard after school. Her leading of her fellow female students in this activity, which also involved a parading of their bodies, may be read as authoring at least three enabling acts of [re]inscriptions/insertions.

Firstly, the singing of the so-called ‘bad-songs’ points to a subversive celebration of denigrated Afro-Antiguan culture. Secondly, the gleeful parade of female bodies re-scripts the shame associated with Afro-Antiguan female sexuality. It also scripts a [re]claiming of the Afro-Antiguan female body that de-colonises it and in turn [re]inscribes it with agency stripped from it during slavery Antigua. Thirdly, I suggest that the authoring of these inscriptions on the graves of former slave owners is a belated overturning of European dominance over ‘blacks’ during slavery Antigua.

The belated overruling of European dominance as undertaken by Annie and her friends is an act that is imbued with much ontological significance. Along with Annie's inscription beneath the illustration of Columbus, it intervenes into attempts to interpellate the Afro-Antiguan female as the amnesiac and submissive colonial subject. I suggest that embedded within Annie's inscription in her history text and the group of girls' rescript is the slut's counterclaim of memory. This counterclaim of memory engages with a positive claiming of African/'black' ancestors and native culture that runs counter to the prescribed adulation of European historical figures and culture. I read this claiming as a political challenge, to adapt Glissant, to the 'erasure of collective memory' and 'brutal dislocation' of Afro-Antigua/Caribbean consciousness, as occasioned by European colonialism and Caribbean slavery (62, 61). This political challenge brings to mind Juneja's observation that a recurring element of the coming-out of the kumbula trope, as it appears in Caribbean literary works, is the reclaiming of roots as is sometimes done via political intervention.

To illustrate the above, prior to her editing of her history textbook, Annie ruminates on the ambivalence in which her textbooks and tutors attempt to shroud her own personal and political identity:

our ancestors had done nothing wrong except just sit somewhere, defenceless. Of course, sometimes, what with our teachers and our books, it was hard for us to tell on which side we really now belonged—with the masters or the slaves—for it was all history; it was all in the past . . . (76)

She deftly negotiates the ambivalence engendered by her textbooks and tutors and ultimately identifies with the enslaved rather than the masters. She shifts the shame associated with the African body unto the English, noting of an English student—'Her ancestors had been the masters, while ours had been the slaves. She had such a lot to be ashamed of . . .' (76). The narrative of the European as victor and superior is re-written

via a rescript of Columbus—'one of the great men in history . . . discoverer of the island' as defeated and impotent (82).

Lucy too features a like rejection of the kumbla of the amnesiac and the slut's insertion or counterclaim of memory. In *Lucy's* case, she rejects her 'white' female upper-class American employer, *Mariah's*, neo-colonial attempts to script her into a kumbla of forgetfulness and forgiveness. Her insistence on memory subverts *Mariah's* attempts to erase the anger marking her remembrance of a lived experience as an island colonial, and her awareness of her still subordinate location as a 'young woman from the fringes of the world' (95). It also spurns *Mariah's* attempts to liberate her from the kumbla of the cumulative trauma of her continued encounter with English colonialism. Significantly, contra *Mariah's* neutralising gaze/perspective, *Lucy* locates them both as 'raced' subjects whose bodies bear differentiated inscriptions of the colonial encounter. She also limns their bodies, burdened as they are with memory, as incapable of performances that run counter to their—in one case privileged, and in the other, subordinate—'racial', class, and national identities.

By way of example, *Mariah* and *Lucy's* vastly different reactions to the sight of daffodils are re-presented as engendered by cultural memories peculiar to their differentiated socio-political locations as members of differently 'raced' and national communities. For *Mariah*, the memories of daffodils involve no violence—epistemological or otherwise; they are but beautiful flowers that bloom annually during spring. For *Lucy*, daffodils are associated with the memory of epistemological colonial violence that she cannot, and refuses, to erase. Daffodils, as first introduced to her via Wordsworth's 'The Daffodils', are 'emblematic of a colonial system' that hoisted 'its own values and cultural standards through a system of education that fell outside local control' (Paravisini-Gebert123).

Importantly, the text re-presents Lucy as understanding that her memory is forever branded with the imprint of her encounter with English colonialism—as Kincaid frames it in *A Small Place*, ‘I met the world through England, and if the world wanted to meet me it would have to do so through England’ (33). Lucy is also re-presented as arriving at an understanding that her relationship with Mariah will always be marked or marred by this:

It wasn’t her fault. It wasn’t my fault. But nothing could change the fact that where she saw beautiful flowers I saw sorrow and bitterness. The same thing could cause us to shed tears, but those tears would not taste the same. (30)

She embraces the inescapability of the kumbla of memory of her English colonial past and demonstrates a clear unwillingness, despite Mariah’s attempts, to re-order the colonial memories and experiences that burden/inform her identity(ies) (30).

By way of another example, Mariah’s proud claiming of ‘Indian blood’ as an explanation for her aptitude at, inter alia, hunting and fishing is re-scripted by Lucy’s as a bad-minded and perplexing act—‘How do you get to be the sort of victor who can claim to be the vanquished also?’ (41). For Lucy, Mariah’s expression of the Native American body, and her reduction of the Native American experience to positive stereotypes is at odds with her ‘raced’ location as a member of the community of descendants of ‘white’ victors. As Ferguson notes of the dyad, ‘Mariah desires forgiveness for colonial complicity, but Lucy cannot countenance Mariah’s efforts to rewrite history’ (*Jamaica Kincaid* 113). This represents a reversal of historical roles. Lucy is invested with the authority to author Mariah’s ‘white’ body, to invoke Fanon as a ‘burden’- a ‘corporeal malediction’ that must undertake responsibility for her ‘race’ and her ancestors misdeeds (*Black Skin*, 84).

I begin now to advance towards my conclusion by offering a brief examination of Queen Singing Althea’s 1998 ‘Violence’. ‘Violence’ is dominated by a quarrel with postcolonial Antiguan men’s physical mistreatment of Antiguan women. Its quarrel is

marked by a rejection of the prescribed kumbla of national silence surrounding the issue of violence against women. It is also marked by a sluttish insertion of voice/speech that counters patriarchal Antiguan society's encouragement of/insistence on female silence on the issue. Embedded within the calypso's sluttish insertion of voice are a series of insertions that render significant statements on gender and class identity, and citizenship. These statements are in turn underpinned by the calypso's overarching statement on the differentiated integration of women in the nation by Antiguan post-colonial nationalism.

'Violence' highlights the prescribed performance of Afro-Antiguan femininity as a posture of fear and silence into which many Antiguan women have been coerced as subscribers:

You know how many women living a lie?
 How many women wit' cry water in dey eye?
 How many women have been misused?
 How many of our young women have been abused?
 But to bring it to the fore
 Women are afraid
 Dey cover up with pink powder and dark shade
 (Verse one, see page 313)

I interpret the calypso's re-presentation of Afro-Antiguan women as coerced into 'living a lie' and masking evidence of their abuse as a parallel for, or commentary on, the way in which Antigua's 'funny patriarchal society', as Hector labels it, functions to coerce female 'consent' to male hegemony ('The Matriarch' n.pag).

I suggest that the ultimate 'lie' and 'cover up' to which Queen Singing Althea refers is that of Afro-Antiguan male post-colonial nationalism's pretence at integrating women as equal citizens into the nation. She disrupts, for example, the silence the state attempts to engender with its 1995 insistence that a 1989 sum of six females among a total of ninety persons occupying the highest paid categories in the public sector is a mark of sure progress (*State Reports CEDAW* 13). She in fact troubles the assertion of a positive and meaningful integration/welcoming of women in the public sphere with her

framing of postcolonial Antiguan workplaces as sites of sexual harassment. She queries, ‘You know how many women in offices / Have to endure unwanted advances? / How many bald head dey have to rub / In order for dem to hold a job?’ (verse 2).

‘Violence’ also offers a significant sluttish insertion that intervenes into Antiguan discourse on the performances of class and expressions of ‘race’. It revises the silence surrounding non-Afro-Antiguan and non-proletarian men’s expressions of physical violence against women. It also rewrites the unflattering suggestion that violence against women is a peculiarly Afro-Antiguan working-class performance. Similarly, the bodies of Afro-Antiguan proletarian women are un-scripted as the main and only sites of inscriptions of male violence. The calypso in fact limns domestic violence as a peculiarly upper-class and non-‘black’ performance—‘We know that in Point and down in Grays Farm / Men cause women much bodily harm / But statistics from Crosbies and Hodges Bay / Shows de bulk of the violence takes place out dey⁶⁶’ (verse 3). I suggest that these revisions locate Queen Singing Althea within the growing tradition of scholarship that re-script past bad-minded scholarly depiction of working-class Afro-Caribbeans—particularly working-class Afro-Caribbean males—as performers of deformed genders, as I discuss in ‘Boy’.

I also consider Queen Singing Althea’s widening of the community of women ensconced in the lie of the nation as a simultaneous widening of the community of women she expects to participate in her suggested performance of female activism. Her sluttish insertion of feminist protest into the pervasive silence—‘Come on woman/Don’t bear your / Suffering in silence / Cry murder / Call for help’ limns the required female response as one that transcends both class and ‘race’ as well as nationality—‘How many

⁶⁶. The populations of Point and Grays Farm are largely working-class Afro-Antiguan whilst those of Hodges Bay and Crosbies are largely upper-class non-Afro Antiguan—of Middle-Eastern lineage or ‘white’ expatriates.

get thrown from hotel roof / De white man in jail here is living proof⁶⁷ (chorus, verse three). Likewise for her [re]inscription of the female body with agency which elaborates an enabling account of female autonomy that reinstates women as full citizens who can rely upon the legal system for protection — ‘Well I going public with your tail / And let de magistrate los’ / Your backside in jail!’

Conclusion

The underlying aim of this section has been to underscore the import of Antiguan women’s narratives’ intervention into the silence surrounding Afro-Caribbean women’s differentiated experience of nation and nationalism. The impact and reach of their interventions is aptly summarised by Hector’s description of the way in which Kincaid has altered both the iconography of Antiguan post-colonial nationalism and the ‘global literary orbit’—

Naturally, this patriarchal society had a **Papa**. . . . But, this society in the equality of things, never had an official **Mama**. . . . And yet, it is this society, this patriarchal society, that has produced the most famous Mother in all literature from Homer to Caryl Phillips. (‘The Matriarch’ n.pag)

This section coupled with the discussion in the previous chapter spotlights the parallel Hector hints at between the differentiated integration of women into Caribbean nations and, to adapt Welsh, the ‘still overwhelmingly androcentric, canonical contours’ of Caribbean bad-minded critical terrain (177).

Queen Singing Althea and Kincaid’s purposeful insertion of Afro-Caribbean women into the Caribbean is accomplished not only by their petition for women’s meaningful integration into the nation but also their own engagement with the literary arts. Their narratives in fact elaborate an established regional tradition of, to cite O’Callaghan, ‘inherently subversive’ women’s writing that ‘explore narrative avenues of

⁶⁷. This is a reference to the 1995 murder of Valerie Baughman, an American tourist who was pushed off the roof of the Royal Antiguan hotel by her then husband, John Baughman.

resistance, from parodying patriarchal posturing . . . to rewriting canonical works of empire' (*Woman Version* 7-8). For her part, Mahabir has referred to the offerings of Trinidadian women calypsonians as 'oral feminism in the making' and credited them with 'shaping an emergent women's consciousness' (410). In the case of Antigua and the Caribbean, this suggests that future scholarship—on nation, nationalism, and gender's role in both—would be well served to take its cues from the already existing contributions of literary producers—male and female—on these themes.

Furthermore, I venture to suggest that the region is not without a critical tradition on nations and nationalism that offers an account of nationalism as, to cite Boehmer, 'a specific historical development of power defined by sexual difference' (22). Rather, the literary texts, especially the Caribbean calypso, prove themselves an excellent archive of Afro-Caribbean criticism that articulates as well as offers commentary on the nation as connected to the expected performances of Caribbean masculinities and femininities. I find particularly heartening, for example, Hughes-Tafen engagement with women calypsonian's use of their 'calypso performances as a theatrical platform to offer a gendered critique of the nation and engage in a dialogue, which despite exhibiting pride in the nation, questions its various exclusions in ways that seek to redefine dominant constructions of the nation as "we"' (48).

II.

CASSIN'S CREOLE

Introduction

Frieda Cassin's *With Silent Tread* is a singular enunciation of late 19th century Antiguan Creole female experiences. The text explores established national, ethnic, and 'racial' dichotomies of difference informing the discourse and praxis of English colonialism and Antigua's engagement with the colonial project. It queries delineations of Antigua-England, Creole-'white', and Creole-'black' as categories of difference marking self from the Other and oscillates between subverting and calcifying these limnings. The text also foregrounds, to borrow from Ramchand, the terrified consciousness engendered by anxieties, in 19th-century Antigua and England/Europe, regarding the instability/porosity of the categories constituting the established dichotomies.

Significantly, *W.S.T's* interrogation of established 19th-century dichotomies is executed primarily via its query of the model 'white' femininity prescribed for Antiguan and West Indian Creole females. Contra past and present re-presentations of the territories as Creole male and Afro-Caribbean male spaces, respectively, the gynocentric focus of the text invents Antigua and the West Indies as a Creole female space. Cassin's peculiar query of 'white' femininity and her concomitant insertion of Antiguan Creole women into the imaginings of colonial Antigua and West Indies trouble present day 'assumptions that "the" imperial account was homogenous' (O'Callaghan, 'Early' 151). Her Creole women are re-presented as hybrid bodies articulating distinct composite gender, 'racial', ethnic, and class identities that are at odds with English colonialism's hegemonic 'black'-'white' and West Indian-English ethno-racial and cultural paradigms.

The text demystifies Creole female experiences by engaging and interrogating the myths that bad-mindedly script Creole women as homogenous doppelgängers of the

model Victorian/ 'white' female, and Antigua and the West Indies as a place inherently bad-minded to the 'white' body and psyche. It utilises the bodies performed by main Creole and English female characters and delineations of the former as articulated by Creole and English male characters as plot devices that engage with and, in some cases, revise the myths/stereotypes that have colonised the Creole woman's body. It also highlights main aspects of 19th-century Antigua that hinder Creole females' performances of the scripted hegemonic modes of 'Englishness' and 'whiteness'. These aspects are re-presented as leading to the degeneration of the Creole body, which, within the parameters of the text, operates as a symbol of the decline of Creole prosperity and dominance in Antigua and the West Indies.

Cassin engages with 19th-century colonial discourses of environmental and cultural determinism to re-present Antigua as a tropical location that is innately injurious to the Creole female body and psyche, and in turn claims of 'whiteness' and 'Englishness'. The island is in fact portrayed to be as much a [dark] doppelgänger of England as the Creole female is of her English counterpart. Post-emancipation Antiguan society is indicted for adhering to the brutalities and rigid class structure that typified pre-emancipation Antigua. Moreover, the praxis of bad-mindedness marking the Creoles' hegemonic positioning within this degenerative Antiguan society is made to account for the incongruities between the Creole and 'white' English body and psyche.

The integrity of the Creole body and psyche is also re-presented as under threat from its proximity to the 'black' body. Significantly, the text locates the 'black' Antiguan population at the periphery of Antiguan and West Indian citizenship. Creoles are referenced as 'West Indians' and given full names. In contrast, 'black' characters are referenced as 'these people', 'black', and 'negroes'. The bad-minded silencing of their surnames is suggestive of 19th-century class and 'racial' prejudices that denied

personhood as constituted by a family history and connection to the island to the ‘blacks’⁶⁸. In this regard, Cassin calcifies the contemporary ‘racial mentality and hierarchy of slavery’—the preservation of which Roberts notes ‘was still a priority’ for Creoles in the 19th-century post-emancipation Caribbean (390). At the core of *W.S.T* lies both an exploration of what Roberts identifies as post-emancipation Creole ‘consciousness of the possibility of negro [and/or ‘coloured’] dominance’ and the manifestation of what Ramchand designates as ‘terrified consciousness’ (389; *West Indian Novel* 225).

Cassin re-presents miscegenation as a prime threat of the proximity/contact between the Creole and ‘black’/ non-‘white’ populations and elaborates late 19th-century terror concerning its perceived consequences upon ‘white’ body, psyche, and society. In the novel, the degeneration of the latter three manifests itself in the threat posed to them by leprosy, which is, significantly, a body wasting illness. For Cassin, leprosy functions, as O’Callaghan aptly summarises, as ‘a trope for the hidden shame of miscegenation, and more generally, for the contagious sickness of West Indian post-slavery society’ (‘Introduction’ 21). It also functions as a marker of particularly transgressive bodies that enact performances out of line with the composite identities scripted for them. In addition, Cassin’s unambiguous endorsement of controversial calls for segregation of lepers elaborates 19th-century anxiety ‘of disease transmission between racial communities in empire and of transmission back to Britain’ (Thomas, ‘Frieda’ 1).

The prominent role of leprosy in *W.S.T* along with the disease’s prominence in 19th-century colonial history and discourse necessitates foregrounding the mood and sentiments of the era regarding the disease. There is a longstanding tradition of fear regarding the disabling properties of leprosy and its destabilisation of the dichotomy

⁶⁸. In the final chapter, I examine Antiguan calypsos’ recording of Afro-Antiguan protest against this body of the amnesiac.

between death and life. Edmond notes that leprosy has long been used, within literature and historical records, to signify larger issues. He characterises the disease as having a ‘tendency to become more than itself’ particularly during periods of societal or political turbulence (*Leprosy* 4). In the case of *W.S.T.*, the overall danger Antigua presents to the Creole female’s body and sensibility via the destabilisation of ‘racial’ boundaries is symbolised by leprosy looming as a threat and an ‘ever-recurring reality’ for both the ‘naygur’ and the ‘buckra’⁶⁹ (159).

Cassin’s text was published during a period marked by contentious debate on whether or not the increase in cases of leprosy in the colony and the colonial world posed such a threat as to demand the compulsory segregation of lepers⁷⁰. The annual colonial report for the Leeward Islands for 1891 assured that there were few cases of the disease present in Antigua and cited a census which returned with 45 infected persons in a population of 36,119. It however also acknowledged that the lack of legislation ordering compulsory segregation made it ‘very difficult to retain within the asylum those who voluntarily enter it’ (39). Additionally, the local press featured many published statements that advocated the segregation of lepers. For example, a petition to Queen Victoria published in the *Antigua Standard* of 8 November 1890 urged the Queen to, ‘direct that measures may be taken for the segregation of all classes of lepers in these Islands’ so as to relieve residents of both the anxiety and chance of contracting the disease (qtd. in O’Callaghan, ‘Introduction’ 20).

In Europe, according to Edmond, by the 1880s, the medical discussion on leprosy entered the public domain. The overwhelming concern was the prospect of ‘reinfection of the metropolis’ and the need to segregate the lepers both at ‘home’ as well as in the colonies (*Leprosy* 19). Edmond notes that the inexplicable disappearance of the disease

⁶⁹. ‘Naygur’ denotes a ‘black’ resident whilst ‘buckra’ refers to a ‘white’ or Creole.

⁷⁰. ‘Colony’ refers to the then presidencies of Antigua, St. Kitts, Nevis, Dominica, Montserrat and the Virgin Islands which composed the colony of the Leeward Islands.

from various parts of Europe in the early modern period engendered fears of its re-entrance ‘in new and virulent form as a kind of counter-invasion’ (*Leprosy* 8; ‘Abject bodies’ 134). Importantly, he also observes that the mass movement of Indian, Chinese and Japanese indentured labours across the Indian, Pacific and Caribbean oceans during this period augmented fears of contagion, ‘which in turn offered a language with which to stigmatise and denigrate these migrants’ (*Leprosy* 7).

Overall, Edmond provides a useful account of the character and development of the 19th century ‘leprosy debate’ as related to notions of difference and constructions/representations of national and imperial identity. According to him, a number of factors led to the reconstruction of the disease as contagious, a threat to Europeans and in turn to calls for the compulsory segregation of lepers. These included the isolation of the leprosy bacillus in 1874 by Norwegian physician Gerhard Hansen, the growing acceptance of the germ theory, the hesitancy of many colonial officials to accept the finding that leprosy was a hereditary disease, a collapse in the belief in European immunity, and an overall anxiety about the disease being transmitted from the colonies back to Europe (*Leprosy* 19).

Prior to the 1880s, the 1867 *Report on Leprosy* by the Royal College of Physicians played an important role in the initial construction of leprosy as both a non-contagious and predominantly ‘native’ disease, unlikely, as Edmond puts it, ‘to jump the barriers of race or geography’. According to Edmond, the report, in framing the issue in this manner, supported colonial discourses’ delineation of coloniser and indigene as distinct (*Leprosy* 57). He notes that the stabilisation of the distinctions between the two groups ‘became more urgent as colonial powers extended their territories while attempting to keep their distance from the peoples and diseases of those territories’. By the 1860s, leprosy was being interpellated to operate within the ‘highly unstable’

dichotomy of health/sickness which was being used, in the 19th century, to mark difference and in turn inform constructions of national and imperial identity (*Leprosy and Empire* 58).

The findings of the 1867 report were overturned by the 1893 report of an official Leprosy Commission sent out to conduct investigations in India in 1890. The commission concluded, inter alia, that leprosy was in fact not hereditary nor was any 'race' or caste peculiarly susceptible to it. It also assured that the risk/degree of contagion was minimal and that legislation 'on the lines either of segregation, or interdiction of marriage with lepers, was unnecessary' (qtd. in *Leprosy* 101). According to Edmond, these new findings failed to quiet the anxiety surrounding the disease. Four years later, the first International Leprosy Conference was held in Berlin and there the 'contagionist position' was endorsed and segregation proposed as the solution for the control and eventual eradication of the disease (*Leprosy* 19).

With regards to West Indian reactions, Edmond notes that the original conclusions of the 1867 report were either ignored or resisted. In the decade following its publication, Gavin Milroy, the Royal College expert on leprosy and Honorary Secretary to the Committee, was often called upon to certify and reiterate the findings (*Leprosy* 52). The colonists paid little heed to Milroy, who throughout his tour of the Caribbean reiterated that leprosy was non-contagious and that the segregation and neglect of lepers was inhumane. Milroy campaigned for 'leprosy' to be removed as a label from the title of institutions treating lepers and for lepers to be cared for in the same facility as other chronically ill patients. Milroy also advocated for work-therapy to be put in place at facilities treating lepers. However, in Trinidad, for example, where work-therapy had been introduced, the public, fearful of infection, could not be persuaded to buy or utilise items made by the lepers (*Leprosy* 63).

The fear of infection and paranoia about leprosy permeates *W.S.T.* Within the first of the text's two vignettes, the argument is made for Antiguan lepers—'these unhappy beings'—to be 'peacefully segregated from' the 'repulsion and temptation' they engender in others (35). Cassin's advocacy of segregation is marked by what I read as an insistence on delineating the 'black' population as the original source of infection⁷¹. It is not by accident that Cassin has a 'black' character, Eliza, express an uncontested wish that the Queen and Governor would hasten to 'shut up de naygur leper, an' de buckra leper mighty quick' (40). Nor is it by chance that, unlike with the creole female protagonist, Morea and her mother, the sources of contamination for the two non-'white' lepers singled out in the text are never revealed and appear to be of little consequence. I interpret the 'black' character's expression of a desire for segregation as both a ventriloquised admission of guilt on behalf of her 'race' and a sanctioning of the popularly proposed solution. Similarly, I read Cassin's silence on the 'black'' and 'coloured' characters' source of infection as an assertion of their 'race' being the original host of the disease, and in turn of the danger the 'black'/non-'white' body presents to the Creole.

I. Cassin's Creole

The contamination of the lively Creole protagonist Morea, via brief contact with the 'black' leper Ol' Pete, is the main device *W.S.T.* utilises to propagate panic about the degeneration of the Creole body. I interpret Ol' Pete's 'semi-crippled' and 'mutilated' figure as a symbol of the stasis and degeneration characterising post-emancipation 'race' relations on the island and the continued mutilation of 'black' personhood. Though

⁷¹. This is in keeping with what Edmond notes was the 'racialisation' of the disease in the modern colonial period. He offers the example of American abolitionist Dr. Benjamin Rush who in a 1792 paper, argued that the 'colour' as well as the 'figure' of 'blacks' originated from a 'modification' of leprosy (qtd. in *Leprosy and Empire* 9).

Morea's decomposition happens off-page and, unlike Ol' Pete's, is a private affair economically summed up in three words—'Morea is dead'—, her capitulation to the disease furthers the symbol, as I will elaborate later, of the degenerative effect the brutality embedded within post-emancipation Antigua has on Antiguan bodies—Creole and 'black'.

Importantly, it is not solely the apathy of Morea's mother, Mrs. Latrobe, as a representative of the Creole elite that is cast as playing an immense role in Ol' Pete's vengeful infection of a young Morea. *W.S.T* also suggests that in 19th-century Antigua, leprosy is the punishment administered to the Creole female who refuses to perform the scripted ideal of Victorian 'white' femininity. Morea's vitality is indeed crucial in highlighting the bad-mindedness of the arbitrary and cruel fate levied against her as a result of her mother's treatment of Ol' Pete. However, within the parameters of the text, it also delineates her as an overtly unruly 'white' body and therefore especially predestined to succumb to leprosy, which functions in the text as the marker of all transgressive bodies.

Leprosy's casting as the 'terrible scourge' that eventually and directly affects the Creole female who performs a particularly transgressive body is evident in the example the text makes of Morea's sister, Thekla. Very significantly, Thekla, who is ostracised by her mother after entering a relationship with an un-named young 'coloured' man, is described as being the 'tallest and handsomest' of the Latrobe girls and having been the life of the island's gatherings. Though Morea is described as bearing a striking resemblance to her, Thekla is drawn as having been 'still brighter and livelier' and 'always laughing and chatting, like a sunbeam in the home' (104). This, undeniably, as per Cassin's schema of subjectivity, signals the eldest Latrobe girl as an even greater performer of an unruly body than her youngest sister.

Antiguan Creole's society ostracisation of Thekla and her husband sums up the terror occasioned by the young man's petition for full personhood, via marriage to a member of the Creole elite, and the Creole's woman subversive performance of 'white' womanhood. This correlates with Brathwaite's description of the anxiety suffered by Jamaican pre-emancipation Creole society in the face of a 'coloured' population which was growing, acquiring property, and becoming educated. According to him, these developments aroused 'jealousy and the feeling that these people should be "kept in their place" for the general good of the body politic (i.e. of the whites)' (*Development* 178). For his part, Green notes that though by 1832, the region had removed all the civil disabilities applicable to the 'coloureds', the 'colour bar'—as Cassin 1890s text clearly corroborates—'remained a fixture of day to day life' (19).

It is not insignificant that *W.S.T* writes Mrs. Latrobe's anger regarding the union between her daughter and the young 'coloured' man as linked to 'strict old-time ideas' that support racial segregation. The text portrays post-emancipation Antigua as understanding, like pre-emancipation Antigua, that interracial sexual relationships formed an area in which 'the greatest damage was done to white creole apartheid policy and where the most significant—and lasting—inter-cultural creolization took place' (Brathwaite, *Development* 303). Creole and 'black'/ non-'white' interracial unions meant the troubling of the boundaries that distinguished the Creole from the 'black' and aligned the former to the 'white' European. Also, the offspring of such unions meant the creation of a hybrid racial group, which further destabilised established categories of 'whiteness'.

Gilman aptly observes that 19th-century fear of miscegenation was not simply centred upon interracial sexuality but also its perceived result—the decline of the

population⁷². Interracial marriages were viewed as ‘exactly parallel to the barrenness of the prostitute: if they produced children at all, these children were weak and doomed’ (‘Black Bodies’ 193). Curiously, in *W.S.T.*, though Thekla and her husband had been together for years, there is no mention of the two having produced children. This and the description of the young man as someone who was ‘rather weak and reliant’ and lacking a very strong or determined character as well as his eventual succumbing to leprosy remind of colonial discourse’s characterisation of ‘mulattos’ as ‘weak and effeminate persons’ who, considered hybrids, like mules, were unable to reproduce, especially with each other (Brathwaite, *Development* 177).

More specifically, the terror engendered by Thekla’s transgressive performance of ‘white’ femininity undoubtedly also centres upon the promised elision of the boundaries marking Creole/‘white’ womanhood as distinct from black womanhood. The legal structure that supported the old order in Antigua and the West Indies was meant to ‘disassociate white womanhood from the reproduction of the slave status by linking it solely to black women’. Therefore, when ‘white’ women reproduced with enslaved ‘black’ men, the children of such unions were legally free. This ensured that the offspring of ‘white’ women would not ‘experience social relations as human property, nor suffer legal alienation from social freedom’ (Beckles, *Centering Woman* 62).

‘White’ patriarchal society attempted to circumscribe ‘blacks’ gaining freedom via this route by limiting ‘white’ women’s sexual freedom via public institutions and the establishment of social norms that ‘did not sanction multiracial domesticity for the white woman’ (Beckles, ‘Perfect’ 148). According to Beckles, ‘Social exclusion, and sometimes death, awaited the white woman who broke free of these constraints’ (‘Perfect’ 149). West Indian society therefore became marked by a dichotomy between

⁷². Gilman describes miscegenation as ‘a fear (and a word) from the late nineteenth-century vocabulary of sexuality’ (‘Black Bodies’ 193).

‘black’ and ‘white’ womanhood. The ‘black’ woman was scripted as the reproducer of labour whilst a ‘premium’ was placed on ‘white’ female maternity ‘for its role in the reproduction of patriarchy’ (Beckles, *Centering* 62).

The post-emancipation case of Thekla therefore articulates the threat presented to ‘white’ womanhood by the young woman’s inability to reproduce ‘white’ patriarchy or to transfer to any progeny she might produce the elite social status in keeping with her upbringing. Curiously, just as *W.S.T* denies the couple children, so too it shies away from having Thekla, despite prolonged contact, contract leprosy from her husband. I agree with Thomas’s persuasive argument that Cassin purposefully censors herself in this regard. While the scene of Morea’s transmission—Ol’ Pete kisses her face and mouth and rubs his face against hers—is representable in the novel, the suggestion of romantic/sexual contact between the Creole woman and her ‘coloured’ husband, which would, according to Cassin’s erroneous model of transmission, have led to Thekla’s infection ‘cannot be hinted at’ (6). The social ostracism Thekla endures and her later struggles with poverty when her husband’s seemingly inherent ‘leper-ness’ manifests itself is sufficient suggestion for Cassin of the fate awaiting the Creole woman who refuses to perform the scripted ideal of Victorian ‘white’ femininity⁷³.

With Silent Tread locates the overtly transgressive bodies of Thekla and Morea, along with other Antiguan Creole females, as products of a colonial Antiguan cultural environment that is the transgressive *doppelgänger* of its ‘mother country’, England. The former is portrayed as marked by an entrenched pattern of bad-mindedness that results in the degeneration of its inhabitants—Creole and ‘blacks’ alike. The latter suffers no such dark critique. Cassin’s re-presentation of England calcifies colonial discourses’

⁷³. As with Ol’ Pete, Cassin does not identify the source of Thekla’s husband’s infection. I read this as a lumping of the ‘coloured’ man with the ‘black’ population as original hosts of leprosy. I also read his leper body as a marker of his performance of a body at odds with the scripted ‘coloured’ or non-‘white’ identity.

dichotomy of national/cultural difference between the colonial power and colony that favours the former. It also enacts a peculiar un-writing of English involvement in the colonial project; Antiguan Creole society is written as largely, if not wholly, complicit in its own degeneration.

All of this is strikingly foregrounded in the text's two opening vignettes. The first vignette—'A picture'—portrays an encounter between the disfigured leper and former coachman, Ol' Pete, and his former mistress, Mrs. Latrobe—a lady of 'high standing in the island'—that 'clearly evokes the unequal paternalistic structure of master and slave' (35; O'Callaghan, 'Introduction' 22). The latter ignores the pleas of the former and his references to his past faithful service, simply informing him, 'I never give to beggars' (36). This treatment of Ol' Pete in Cassin's post-emancipation Antigua is in keeping with the treatment of elderly enslaved 'blacks' unable to perform the script of the labourer in pre-emancipation Antigua. An 1815 report from the *Association for the Relief of Distressed Negroes, &c. in Antigua* features repeated references of having to provide for enslaved 'blacks' who had contracted leprosy, had 'applied in vain' to their mistresses and were often left in 'great want' (n.pag).

The stoic reaction of Mrs. Latrobe, along with the description of her face and body as 'inflexible' and 'unflinching', symbolises the inflexibility and apathy constituting the bad-mindedness that marks upper-class Creole relationship with the impoverished 'black' working class (36). In turn Ol' Pete's act of revenge, his accosting of the young Morea to transmit his disease to her, suggests that it is the apathetic stance of the Creole that engenders the vindictiveness and degeneration marking Antiguan society. Upper-class Creole Antigua is thus scripted as being complicit in its own decline. Eliza's remark, at the end of the first vignette, on the need to segregate the lepers to avoid total contamination is therefore ironic since Cassin has already anticipated Antigua to be just

that—fully contaminated. Creole apathy and cruelty sparks retaliation against the guiltless and, as O’Callaghan succinctly summarises, ‘All West Indians, unwittingly or not, are contaminated by their history’ (‘Introduction’ 22).

The dark and sinister undertones of the first vignette are absent from the second vignette—‘Another picture’—set in Kent, England; the leper, stoic former mistress, screaming Morea and panicked nurse are replaced by children at play on a pebbly beach at Deal. The crisis of the moment is Min’s, the younger Marion, sprained ankle that resulted from her obeying a command from the young Selwyn to jump from a wall. Their return home is unmarked by any cover-ups/deceptions—though Min does attempt to take the blame for her injury⁷⁴. Though Selwyn storms out angrily after his older sister, Elizabeth, settles upon the incident being his fault, the vignette ends with the group getting ready for tea.

Importantly, though an unequal power structure is evoked in the second vignette, as in the first—Selwyn is the master and Min his ‘devoted slave’—Selwyn and Min are shown to be connected ‘in an English code of honour’ when each attempts to take responsibility for Min’s injury (Cassin 40; O’Callaghan, ‘Introduction’ 23). Cassin not only constructs a shared past for the two—they are ‘excellent chums’—but also represents them as products of a peaceful and unproblematic environment in which all threat to English safety is predictable, visible to the naked eye, fleeting, and nonfatal. Cassin’s depiction of the English family and England engages with what Edmond notes was the typical tone of general studies of the 19th-century which limned ‘the Victorian home as a peaceful, even sacred, place, a haven in a heartless world’. This idealisation, he observes, stood in stark contrast to Victorian writing which is ‘full of unhappy homes, appalling families, and the break-up of happy homes and families’ (*Affairs* 7).

⁷⁴ In the first vignette, Morea’s young nurse, fearing the wrath of Mrs. Latrobe, takes the advice of her friend and does not report their encounter with Ol’ Pete.

With Silent Tread persists throughout with an idealisation of England that exhibits few cracks. Cassin in fact has the grown-up Min, Marion, directly voice the differences marking mother country and colony as outlined in the opening vignettes. In a conversation with her Creole cousin, Merriebell, in Antigua, Marion insists upon the superiority of England as a more hospitable or less bad-minded and duplicitous place/space than the small island: ‘But at home, at least, our dangers may claim to be open and above board, here they seem to run in little silent undercurrents seldom spoken of and dangerous to recognise’. She also limns the English person as at odds with the Creole and Creole environment. The latter ‘might live out here for years and go home at last perfectly unconscious of any dangers lived through or of any dormant volcanoes under one’s feet’ (102).

Marion herself is a central plot device used to interrogate 19th-century interpellations of the Creole and the West Indies, whose function I will return to not infrequently in this section. Her presence in Antigua and the primacy which Cassin affords her gaze is not insignificant. She is positioned as the performer of the ideal English/ ‘white’ femininity and an arbiter of Creole femininity and Antigua/West Indian society. This is made evident by her delineation, in the opening chapter, as the ‘unmistakably English girl’, ‘cheery, bright and approachable, a woman who... would have a wholesome influence over all with whom she came in touch’ (40). She is the equivalent of the baker’s woman in terms of her performance of the model ‘white’ femininity. It is through her ‘unmistakably’ English gaze that Antigua is first seen, years after Mrs. Latrobe and Morea’s encounter with Ol’ Pete. Via her gaze, in the opening chapter, Antigua is immediately limned as England’s Other for, inter alia, its dilapidated and poorly managed infrastructure, the generally unhurried attitude of its residents and the convoluted and pervasive kinship ties marking Creole society.

The Antigua at which Marion gazes in the opening chapter is a fitting habitat for the Creole Morea delineated by Selwyn, prior to his meeting her. Selwyn, like Marion is also positioned as an arbiter of the Creole woman and West Indian society's performance of 'whiteness' and 'Englishness', respectively. His caricature of Morea draws upon a network of longstanding interconnected English stereotypes of the Creole and the West Indies that limned both as the Other. He envisions Morea as follows:

Her talk is slow, measured, and monotonous, and she occasionally falls asleep before reaching the end of a sentence. She is very fond of giving orders, but does not always stay awake to see if they are carried out. ... I shall be immensely polite to her...until she wants to make use of me to fan her by the hour together.... The Mater and herself will sit placidly dozing in the sunshine, the Mater perhaps knitting a little, and our saffron-coloured West Indian twirling her thumbs. (130)

Selwyn's delineation of the Creole woman is worth examining given his positioning as representative of the Englishman, and a figure akin to Kincaid's baker. In *W.S.T.*, his hand in marriage is the symbolic equivalent of the baker allowing the worthy female access to his bread.

Selwyn's reference to the Creole accent draws upon the pervasive stereotype of the 'Creole drawl' used to Other the West Indian. In the 19th-century novel, *Constance Mordaunt*, Creole speech is described as 'grating to the ears of Europeans and so difficult to be got rid of' (qtd in O'Callaghan, *Women Writing* 136). Similarly in *W.S.T.*, the Otherness of Creole speech is highlighted in the narrator's unfavourable comparison of the Barbadian drawl to 'the crisp, cheery, English tones' (128). The slow speech of the Creole is also linked to another prevalent stereotype, which Selwyn references in his portrait of Morea as prone to narcolepsy and idleness,—that of the 'lazy Creole'.

Cassin has Morea herself query this latter stereotype during a conversation with the Englishman. The young Creole woman not only dismisses the myth but commits to a rewriting that reinstates Creole agency and queries the 'truth' of connected stereotypes

supporting Creole difference. She destabilises the dichotomy of lazy creole- industrious English by rewriting the frames of reference for industry. The observed Creole females' 'fine talent for doing nothing' is revised as measured industry, that is, they exert themselves 'when necessity urges'. Likewise, Creole male resilience, that is, the ability to 'get through a great deal' is located within the parameters of industry (133). Importantly, her deconstruction also invents the Creole as arbiter of English industry as evident in the wry comment: 'the Englishman . . . is our universal ideal of strength, vigour, and athletic activity. I hope I am not doomed to prove him a mere delusion and a fraud' (133).

For his part, Selwyn's reliance upon the stereotype of the lazy Creole is bolstered by the stereotype of West Indian lifestyle as one of indulgent excess. Selwyn's Morea will not only relegate him to fan-bearer but also prove prone to despair 'at not finding six or seven black maids' at her disposal⁷⁵ (129). This correlates with Lady Nugent's 19th-century testimony of the dependency of the Creole woman on 'a number of servants' as well as her worry that her son will come to think himself a 'little king' and adopt the arrogance and 'all the petty vices of little tyrants' (146). Overall, the stereotype spotlights the perceived degeneration of the Creole body and mind, as evidenced in their reduced functional capacity, which is encouraged by Creole society's dependency on and proximity to 'black' labour and body, respectively.

Selwyn's caricature of Morea is also undoubtedly informed by the cultural and environmental determinism guiding 19th-century stereotyping of the inevitable degenerative effect living in the West Indies has on the Creole body and sensibilities. The West Indies, for Selwyn, is the 'topsy-turvy land with fishes that fly, and crazy cashews growing their seeds outside instead of in' (137). Roberts observes that in both the English

⁷⁵. Indeed, one of Morea and Selwyn's later spats is caused by the latter's inability to understand the former's longing for her 'black' nurse, Mammy Doodle.

and French territories, the ‘idleness mentality’ of the Creole ‘was reaffirmed as the psychological result of the influence of the land’. According to him, an early belief was that whites were ‘temperate climate people’ and were therefore susceptible to being adversely affected by tropical climate. He notes that the West Indies was viewed as the region of plenty, favourable climate, and an enslaved labour force, which meant that whites ‘could exist comfortably without having to work hard’ (391).

The degeneration of Selwyn’s Morea manifests itself physically and mentally. She is ‘saffron-coloured’, short and has ‘black and bead-like eyes’ which are hardly ever ‘quite open’. Her devolution, expressed in her diminished intellect, reduces her range of conversation to but one phrase—‘How very hot!’ (129-130). Selwyn’s ‘yellowed’ Morea is consistent with *W.S.T.’s* repeated referencing of the peculiar colouration of the Creole as a symbol of the undesirable un-‘whitening’ of the Creole body and sensibility. This in turn references what Edmond notes was 19th-century interpellation of the tropics ‘as uninhabitable by Europeans for any sustained period’ and European bodies as distinct from those of their subjects. Residency of the former in tropical zones was thought more likely to result in illness and death as opposed to adaptation (*Leprosy* 20, 110).

The Creole body therefore troubles the European-‘native’ dichotomy. On one hand, their resilience—that is, their survival in Antigua and the West Indies—positions them, in the 19th-century model of health and illness, as inferior to the European⁷⁶. On the other, their susceptibility—the supposed degeneration of body and intellect—positions them as superior to local non-‘white’ populations. As Edmond explains, in 19th-century colonial discourse, both immunity and susceptibility ‘could figure as markers of superiority when attached to the white races’ (*Leprosy* 112). Of course, in the case of Cassin’s Creole,

⁷⁶ In *Leprosy and Empire*, Edmond provides a useful discussion of the way in which the late 19th-century invention of “tropical medicine” conceptualized the difference between Europe and its others’. He notes that one of its main tenets was the difference between native susceptibility to diseases and European health (18).

both the immunity and susceptibility of the Creole is viewed negatively as far as the overall impact on Creole ‘whiteness’ is concerned.

Nineteenth-century perceptions of Creole sensibility as deformed/diminished ‘white’ sensibility also unfavourably references the transformative results of the cultural contact between Creole and ‘black’ populations that Brathwaite, Glissant, and others have described as ‘creolisation’. Brathwaite defines creolisation as a,

cultural action—material, psychological and spiritual- based upon the stimulus/response of individuals within the society to their environment and- as white/black, culturally discrete groups – to each other.
(*Development* 296)

He offers the example of Lady Nugent whose initial approval of her husband’s immediate predecessor, Lord Balcarres, is later withdrawn after she estimates him to have ‘gone Creole’. Lord Balcarres’s Creole sensibility exhibited itself in his link to a coloured mistress, lapse of good manners and proper hygiene, and other habits considered peculiar to the Jamaican ‘black’ population (*Development* 110).

The notion of ‘going Creole’ and the colonialist discourse surrounding the perceived degeneration of ‘white’ sensibility represented an attempt by Europeans to classify the visible adaptive effects of European transplantation in the West Indies. Brathwaite argues that creolisation was a two-way process in which both the dominant group—the Creoles—and the subordinate group—the ‘blacks’—influenced each other’s cultural norms through their ‘osmotic relationship’ (*Development* 296; *Contradictory* 6). According to him, what this meant was that the society formed ‘in so far as it was neither purely British nor West African, is ...Creole⁷⁷’ (*Development* xiii). Beckles concurs noting that the process of creolisation transformed European immigrants ‘at the frontier into natives who possessed an increasingly distinct value system and sensibility’ (*Centering* 71). It is this distinctiveness that is anticipated by Selwyn’s obscene and bad-

⁷⁷. ‘Creole’ here denotes indigenously Caribbean.

minded caricature of Morea.

With Silent Tread engages with colonial discourse's bad-minded limning of the Antiguan Creole woman, as evident in Selwyn's delineations and Marion's observations, by fleshing out details of small colony life and the peculiar positioning of Antiguan Creole women. The local parson, Rev. Browncave is made to function in the text as a resident baker figure who counters the authority of the English *baker* figure, Selwyn, and baker's woman, Marion, and so reinstate Creole agency. He highlights crucial considerations overlooked by the English outsiders in their assessment of Creole female characters like Terpy, the equivalent of Selwyn's Morea. He also intervenes into Morea's snobbery as reserved for Creole women like Terpy. He re-writes what Marion views, to cite O'Callaghan, as 'the stunted growth of young West Indian women', as the 'legacy of female economic, educational, and social marginalization in a small colonial society' ('Introduction' 25).

Via Browncave, *W.S.T* spotlights the differentiated fortunes of Antigua's Creole women. It also highlights the peculiarity of the Creole woman's position in relation to her English counterpart given the bad-mindedness inherent in the limited economic and physical size of the island. Browncave re-writes the stereotypical life of excess of the Creole woman by referencing the poverty of some members of the group. This hints at the decline of Creole dominance and what Lowes notes was Antigua's 'sorry economic situation in the 1890s' (32). On one hand, he writes the island as akin to a prison—a confining space that, with its lack of resources and distance from European centres and pleasures, promises a 'stagnant' life and permanently threatens the Creole woman's performance of model 'white' femininity. On the other, he agrees with colonial discourse's delineation of England as a 'civilising' agent.

By way of example, Carrie, whom Marion thinks ‘rather abrupt and wanting in courtesy’, is revised by Browncave as a ‘fine girl’, who in ‘any wider place’ than Antigua would make her mark (93). Her seeming want of courtesy is re-written as the stance of a young woman who ‘had a good many cares and responsibilities when she was a child through poverty and careless parents’ (94). Moreover, she is revealed to have a desire to travel to England or America to ‘find her niche in life’. As another example, Louisa, whom Marion considers ‘the essence of vulgarity and affectation’ is revised as a clever girl who had the misfortune of being raised uneducated by women folks with no ‘higher aim in life than to pinch at home on a narrow income while making the greatest possible display in society’ (94). Tellingly, Browncave juxtaposes Creole women like Carrie and Louisa to those who spent their youth in England. The latter are limned as better equipped, having known European pleasures, to have ‘extra in interest in life’ and interact with English culture as imported into Antigua. They can ‘enjoy the English newspapers and books and understand what they are all about’ since their brains have been properly ‘cultivated’ (95).

Thus, while Marion is re-presented as a performer of and an authority on the model ‘white’ femininity, *W.S.T* repeatedly demonstrates, as O’Callaghan persuasively argues, that her ‘reading of West Indian appearances is ultimately founded on an alien set of predetermined judgements, so that the truth eludes her: she is often in a “tangle of bewilderment”’ (‘Introduction’ 26). By way of example, Marion’s English eyes can marvel at the green beauty of the cane fields without giving thought, like *Lucy’s* Mariah, to the effects the brutality the fields represent has on Antiguan and Creole society. Similarly, she can enjoy the ‘heavy planter’s breakfast’—complete with butler and maid in attendance—at the Latrobes but appears not to take note of what the less lavish fare at

the Browncaves suggests about the varying socio-economic situations of the various Creole families and in turn the impact on the lives of the girls of whom she is critical.

In connection to the latter point above and Browncave's interventions, *W.S.T* provides clear indication that just as there is, to cite O'Callaghan, a 'subtle hierarchy of "real" white womanhood and a more degenerate Creole mutation' there is a corresponding hierarchy of Creole 'white' womanhood (*Women Writing* 33). This hierarchy is informed by judgements on the personality and intellect of the island's Creole women as well as their class status. By way of example, though Terpy and Morea appear to inhabit the same class bracket, Morea considers herself a more promising model of the Creole woman. She rebuts her mother's defence of the latter—'There is no say what Terpsichore might have been if she had had an English education'—with 'I haven't had an English education either' (81).

I return now to *W.S.T's* use of Morea's presymptomatic body as a main plot device to engender panic about the degeneration of the Creole body. My intention is to expand the discussion by focusing on the manner in which Morea's body is also used to interrogate 19th-century delineations of the Creole woman and Antigua/the West Indies. In the latter regard, my focus will be on the dissonance between her pre-leper body and her eventual fate. It will also be on the disunity between her performance of 'white' femininity and that of her mother and Marion's. I aim to show how all of this foregrounds the troubling implications the scripted ideal of 'white' femininity has for 19th century Creole female identity.

Morea's presymptomatic body is weighted with deep irony and symbolism. Fated to die since the age of three, she is drawn as the most energetic and passionate female in the novel and a Creole foil to Selwyn's Morea. Via Marion's English eyes, she is, contra Terpy, representative of hope for the future of the Creole female population—

No, there was life, nobility, power, and animation in that quaint, dark little face, with its rebellious waves of hair. In the most hopelessly colourless life in the world, Morea's active brain would still have found undercurrents of interest and occupation. (89)

Her vitality and zest for life are skilfully employed by Cassin to highlight the injustice of the arbitrary and cruel fate she—that is, the Creole future—has inherited as a result of her mother's cruelty—that is, past Creole cruelty—towards Ol' Pete—that is, the 'black' working class.

Morea's vitality and zest for life also symbolise the 'silent undercurrents' Marion identifies as marking Antigua and West Indian society and transforming the region into a threatening bad-minded space. Her deceptively healthy body is consistent with the text's representation of the leper body as a 'terrible scourge', that 'more often in secret invades the circles of West Indian families' (35). This reminds of Edmond's assertion that the body of the leper, more than Kristeva's example of the corpse, is a 'mordant instance' of what Kristeva means by abjection⁷⁸. For him, 'Leprosy undermines the integrity of the body and its significance as an expression of cherished distinctions and categories' (3). In *W.S.T.*, the 'silent tread' of the leper's body, as typified in the case of Morea, is terrifying for the Creole because it doubly blurs the distinction between the living and the dead 'among all colours and classes' (159). Moreover, its silent encroachment upon the Creole body versus its very visible inhabitation of the 'black' body doubles its effectiveness as a trope for the ignominy of the Creole contact with/proximity to the 'black' population.

Significantly, Morea's presymptomatic body comes under much scrutiny from her mother. The disunity between mother and daughter is primarily symbolised by their divergent views on what constitutes a proper wardrobe and comportment. This disunity may be read, as with Kincaid's texts, as a metaphor for the relationship between the

⁷⁸. For Kristeva, the corpse 'is the utmost of abjection. It is death infecting life' (4).

colony and the mother country as well as the colony and its female citizens. The daughter is both unable to dismiss the influence of her mother and to enact a performance of an identity that matches hers. She is also expected to enact a performance that is out of line with or delimited by her environs. By way of example, throughout *W.S.T.*, Morea's comportment strikingly contrasts that of her mother's. While the latter is reserved and stoic and clearly thinking this an appropriate posture of 'white' femininity, her daughter repeatedly exhibits an inclination to reject this scripted kumbla of stoicism and inflexibility. Mrs. Latrobe greets Marion 'kindly and sincerely, but without warmth'; Morea kneels before her and jokes. Mrs. Latrobe maintains a 'stiff, ungenial demeanour' when the three sit to breakfast; Morea engages in 'gay, bright chatter' (51- 55).

By way of another example, Morea's wardrobe, in contrast to her mother's, is exaggeratedly colourful; in this respect she performs the body of the Creole as a consumer of excess. She protests against the wardrobe her mother has her wear at nights—the dresses ordered from England and her hair styled according to the latest fashion from 'that stupid Paris' (64). Mrs. Latrobe's insistence upon an English wardrobe and European fashion for Morea represents an attempt to mask her daughter's Creole body and self. The mask, the equivalent of a kumbla, is however ill-fitting upon the Creole form. For Morea, the English wardrobe detracts rather than improves and renders her the equivalent of, as she puts it, a 'humming bird stripped of its bright colour' (63). This queries the scripted model of English femininity and signals its ill fit for the Creole woman. Morea's description of herself whilst dressed up per her mother's wishes as a 'doll or fashion-plate, instead of Morea Latrobe' unequivocally communicates the threat that 'Englishness' presents to Creole female personal autonomy. It erodes Creole female subjectivity and agency, and transforms woman into mannequin.

Furthermore, Marion's role as the model English female and Morea's as her Creole doppelgänger are emphasised by their differentiated comfort levels with an English wardrobe. While Morea suffers a sense of depersonisation, she observes how perfectly the fashion fits her English cousin: 'You can wear those laced up English clothes and not look a fright. I'm sure I wish I could'. Revealingly, Morea rejects her European costumes as 'ugly' and 'unhealthy' in comparison to the Japanese, Grecian, Turkish or 'Eastern styles', even as she acknowledges that her thinking so is 'another sin in Mamma's eyes' (64). This is in keeping with 19th-century delineation of the Creole woman as performer of an 'exotic' body/ femininity⁷⁹. Morea is in fact described as having a darker complexion than Marion and Terpy—she is drawn as possessing a 'quaint, dark little face' as well as a 'quaint Eastern type of beauty' (89, 54). Importantly, Cassin exercises great caution in her literal casting of Morea as Marion's darker double. She ensures that Morea is not so severely 'othered' as to make her a performer of the 'black' body. Instead, she destabilises 'whiteness' as a fixed category and subverts the conventional 'black'/'white' and European/West Indian categories by situating Morea in an intermediary exotic location, rendering her a palatable European, Asian, and West Indian hybrid.

I read Morea's awareness of the physical and other differences between herself and Marion as an internalisation of herself as Other in relation to the English self and the bad-mindedness attending her status as an inferior copy of the latter. By way of example, in the same moment in which Morea notes how perfectly the English fashion suits Marion, she also observes: 'How I envy you English girls your nice complexions. But you soon lose them out here that's one comfort. I mean one draw-back' (63). Her half-joking comment not only suggests her internalisation of the English female body as better

⁷⁹ . In literature, this is seen, for example in the immense beauty of the presymptomatic body of Bertha Mason in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*.

meeting the criteria of the classic standard of ‘white’ beauty, but also isolates Antigua/the West Indies as an inhospitable place capable of corrupting the English as it has done the Creole female body.

The suggestion from Cassin therefore is that efforts to transform the Creole female into a performer of English femininity could never be wholly successful. An English wardrobe, for example, cannot mask the difference living in the West Indies has produced in the Creole female’s outward appearance, and, more importantly her sensibilities. Indeed, though the Creole female may refer to England as ‘home’, as Morea and other Creoles in the text do, they could never be truly English, particularly not whilst simultaneously interpellated or identifying themselves, as West Indian. This brings to mind Rhys’s Mr. Rochester’s assertion of his Creole bride: ‘Creole of pure English descent she may be, but they are not English or European either’ (*Wide Sargasso Sea* 86).

I move to closing this section by focusing on *W.S.T*’s ultimate symbol of the Creole woman’s ‘otherness’ in relation to her English counterpart—her incompatibility with the English male. I suggest that Selwyn and Morea’s failed engagement spotlights the latter’s positioning outside of the English ‘family’ or nation; her ‘othered’ body is not one that can reproduce English citizenship. Tellingly, the prim and proper Elizabeth in delivering judgement on Morea’s unsuitability for her brother interpellates her as the ‘noble’ Creole ‘still in process of development’ and herself needing support. Selwyn himself is interpellated as having a ‘weak nature’, which needs a ‘healthy and guiding influence’ (140). Elizabeth’s latter pronouncement easily reminds of the narrator’s initial description of Marion as a ‘woman who . . . would have a wholesome influence over all with whom she came in touch’ (40).

Revealingly, the appearance of the symptoms of the disease, shortly before the wedding, is prefaced by references to the physical difference between Morea with her

‘shy dark beauty’, her ‘proud dark little head’ and the womenfolk of Selwyn’s family. When the leprosy specialist arrives to reveal the horrifying news, the cultural difference between the Creole and the Englishwoman is emphasised. Leprosy is isolated as a West Indian disease and phenomenon. The narrator stresses the Creole woman’s familiarity with it and its meaning: ‘No need to explain to the West Indian girl the detailed miseries of her condition. Brought up in a land where that awful affliction is an ever-recurring reality among all colours’ (159).

Morea’s sudden performance of the body of the leper as well as her noted familiarity with the disease brings to mind Gilman’s elaboration of the health/illness dichotomy marking 19th century discourse of citizenship/belonging. According to Gilman, this dichotomy posited the healthy body as ‘the beautiful . . . the good, for it leads to the preservation and continuation of the collective’. The converse was held to be true of the unhealthy body. It was believed that the ‘ugliness of the deviant may be overtly evident upon first glance, may appear over time, or may be evident only to the ‘trained eye’ of the physician/aesthetician’ (*Health* 66). The latter two descriptions are apt in Morea’s case. Just as apt is the delineation of the unhealthy body as a ‘mask’, there is ‘no intermediate or transitional stages’, which is ‘lifted to reveal the antithesis of the healthy’ (Gilman, *Health* 66). This reminds of Mrs. Latrobe’s efforts and failure, as described earlier, to cloak the Creole girl in English fashion and, what she perceives as proper English mannerisms and postures.

I concur with O’Callaghan that *W.S.T* ‘pathologizes cultural/racial hybridity to indicate the sickness of West Indian post-slavery society’ (‘Early’ 155). The ‘silent tread’ of leprosy within Morea’s form is suggestive of Creole society’s pre-disposition to decay and ruin. This calcifies the Creole-English and Antigua/West Indies-England dichotomies of difference. In the context of the 19th-century health/illness dichotomy as elaborated by

Gilman, *W.S.T* on one hand limns the Creoles as deviant bodies ‘predisposed to their state’ and belonging to a ‘separate world, a dangerous world that is always attempting to colonize the world of the healthy’. The English on the other hand, for all their bad-minded delineation of the Creoles, are the ‘good’ citizens, indisposed to being ill and infecting ‘members of society with dangerous illnesses...that would be marked on their physiognomies’ (*Health* 66).

The events that occur within the last pages of *W.S.T* not only position the Creole woman outside of the English ‘family’/nation but query her place in the world. Mrs. Latrobe’s transportation of Morea to a location that is neither Antigua nor England, the two places interpellated by Creole characters as ‘home’, suggests that the interstitial identity of the Creole female results in a peculiar un-homed-ness. This suggestion is worrying for the Creole female, particularly as regarding her claim to English citizenship and in turn her claim to ‘whiteness’. Anthony Trollope observes the peculiar way in which West Indian Creoles used the word ‘home’. According to him, ‘With the white people, it always signifies England, even though the person using the word has never been there’. He further asserts: ‘The word “home” with them is sacred, and means something holier than a habitation in the tropics. It refers always to the old country’ (75). In Cassin’s text, the Creole woman’s claim to England as a ‘home’ and ‘whiteness’ as a fixed ‘racial’ and cultural identity is vastly diminished. She is, as O’Callaghan puts it, the “menacing dark stranger” who threatens the home/land’ (‘Early’ 155).

I read Mrs. Latrobe’s return to the island, after Morea’s death and her own contamination as not so much evidence of the belongingness of the Creole to the West Indies but as a fulfilment of the historical representation of islands as ‘stations of quarantine, sites for isolation and containment of disease’ (Edmond and Smith 4). With the two Creoles- Morea and her mother- exiled from England and the English world safe

from ‘counter-invasion’ of leprosy, the text closes with a sedated Selwyn, whom Elizabeth would approve of, and a calm Marion accepting a life together (Edmond, ‘Abject’ 134). The story ends with the telling image of the setting sun sending ‘forth a sudden glow of shafted glory’, blessing the union of the Englishman and the Englishwoman; the Creole, ‘quarantined from the national family’ is nowhere in sight (169; O’Callaghan, ‘Early’ 156).

Conclusion

With Silent Tread’s singular enunciation of late 19th-century Antiguan Creole female experiences, along with its belated [re]insertion into ‘Caribbean literature’, renders it immensely relevant and useful for considerations of, and inclusion in future studies on, the genealogy of Antiguan and Caribbean identity as well as the nexus between ‘race’ and power in the region. Its invention of Antigua and the region as a ‘white’/Creole female space and the controversy this suggestion would undoubtedly invite in present-day scholarly and non-scholarly Caribbean spaces serves as a reminder of the central role ‘race’, class, and gender has played and continues to play in discourses of citizenship/belonging in the region and other spaces still entangled in the trauma of various European colonial projects. Its tone, preoccupations, and previous neglect also give clue to the personal investments which mark both the Caribbean writer and critic’s participation in the struggle to define ‘Caribbeanness’ and the pertinent Caribbean subject.

Furthermore, *W.S.T’s* engagement with questions of Creole identity and the group’s role in the brutality marking the foundations of Antiguan and West Indian societies reminds of the complexities of colonialism as a process. It queries customary apprehension of Creoles/ ‘whites’ as a homogenous bloc of ‘colonialists’ or, as O’Callaghan puts it, ‘wooden caricatures of bad history’ (‘Early’ 151). Cassin’s

indictment of Antiguan Creole society for its indifference to the suffering 'black' population is in fact marked by 'a pervasive unease about the imperial project' that intervenes into suppositions that "'the" imperial account was homogenous and smugly certain of the righteousness of its project' (O'Callaghan, 'Early' 151). Indeed, the text's attempt to recover a thoroughly colonised body, its articulation of the peculiar bad-mindedness inherent to small-island spaces, and its portrayal of an anxiety-ridden relationship with England, aligns it to rather than distances it from 20th and 21st-century engagements with the peculiar recuperative projects that interrogates the ontological and epistemological bad-mindedness inherent in the construction of Antiguan and Caribbean bodies within colonial and/or neo-colonial discourses.

III.

CARIB RE-VISION

Introduction

In *The Autobiography of My Mother* and *Unburnable*, Jamaica Kincaid and Marie-Elena John present accounts of early to late 20th-century Carib female experience. These accounts quilt a peculiar belated interrogation of European and Caribbean mis-treatment of the figure of the Carib, in particular, and indigenous experience, in general. John and Kincaid engage with prevailing myths, in circulation since the 15th century, that bad-mindedly delimit the Carib as ‘more “other” than the rest’ and account for the mis-representations and mis-treatment of the group in historical narratives, literary works, and Caribbean societies (Roberts 27). In both texts, the Carib female body predominates as a metonym for Carib/indigenous experience and identity. The female protagonists’ recuperation of their bodies de-mystifies, de-colonises, and in turn [re]inscribes the Carib body and experience with agency.

The recuperative projects undertaken by the protagonists [re]insert the Carib body into the Caribbean experience and national space(s). They also, crucially, delineate Carib experience and in turn, to adapt DeCaires Narain, the trauma and loss upon which the region is predicated as female (‘Standing in the Place’ 344). Pacquet observes that since the mid-20th century Caribbean women’s writing has engaged in a quest for a female ancestor via an ‘imaginary emplotment of the primal mother’. She argues that Caribbean women’s narratives

reinscribe the primal mother as a quasi-historical mythical female ancestor whose presence is responsive to the twentieth-century Caribbean women’s writer’s quest for cultural legitimacy and agency. (*Caribbean Autobiography* 12)

I read Kincaid and John’s recuperative efforts and preoccupation with the Carib mother in

their texts as firmly grounded within this tradition. Both authors intervene into Caribbean historical and master/national narratives to render important assertions about the foundations of Caribbean society and culture, and the female citizen/body's location in them.

Contra 20th-century and contemporary conventional apprehension of the region as an Afro-Caribbean masculine space and endeavour, John and Kincaid enact a reading of the Caribbean that limns the region's engagement with anti-colonialism and the national question as a Carib-Afro-Caribbean feminist undertaking that predates the 1950s. I read the acts of resistance and recuperation undertaken by Kincaid and John's protagonists as, to cite Anatol, 'a woman-centred, woman-positive' reinterpretation of the fearsome Caribbean supernatural female folklore figure—the 'soucouyant'⁸⁰ (46). I argue that this conventionally demonised figure is re-produced and revised in the performances enacted by the bodies of John's and Kincaid's protagonists as an enabling gynocentric version of, arguably, the most pervasive Carib figure originating from within European colonial discourse—the *cannibal*.

In *Unburnable*, John recovers the Carib body by having her beleaguered 'half-Carib' female characters, Iris and Lillian, lay claim to agency via ironic and subversive performances of the Carib femininity scripted by colonial discourse and prescribed by colonial and postcolonial Dominican societies. For its part, *T.A.O.M.M.'s* intractable 'half-Carib' anti-heroine, Xuela, [re]claims the Carib body via performances of indocile bodies that are at odds with the hegemonic femininity as well as with the scripted body of the

⁸⁰. The *soucouyant* is 'A legendary, evil, wrinkled old woman, who hides by day, but by night sheds her skin wh[ich] she carefully hides in a jar, then becomes a ball of fire roving in the air to seek out and light upon sleeping victims, esp[ecially] babies, whose blood she sucks before returning to her skin, wh[ich] may have been peppered and salted by those hunting her down to get rid of her by this as their only means' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 520).

productive citizen⁸¹. In both texts, the Carib females operate from a paradoxical location; they arrogate agency from within postures of defeat and historical demonisation. They also construct autonomous selves amidst the depersonising wreckage and cumulative trauma of colonial history.

Kincaid's and John's Carib women's hybrid bodies, like Cassin's Creole's, destabilise the dominant 'racial'—'black'-'brown'-'white'—and cultural—West Indian-European paradigms. At the texts' cores is, to borrow from Hall, a claim for 'access to the rights to representation' by the Carib herself and a 'contestation of the marginality, the stereotypical quality and the fetishized nature of images' of Caribs ('New Ethnicities' 442). There is also a concomitant exploration of the manifestations of the 'terrified consciousness' of the 'brown' and/or 'black' Dominican community which, despite being similarly affected by a history of European subjugation and colonial trauma, views the Carib's quest for autonomy as at odds or competing with its engagement with the national question.

For this section, I focus on the authors' re-presentations of the bad-minded delineations of Carib identity and experience, and their engagement with the myths that inform these delineations. I offer interpretations of what their interrogations of these myths suggest about Carib identity and experience—past and present—and the place/location of the Carib in present and future Dominican/Caribbean societies. An underlying argument that I advance is that John's and Kincaid's peculiar revisions of the Carib figure from tragic, defeated, and despised body to a body characterised by self-autonomy recuperates the indigenous group's deserved position in Caribbean traditions and narratives of anticolonial resistance.

For *Unburnable*, I examine John's re-presentations of Iris' subversive engagement

⁸¹. Iris is the daughter of Matilda, a 'black' woman of unadulterated African descent, and Simon, a Carib. Lillian is Iris's daughter via Winston, a 'coloured' man. For her part, Xuela is the daughter of a Carib woman, Xuela, and a 'coloured' Dominican man of Afro-Dominican and Scottish heritage, Alfred.

with three significant Carib myths: the ‘exotic’ Carib, the ‘savage’ Carib and the hyper-sexual Carib. I also analyse Iris’s daughter, Lillian’s, planned suicide as an enabling act that combats the cumulative trauma of Carib colonial history and entrenches the figure of the Carib within Dominican national narratives. My discussion of *T.A.O.M.M* focuses on the text’s engagement with the myth of the ‘vanished/vanquished Carib’. I pay particular attention to Xuela’s various modes of resisting or challenging Carib depersonisation and the tone of her quest for self-possession in the face of continuing colonial trauma and Carib marginality.

I. The ‘meaning of her skin’

Unburnable economically utilises the Carib female body, Iris’s in particular, to engage with the 500-year-old corpus of colonial myths that bad-mindedly delineates the Carib, to cite Roberts, as ‘more “other”’ than the collective body of ‘others’ in the Caribbean (27). The physical and psychological portrait of Iris that appears at the text’s opening straightaway engages with three pervasive myths that produce her as the Other in Dominican society. I reproduce below Iris’s portrait:

Lillian’s mother, Iris, was known throughout the island for a number of distinct characteristics: the women would say that chief among them were her uncommon beauty, the fact that her skin was reputed to actually glow in the dark, and the nasty cussing she directed at anyone who crossed her path when she was drunk beyond a certain point Men, though, would laugh at that and say it was the quality of the sex Iris offered that was the thing. (1)

This portrait foregrounds Iris’s hybrid body’s entanglement in, to borrow from Fanon, the ‘thousand details, anecdotes, stories’ out of which European discourse has constructed Carib identity as a ‘racial’ Other (*Black Skin, White Masks* 84)—exotic, savage, and hyper-sexual. The opening phrase ‘Lillian’s mother, Iris’ is not insignificant. It anticipates ‘Caribness’ and its concomitant burdens as a female inheritance. This in turn signals the text’s engagement with the central role Caribbean female bodies have played in the

reproduction of the scripted composite gender, 'racial', and class identities that nurtured 'white' colonial patriarchy and nourish succeeding Afro-Caribbean patriarchies and androcentric national projects.

I read the perceived uncommon beauty of Iris as John's engagement with the figure of the exotic Carib, which Hulme intimates flourished in many 20th-century travel narratives. According to him, many of these writings revolved around a 'diverted or repressed sexual encounter between Western traveller and Island Carib girl'⁸² ('Elegy for a Dying Race' 120). By way of example, in Birge's *In Old Roseau*, the American writer's account of his attempt to advise a young Dominican Carib girl that he could not take her to America is filtered through comments on her 'magnificent hair', her 'dainty neck and shoulders' and 'those dark eyes' (qtd. in Hulme, 'Elegy' 120). As another example, Lanaghan's 19th-century account of the legend of the Antiguan 'half-Carib' girl, Zulmeria, casts the latter as being 'in every respect far different' from her 'white' companions. She encourages gazing at the girl's 'lofty and commanding figure', the 'clear olive tinge of her complexion', her 'large black eye', and 'long coal-black hair' (1:287).

The examples above, particularly the first, bring to mind Young's useful observations concerning the narration of 'colonial desire' in English colonial novels and travel writings⁸³. According to him, many of these works 'betray themselves as driven by desire for the cultural other' and 'concerned with forms of cross-cultural contact, interaction, an active desire, frequently sexual for the other' (3). Hall too addresses this 'desire' for the Other in his discussion of 'black' experience' and 'racism's' conventionally binary system of representation. He argues that the 'play of identity and difference' that articulates racism is driven not only by the interpellation of 'blacks' as the

⁸². The 'Island Carib' is a label used to distinguish the Caribs residing in the islands from those on the mainland (South/Central America).

⁸³. Young defines 'colonial desire' as a 'covert but insistent obsession with transgressive, inter-racial sex, hybridity and miscegenation' (xii).

‘inferior species’ but also an ‘inexpressible envy and desire’ (‘New Ethnicities’ 445-446). In the case of *Unburnable*, John’s engagement with desire for and envy of the Other, as delineated by Young and Hall, positions it as both European and Dominican.

I also suggest that the drunk Iris’s performance of ‘nasty cussings’ of random passers-by is an engagement with European colonial discourse’s re-production and ‘othering’—as enunciated in royal edicts, treaties, plays, travel writings, and et cetera—of the Carib as a savage. European colonial discourse produced the Carib as occupying the highest rung of the hierarchy of Caribbean/ ‘New World’ savagery. According to Beckles, the distinction made between the Caribs and other indigenous Caribbean groups resulted from the former’s ‘irrepressible war of resistance, which intimidated all Europeans in the region’. The peoples identified as Caribs were ‘targeted first for an ideological campaign’ establishing them in the European mind not as “‘noble savages’” . . . but as “‘vicious cannibals’ worthy of extermination’ (‘Kalinago (Carib) Resistance’ 4).

The myth of the savage Carib itself, as propagated over the centuries, has two other myths subsumed within it—the cannibalistic Carib and the polygamist Carib. According to Honychurch, the cannibal myth was birthed after Christopher Columbus’s men reported finding large quantities of human bones and skulls being used as vessels in Carib houses in Guadeloupe⁸⁴. Gullick highlights the pervasiveness of the cannibal myth in his relation of historical disputes and strained relations between Afro-Vincentians and Carib-Vincentians. According to him, the former often take to denigrating the latter by referring to their purported past as cannibals (‘Communicating Caribness’ 161). For its part, the myth of the polygamist Carib played a significant role in the interpellation of the Carib as hyper-sexual. Iris’s delineation by Dominican society as a sexual creature and one who offered a peculiar sexual experience is an engagement with the latter myth. The

⁸⁴. He notes that alternative interpretations such as ancestral worship or the remains serving as battle trophies were not considered by the majority of the early chroniclers (*The Dominica Story* 22).

simplified account of the indigenous peoples long taught in Caribbean schools identified the Caribs as polygamists who warred with the ‘Arawakan’ men whom they ate, and took the ‘Arawakan’ women as wives.

I concur with Kathryn Morris’s observation that the propagation of the polygamist and cannibal myths was intended to ‘suggest loose moral behaviour in the context of European colonial discourse’. She argues that colonial discourse connected cannibalism as the ‘ultimate image of consuming flesh’ with sexual promiscuity as ‘another delicacy of the flesh’. According to her, the two myths operated within European discourse to ‘connote excessive bodily appetite and animalistic physicality’, which evolved into metonyms for the Carib people and differentiated them from the ‘civilised’ and Christian Europeans (958).

It is indeed this tendency towards excess and savagery that is re-presented in *Unburnable*’s initial portrait of Iris. Importantly, with regards to her sexual excesses, Gregoire, Henderson, and Kanem note that in Dominica the negative stereotypes attached to the Carib people ‘take on a special meaning in application to Carib women’ who are perceived by non-Carib men as ‘sexually available’ (150). I read this as support for *Unburnable*’s tracing of a tradition of ‘desire’—colonial and postcolonial—as subsumed within the ‘othering’ of the Carib woman.

Moreover, Iris’ delineation as an alcoholic is not insignificant as far as John’s engagement with tropes/myths of the Carib is concerned. Since at least the 17th century, the Caribs have been delineated as being particularly susceptible to alcoholism—another signal of their supposed proclivity for excess. By way of example, Nicholson’s chronology of Antigua history from 1492-1705 records a 1681 raid of Barbuda in which eight European settlers were killed and the remaining twelve managed to escape while the Caribs were busy consuming rum. As another example, in 1787 St. Vincent, the ‘black

Caribs' stood accused of maiming/shooting their wives in 'scenes of drunkenness and debauchery'⁸⁵ (Davidson, 12). Moreover, in the early 20th century, Treves theorised that the West Indian Carib 'might have held his islands longer but for his taste of rum' (173). This stereotype in conjunction with the other stereotypes elaborated thus far enunciate a network of interpellations that brings to mind Gates's assertion that the 'sense of difference' defined in the term 'race' describes as well as inscribes 'all sorts of supposedly natural attributes such as rhythm, athletic ability...and so forth' onto various 'races' (*Race, Writing, And Difference* 5).

John's engagement with these myths via Iris's seemingly compliant performance of the scripted Carib female body is marked by a deconstruction and simultaneous indictment of the depersonising bad-mindedness levied against the Carib woman by the European colonising project and 20th century patriarchal Dominica. By the second page of the text, Iris's performance is historicised and her body's seeming re-production of the stereotypical Carib figure of excess is re-revised as a subversive and enabling performance. John retains Iris's performance of excess as a mark of her 'Caribness'. However, she isolates 'Caribness' from the supposed inherent nature to exhibit/perform the excess. Iris's performance is instead framed as an attempt to negotiate and alleviate the great sense of defeat and powerlessness occasioned by the bad-mindedness, that is, the cumulative colonial trauma, still affecting the Caribs—the 'small group of people left over from the time before the white people and the Black People' (3).

Unburnable's elaboration of Iris' performance of the hyper-sexual Carib woman's body reveals a woman who leaves 'men of all classes, town men and country-men— . . . astounded by the passion of their encounters' (1). Moreover, her performance left the fainthearted among the Dominican men unwilling to brave a second encounter. However,

⁸⁵. This term originated to describe the offspring of African slaves and the Caribs. Descendants now largely refer to themselves as 'Garifuna'. Honychurch notes that this term probably originated from an Ancient Arawakan term for the Carib - 'kaniriphuna' or 'kallipina' (*The Dominica Story*, 20).

as the narrator explains:

None understood that the intensity that left them shaken was actually the aggression of an otherwise powerless, disappointed, and very angry woman, who was, in fact, molesting them with her body as she threw them onto their backs and attacked them brutally. But they were oblivious to this dynamic, and left with their chests out, proud of their potency, which they felt had aroused her to such an extreme response. (2)

For Iris, her impotency, as a member of the dispossessed Carib 'race', is tempered by her performance of the same body used to produce her as Other to recuperate personal autonomy and agency.

I interpret Iris's performance of the hyper-sexual Carib female body as a re-inscription of the myth of the cannibalistic Carib. The violence she exhibits in her sexual encounters, along with the effect it has on her sexual partners, represents a symbolic cannibalisation of the bodies of the latter. This cannibalisation may in fact be read as a two-fold re-write of the cannibal myth. First, Iris transports cannibalism away from the trope of the savage and re-frames it as an enabling enactment of self-possession; she re-asserts her agency via devouring of another's body. Second, European colonialists and Afro-Dominican patriarchal society, rather than the Caribs, are invented as cannibals. The performance that Iris renders is produced as a symptom of the powerlessness and disappointment occasioned by their differentiated cannibalisation of Carib agency. In the latter case, particularly, I read Iris's performance of the hyper-sexual Carib as an act of counter-cannibalism. It is her way of avenging the historical and contemporary cannibalisations of the Carib via epistemological, ontological, and actual physical violence.

Furthermore, if one takes into account the OED's definition of 'cannibalise', that is, to 'use (a machine) as a source of spare parts for another similar machine', Iris's performance of the hyper-sexual Carib cannibal body is rendered all the more significant (255). Her 'molestation' and overwhelming of her clients, that is, the sapping of their

[physical] energies to repair her diminished agency is a performance that is akin to that of the popular Caribbean supernatural female folkloric figure, the soucouyant. In *Unburnable*, the soucouyant, famed for her blood-sucking and skin-shedding tendencies, is in fact represented as the ‘worst of the lot’ of female supernatural creatures in Dominican mythology. Her location on the highest rung of Dominican hierarchy of female demons is analogous to the Carib body’s longstanding location in the hierarchy of Caribbean ‘otherness’.

The connection between Iris’s performance of the Carib cannibal and the feared soucouyant is an important one to make. The soucouyant is in fact the form into which her daughter, Lillian, opts to transform following her decision to commit suicide as a means of liberating herself and simultaneously corroborating Dominicans’ conviction of her ‘otherness’. Giselle Anatol, in her excellent deconstruction of the folkloric figure observes that the soucouyant has been used in Caribbean patriarchal societies ‘to demonize female “drive”—whether this be independence and ambition, sexual enthusiasm, or same-sex desire’. She argues for a feminist interpretation of the figure as a model of female agency (52). Iris’s and Lillian’s performances represent such an interpretation. As I will discuss more closely nearer the end of this section, the recuperation of the soucouyant as an enabling version of the cannibal by mother and daughter limns a feminist tradition of Carib and Caribbean resistance of Dominican/Caribbean patriarchy.

Iris’s male clients’ failure to recognise her persistent symbolic battle with the bad-mindedness informing 20th century Carib experience signals the vast disconnect between the Carib woman and patriarchal Dominican society. Revealingly, these men supply Iris with alcohol as well as money after each visit. This facilitates both the physical degeneration of Iris and the perpetuation of the drunkard/alcoholic Carib stereotype. I

apprehend this as a symbol of the general unwillingness of Dominican society to attempt to bring to halt the continuing bad-mindedness that locates the Carib on the periphery of Dominican society—the source material for hearsay and sly creole songs such as the ones documenting Iris’s mother’s hanging or the brutal sexual assault she (Iris) endured at the hands of her lover’s mother-in-law.

Importantly, even the ‘country people’, as opposed to ‘the high-class town people’, who are presented as being aware of ‘the options left for a woman’—a Carib woman—‘who had suffered Iris’s fate’, are presented as unwilling to negate Iris’s positioning outside of the margins of Dominican society (2). Beyond their acknowledgement of her as the daughter of the powerful Obeah woman Matilda, the village women, in particular, are portrayed as complicit in the re-production of Iris solely as a hyper-sexual creature. They appear to accept Iris as a performance of excess—the abject body—that cancels out other excesses in their midst. By way of example, Iris’s sexual encounters with male villagers are re-produced as a valuable service provided to the female villagers. She relieves them of the sexual demands of their men that can prove excessive when they are in child-rearing mode and least concerned with the ‘effort of sex’ (2).

Iris’s location on the margins of Dominican society as well as her eventual fate is in keeping with the characterisation of the soucouyant as an inhabitant of marginal spaces. Written and oral versions of the soucouyant myth often place her alone in a house at the end of a village. This, Anatol argues, ‘parallels her position on the cusp of society’ (50). As a supernatural performer of non-compliant femininity, the soucouyant is located both outside the margins of society and in an ‘Other-worldly’ space, forever under threat of a tragic end/fate due to her ‘otherness’.

Iris’s marginal position in Dominican society along with her tragic end is also

employed by John to render a facetious statement/suggestion about ‘racial’ and social relations in the Dominica re-presented in the text as well as the ultimate place/function of the Carib/Carib experience in Dominican and Caribbean society. By the fourth paragraph of the novel, Iris’ degeneration is complete; the reader learns that she dies at the age of forty in 1971, while being held at a prison in the capital for disorderly conduct and disturbing the peace. The novel then works backwards to unravel an intergenerational Carib narrative spanning three generations. In this unravelling, Iris’s mother, Matilda’s neglect of the young Iris is facetiously cast as the cause of the sum of bad-mindedness attendant to her ‘half-Carib’ daughter’s life.

John engages with three myths of ‘Caribness’ and ‘blackness’—the exotic Carib, the absent/invisible father, and the emotionally unattached or disabled ‘black’ mother—to facetiously corroborate Iris’s predestination for a tragic end from her location outside of the margins of Dominican society⁸⁶. The latter two myths are referenced in Matilda and Iris’s father, Simon’s, neglect of a young Iris; the young girl is left to be raised by Matilda’s Maroon community. The former is referenced in the biased socialisation the young Iris received from the women in Matilda’s community who were fascinated with the young ‘half-Carib’ girl’s ‘unusual beauty’ (4).

The omniscient narrator’s tongue-in-cheek elaboration of Matilda’s complicity in Iris’ eventual tragic end spotlights her failure to ensure that Iris was a recipient of the ‘sensible socialisation’ that the other children received. On one hand, the socialisation the other children in the village received ‘did not promote mobility, but . . . gave them a clear understanding of who they were and where they belonged’ (4). Its importance lay in educating them that the outside world, that is, the world outside the sequestered Maroon village, held nothing for them but a ‘limited lower space within which they could exercise

⁸⁶. The latter of these three myths reference what Beckles observes was the historical projection of the ‘black’ woman as ‘lacking a developed sense of emotional attachment to progeny and spouse’ (*Centering Woman* xx).

their ambitions' (4). On the other hand, Iris's socialisation is revealed to have left her unprotected from the 'disappointment of destroyed dreams' and unaware of the bad-mindedness the island has levied against people of her 'race(s)' for centuries.

It is important to note that Matilda's ancestry is cast as equally culpable as Simon's in Dominicans' scripting of Iris's identity and location as Other. Throughout *Unburnable*, Matilda is cast in opposition—as the 'black' Other—to Afro-Dominicans; she is a powerful Obeah woman and a Maroon of 'unadulterated African descent'. Matilda and Simon, as members of two alienated groups that adhere to distinct mores and, particularly in the case of the Maroons, a separate legal system, represent a threat to the Dominican 'blacks', and especially the 'coloureds'' engagement with national self-determination now that 'the white man's day was done'⁸⁷ (74). This is made clear when Matilda has another woman, with less 'black' 'African' features, take Iris to the capital in an attempt to get her enrolled in school; it was felt that Matilda's haughty walk, a sign of her physical 'otherness' would have signalled to the Dominicans' that she was not of them, that 'she did not come from slaves'⁸⁸ (56).

Unburnable is replete with evidence that Iris is 'battered down' by the stereotypes and other supposed 'racial defects' that produce her Maroon mother and Carib father as the Other (Fanon, *Black Skins* 84-85). Dominican society's re-production of Iris as an heiress to an isolated, empty, and powerless existence, with a predefined function to fulfil as a member of the lowest stratum is a central refrain of John's text. For example, when the Council persuades Matilda to send Iris to school in the island's capital, the narrator facetiously laments,

⁸⁷. Near the end of the text, it is revealed that Matilda was the Chief Justice and head of the Council of the Maroon village of *Noir*, which had remained undiscovered for two centuries hidden as it was atop one of the island's highest mountains. She was wrongly accused of murder and executed by the state.

⁸⁸. In another incident, a 'coloured' character rebuffs a 'white' English colonial administrator for suggesting a link between Dominican and African masquerades—'We here in the West Indies, we are not Africans, you know'. She also assures, 'It's a long time since we could tell you anything about Africa' (138).

Had Iris been properly grounded by those tasked with her upbringing, she might have had a chance to fit properly into the slot for which she was made. But they failed her. They filled her head with a sense of her own importance. (55)

Colonial Dominica is re-presented as a patriarchal society characterised by a rigid social hierarchy that is underwritten by ‘race’, class, and gender biases. This is summed up in the timbre of a younger Iris’s relationship with John Baptiste, a member of Dominica’s rising ‘coloured’ elite. Iris is abandoned by John for marriage to a woman from a family equal in status to his. Importantly, John’s sense of the male and class privilege afforded to him is summed up in his reasoning that his marriage only meant that he would not sleep with Iris as regularly as he did before.

The suggestion *Unburnable* makes is that though Iris was doomed in mainstream Dominican society from the outset, her fate was hastened, and perhaps made worse, by her attempts to perform a femininity and personhood out of line with that scripted for her ‘race(s)’ and class. Her mistaken belief that a marriage to John was a possibility is framed as her lack of understanding of the ‘meaning of her skin’ and the ‘meaning of her poverty’ in Dominican society (95). I read Iris’s unsuitability as a wife for John as a symbol of the incompatibility of the Carib body with the new national project. Like Cassin’s Morea, Iris’s ‘othered’ body is not one that can reproduce the ideal or required citizenship. In Iris’s and John’s Dominica, it is the monied ‘hybrid’/ ‘brown’ body—neither ‘white’ nor ‘black’ nor Carib—that is cast as the ideal citizen.

Furthermore, embedded within John’s suggestion of the inescapability of Iris’s fate is also a revision of the emotionally disabled ‘black’ mother myth that indicts Dominican society for expecting Matilda and, by extension, proletarian Dominican mothers, to collude with it in cannibalising the ambitions of their children and keeping them in line with a ready-made fate. I therefore read Matilda’s ‘failure’ as a repudiation of the historical association of ‘black’ womanhood with the reproduction of the enslaved

status and/or the labouring class (Beckles, *Centering Woman* 62).

I move to closing my analysis of *Unburnable* with an examination of Iris's daughter, Lillian's, planned suicide and what it suggests about Carib agency and the place of the Carib experience within readings of the Caribbean. Near the end of the text, Lillian, whose story unfolds alongside that of her mother's and maternal grandmother's, is revealed to have settled upon a mode of suicide that will leave her body in such a state as to convince the deeply religious/superstitious Dominicans that she was a soucouyant. Her intent is to jump from the mountainous site of her maternal grandmother's former Maroon village, tearing her skin from her body in the process. I read Lillian's decision to perform the skin-shedding body of the soucouyant as fulfilling at least three important enabling functions.

Firstly, through Lillian's stream of consciousness, the performance of the soucouyant's body is re-presented as a claiming of personal autonomy. Lillian draws upon her creolised Catholic faith to invent her death as an indulgence, an act of liberation that runs counter to the life of 'atonement, practicing self-sacrifice and self-denial' that she has thus far led in 'the hope that she would one day pay for her inherited sins' (291). Within the text, she is re-produced as understood by the entire island to be a cursed creature; her conception is reputed to be the work of Matilda from the grave⁸⁹. The text also details her stepmother's several attempts and failures to un-write the peculiar bad-mindedness attendant to Lillian's location as Other. By way of example, when Icilma attempts to have the young Lillian confirmed in the Catholic Church, the communion wafer the priest offers to the young girl falls on the floor leaving everyone present convinced that Lillian's body was 'so polluted that the body of Christ himself would not dare enter into hers' (5).

⁸⁹. Lillian's father Wilson Baptiste is the son of Iris's former lover John Baptiste. Lillian's conception is apprehended as the work of the 'devil-dealing' dead Obeah woman, Matilda, 'determined to give her daughter what was hers' (171).

Lillian's planned skin-shedding is therefore an enabling performance that is designed to facilitate the shedding of the meanings inscribed upon her skin/body and in turn the attempt to fix her, as an immobile body, within a kumbla of 'otherness'. This brings to mind Anatol's reading of the soucouyant's skin as a metaphor for a cocoon—'the constrictive outer layers are shed and left behind, and a transformed being emerges endowed with the freedom of mobility' (52). Lillian's planned skin-shedding is also designed to render her body in seeming compliance with the 'othering' that is represented as the heirloom of the Caribs and her matrilineal line in Dominican society. In the latter instance, her claiming of her heritage as the Other represents her reframing of 'otherness' as a stance of resistance rather than a posture of subjugation. It is analogous to the appropriation of the appellation 'Carib' by members of the indigenous group as a 'symbol of resistance to the intrusion of those colonial and neo-colonial regimes' (Whitehead 12).

Secondly, Lillian's intent to perform the soucouyant's body is meant to revise the sense of disconnect between the Carib past and present, and in turn the amnesia characterising the Carib experience. For Lillian, her death presents a way to acquire the truth directly from her ancestors about their and her pasts. Given her creolised Catholic faith, 'for her to believe that in death she would be able to speak with her mother and grandmother . . . was logical' (290). Returning to Dominica, after twenty years in the US, to uncover the truth about her 'murdering Obeahwoman' grandmother and 'prostitute' mother, she is portrayed as tormented by the limited knowledge she has of her maternal forbearers. I read Lillian's quest as an engagement with the myth of the vanquished Carib, which I will elaborate in my discussion on Kincaid's text. This myth references the absence of the Carib in most of the Caribbean and the silence, discontinuity, and trauma characterising the Carib nation and memory. I also read Lillian's desire to revise the silence surrounding her forbearers' narratives as analogous to the quest for a female

ancestor with which Pacquet observes Caribbean female writers to have been preoccupied since the 1950s (*Caribbean Autobiography* 12).

Thirdly, I read Lillian's plan to perform the body of the soucouyant as an undertaking to place cumulative Carib female trauma and experience on the national agenda and within Caribbean narratives of loss and trauma. She envisions Dominicans immortalising her 'otherness' in song much like they did for her mother and grandmother before her. This 'othering' is foregrounded as a positive experience and an important aspect of her heritage: 'Let them sing another song about another woman whose life had not fulfilled its promise. . . . she wanted her own song, it was her birthright'. Overall, I suggest that her desire to join her female forbearers—Matilda the 'black' Obeah woman and reputed La Diabliesse and Iris, the 'half-Carib' Mama Glo⁹⁰—in the annals of Dominican oral history represents an attempt to quilt together Carib and African female narratives in a tradition of resistance and subversive femininity.

II. Adding 'fresh weight to his view'

In *The Autobiography of My Mother*, Kincaid engages with the myth of the vanquished/vanishing Carib to provide an account of the location of the Carib past within the present. According to Hulme, the trope of the impending extinction of the Island Carib was one of the ideas that dominated the brand of 'Caribness' that predominated in the late 19th into the 20th century. He notes that during this period, terms such as 'remnant', 'linger, and 'vestige' recurred 'almost obsessively' in the discussions on the Carib ('Elegy' 131). The elegies written for the Caribs normally evoked the wondrous beauty of Dominica and recalled the story of a 'once mighty people' who dominated the Caribbean and fought bravely to defend their liberty though all that remains now is a 'miserable remnant'

⁹⁰. La Diabliesse, the 'she-devil', is a folkloric female figure that initially assumes the form of an attractive young woman to 'lure a man into a wooded or bushy place before revealing herself as an old crone with cloven hoofs, who will cause the man to go mad or die'. The Mama Glow is a 'legendary mermaid-figure—now young and lovely, now old and ugly, always bountiful but deadly' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 195, 365).

(Hulme, *Remnants of Conquest* 28).

Kincaid's engagement with this myth is marked by a revision that historicises the depersonisation of the vanishing/vanquished Carib and de-romanticises the Carib past, in epistemological opposition to colonial narratives/elegies. The spectre of Xuela's 'vanished' mother predominates throughout the text. Xuela symbolically sums up the trauma visited upon herself and, by extension, the Carib 'race' in the very first lines of the text: 'My mother died at the moment I was born, and so for my whole life there was nothing standing between myself and eternity; at my back was always a bleak, black wind' (75). Kincaid's text, as I will demonstrate in this section, re-frames the vanishing/vanquished myth as an anti-elegy and protests the praxis of bad-mindedness that occasioned the near-extirpation of the Caribs.

The sum total of the modes of anti-elegiac resistance Xuela employs limns her as a performer of what Spargo describes as 'ethical mourning'. For Spargo, 'ethical mourning' is not merely constituted by 'a stubborn act of mourning' but must involve a 'mourner's willingness to oppose those cultural norms that preside over his society's attitude toward death' (5). Xuela demonstrates such a willingness to protest Dominican society's treatment of Carib extermination and, in the cases of survivors, 'zombification'. Contra 'black', 'brown', 'white', and even Carib characters, as narrator, she presents herself as the only one who opposes the prescribed amnesia that has led to Dominican society's dismissal/neglect of the cumulative trauma inflicted upon the Caribs. *T.A.O.M.M.*, in keeping with Spargo's observations of literary works of mourning, 'develops a dialectic between those who are outside (those, for example, who have mourned inadequately) and the mourner who is truly dedicated to the memory of the other she laments' (5). There is no closure for Xuela; her mourning is in a constant state of renewal—'There was hardly a day of my life that I did not observe some incident to add

fresh weight to this view' (138).

For Xuela, the burden of history that fuels her mourning is immense. Her vision of the cumulative colonial trauma affecting the Caribs invents the past as inseparable from the present. She sees Carib 'history' as,

not a large stage filled with commemoration, bands, cheers, ribbons, medals... in other words, the sounds of victory. For me history was not only the past: it was the past and it was also the present. I did not mind my defeat, I only minded that it had to last so long. (138-139)

Her sentiments and dedication to the performance of the body of the ethical mourner mirrors that of *Unburnable's* Simon. For Simon, the burden of history is not only immense but he too suffers a sense of alienation in his mourning: 'it felt to him like he was the only one who went through the day unable to concentrate on anything other than the statistical fact that they were extinct' (20). Like Xuela, he raises the question of the injustice of Carib extermination and the subsequent cumulative colonial trauma: 'This was the unbearable thing for Simon, that white people had shown up and told his ancestors that they were entitled to land not theirs'. There is nothing romantic about the fate the Carib suffered. When he quits 'the tiny piece of land they had been cornered into', it is to avoid the 'defeated faces of his people' and to preserve his sanity (21).

As for the wondrous beauty of the Dominican landscape celebrated within colonial Carib elegies, in *T.A.O.M.M.*, the island is re-written as an inherently bad-minded or hostile place marred by a history of violence. Dominican rivers host supernatural beings that lure individuals to their death and, more importantly, the names of places featured on maps and brochures serve as a reminder of the atrocities practiced upon the Caribs by Europeans. Xuela, as well as Simon, fill the silence created by, for example, their fellow literary character, Rhys's Creole protagonist, Antoinette, around the history of the Dominican town of 'Massacre'. In *Wide Sargasso Sea*, Antoinette, when quizzed by her English husband as to the origin of the town's name, replies: 'Something must have

happened a long time ago. Nobody remembers now' (66). Xuela and Simon, in contrast, remind everyone 'unwilling to make the effort of memory that would bring those past events into the present' of the mourning that should occur over the origin of the town's name—the 1674 massacre of scores of Caribs by the English (Hulme, *Remnants* 205).

Kincaid not only engages with the myth of the vanquished/vanishing *Carib* but also with a notion of 'Caribness' as subsumed within that myth, namely, that of the vanishing 'pure' Carib. Hulme observes that one shift in the writings on the Caribs in the late 19th to 20th century was that the Caribs came to be considered 'the old story of the North American Indians all over again' and were expected to be strikingly different from the local 'black' population ('Elegy' 130). He notes the close association between the question of 'racial' purity and the topic of Carib disappearance. He offers the example of American ornithologist Frederick A. Ober who bemoaned the dwindling numbers of the Dominican Caribs of 'pure Indian blood' owing to the group's having 'become mixed to a great extent with the blacks' (qtd. in 'Elegy' 116). William Agnew Paton's 1888 *Down the Islands* too is offered as an example of Western lament about the 'handful' of 'ancient possessors of these islands' remaining in Dominica and the 'wretched band of half-breeds' in St. Vincent (qtd. in Hulme, *Remnants* 28). Similarly, Gullick observes that most of the tourists to St. Vincent interviewed during the 1970s expressed disappointment with the Caribs whom they felt 'appeared virtually the same as other Vincentians' (163).

Kincaid intervenes into the myth of the vanishing 'pure' Carib to offer a portrayal of Carib and 'black' Dominican relations that interrogates the discourse of hybridity offered by Ober and others. On one hand, colonial Carib elegies, as seen from the examples given, engage with a discourse of hybridity that bemoans the dilution of the Carib 'race' and present the hybrid body of the Garifuna/'black' Carib as representative of the elision of Carib difference. On the other hand, Kincaid troubles this portrait by re-

presenting the Caribs and ‘blacks’ as still two very distinct groups in tension with each other despite, or because of, their shared history of colonial oppression.

In *T.A.O.M.M.*, Xuela’s hybrid ‘black’ Carib body is represented as alienating rather than endearing her to ‘black’ Dominicans. Like Iris and Lillian, it is the visible Carib features marking her body that take precedence in Dominicans’ perceptions of her. Xuela’s summary of the political differences her classmates and teacher at her first school observe between her ‘race’ and theirs is particularly telling:

I was of the African people, but not exclusively. My Mother was a Carib woman, and when they looked at me at me this is what they saw: The Carib people had been defeated and then exterminated, thrown away like the weeds in a garden; the African people had been defeated but had survived. When they looked at me, they saw only the Carib people. (15-16)

Later, when her reading and writing skills develop at a quick pace and her memory proves impeccable, her teacher is convinced that she is evil/possessed —‘and to establish that there could be no doubt of this, she pointed again to the fact that my mother was of the Carib people’ (16-17).

Xuela’s delineation of Carib-‘black’ relations mirrors that of *Unburnable’s* Simon’s; together the two novels elaborate a tradition of terrified consciousness marking the relations between ‘black’ and Carib Dominicans. In *Unburnable*, Simon frames ‘black’ disdain within a discourse of terror and anxiety. ‘Black’ Dominicans are portrayed as eager to expunge the Caribs and Carib anti-colonialism from the records in an anxious bid to clear national spaces for themselves. Via Simon’s stream of consciousness, ‘black’ and Carib Dominican tension is summed up as a coping strategy for the former since having ‘been slaves for hundreds of years, it would help them, help their broken souls, to in turn have the Caribs to look down upon as depraved, to scorn

them and accuse them of eating human flesh'⁹¹(32). Moreover, Kincaid's hint at the irony of the two group's tension-filled relationship is directly broached by Simon who re-writes colonial Carib elegies' mourning of the elision of differences resulting from 'black' and Carib unions, especially as occurred in St. Vincent. Simon re-directs the mourning by lamenting the fact that 'black'-Carib relations in Dominica had not progressed as in St. Vincent: 'We should have done like the Vincentians We all should have fought the white people together—the Caribs and the Maroons' (22).

I preface my examination of Xuela's modes of challenging Carib depersonisation with an analysis of the text's re-presentation of the scripted identity prescribed for the Carib and Carib female within Dominican society. I do this so as to ground the significance of the bodies performed by Xuela in her attempt to author agency or self-autonomy. Over the next few paragraphs, I commit to examining Kincaid's [re]framing of Carib experience and identity within a revised myth of the cannibal.

Kincaid's engagement with the cannibal myth is marked by a simultaneous involvement with the figure of the zombie. Her revision of the myth of the Carib as cannibal involves not only an inversion—in her model, it is the Europeans who cannibalise the Carib body—but a re-write of the 20th-century Carib as a zombie—the 'living-dead', to adapt Sheller, who has been 'deprived of will' and is 'the ultimate representation of the psychic state of one whose body/ spirit is consumed' by the cumulative trauma of the colonial encounter (145). Xuela's own mother is presented as an example of the zombification of the Carib engendered by praxes of colonial bad-mindedness against Carib body and agency. The cannibalisation and zombification of Xuela's mother is largely symbolised by her name, 'Xuela Claudette Desvarieux', which is revealed to be the work of a French nun who found her after she was left outside the

⁹¹ . Interestingly, Gullick relates that Carib-Vincentians' retort to like Afro-Vincentian taunts was often along the lines of: 'But you were slaves. We would die rather than be slaves' (161).

convent's gates by her mother. Xuela apprehends the decision of the nun, herself named Claudette Desvarieux, to name her mother after herself as an act of violence that symbolises the havoc and erasure of Self that the Europeans visited upon the Caribs and remnants of the Caribs.

For Xuela, who herself inherited 'Claudette' as one of her names, the power of the nun to revise both Xuelas into 'Claudette Desvarieux' fills her with despair, humiliation and self-hatred –

To look into it, to look at it, could only fill you with despair; the humiliation could only make you intoxicated with self-hatred. For the name of any one person is at once her history recapitulated and abbreviated, and on declaring it, that person holds herself high or low, and the person hearing it holds the declarer high or low. (79)

I interpret as significant the fact that both Xuela and her mother were allowed to retain Carib forenames. This is apt for the notion of the Caribs having been re-produced, by the cumulative trauma of colonial epistemological and actual violence, as zombies. 'Xuela' is but a shell and 'Claudette Desvarieux' is the indoctrinated and mindless mimic contained within the shell. Additionally, Xuela's filtering of Carib trauma through her own experience as well as that of her mother's signals the grounding of the historical depersonisation of the group as female, and in turn the limning of the Caribbean's initial encounter with the European colonising mission as a narrative of female subjugation.

European cannibalisation of Carib agency via the use of language is shown to enjoy continuity in the interpellation of the Carib by Dominican 'blacks' and 'coloureds'. This is evidenced in and symbolised by Xuela's stepmother's tendency to speak to the young Xuela in French patois in her father's absence⁹². The young Xuela immediately apprehends this as an act of depersonisation,

I recognized this to be an attempt on her part to make an illegitimate of

⁹². In the text 'proper English, not patois' was spoken at Xuela's school with 'French patois' being delineated as 'a language that was not considered proper at all' (16).

me, to associate me with the made-up language of people not regarded as real-the shadow people, the forever humiliated, the forever low. (30-31)

I read Xuela's stepmother's disdain for the young girl, revealed to be engendered by the fear that her presence will move her husband to think more fondly of his dead wife, Xuela's mother, as a symbol of 'black' and 'coloured' Dominicans' resentment and terror as occasioned by recognition of the Caribs' claim to the land as the original inhabitants. Additionally, the step-mother's continuous attempts to harm the young girl, along with her unabated dislike for her, is a symbol of the unresolved quarrel between Carib Dominicans and 'black' and 'coloured' Dominicans⁹³.

Kincaid's engagement with the cannibal myth and the figure of the zombie is also facilitated by her re-presentation of Xuela as the lone Carib body engaged in ethical mourning. In a telling instance in the text, other Caribs who appear are described by Xuela as 'walking in a trance, no longer in their right minds, toward a church or away from a church' (133). As with the naming of Xuela's mother, the Catholic Church, as a metonym for European colonialism, is indicted for its role in the consumption and zombification of the Caribs. For Xuela, the Caribs' performance of the Catholic body 'signified defeat yet again', given the role of the Church in the depersonisation of the Carib (133). The imaging of the surviving Caribs as walking shells is comparable to a 19th-century description of the Dominican Caribs by an anonymous Dominican resident as cited by Hulme: 'They . . . shew no curiosity, or anger; seem little sensible of either joy or sorrow; are peaceable and harmless, silent and indolent' (qtd. in *Remnants* 16).

This section advances now to a close with an examination of Xuela's chosen modes of resisting/challenging historical and 20th century depersonisation of the Carib

⁹³ . Carib Chief Hilary Frederick gave evidence to this long-standing quarrel during a presentation in Geneva at a NGO Conference on the Rights of Indigenous People in 1981. He protested the confinement of the Caribs to an area that was smaller than was originally agreed upon stating confidently that the Caribs had 'more claims than any other human beings' to Dominica (*The Carib and their Colonizers* 17).

and the cumulative trauma that threatens performance of personal autonomy. In her attempt to negotiate/author self-autonomy, Xuela performs several unruly bodies, all of which are guided by an underlying performance of the body of the narcissist and are at odds with the hegemonic femininity as well as the prescribed body of the productive citizen. I focus on her performance of the hyper-sexual body, the anti-maternal body, and the body of the narcissist, all of which are marked by performances of the body of the subversive citizen as well as that of the ethical mourner. I suggest that all of these performances, particularly that of the narcissist, engage with the cannibal myth in a way that registers primarily as self-cannibalism/ consumption. In turn I also read in Xuela's engagement with the cannibal myth an unmistakable engagement with the body of the soucouyant.

Xuela's performance of the hyper-sexual Carib and, by extension, the non-maternal body, represents the claiming of an identity that, as Kathryn Morris observes, is 'fraught with violent and deliberate non-reproductive sexuality' (955). She engages with the myth of the hyper-sexual Carib and recuperates Carib female body and agency via performance of an unruly/subversive feminine body that is regarded as sexually deviant and at odds with respectable femininity. At one point in the text she is interpellated as 'a whore, a slut, a pig, a snake, a viper, a rat, a lowlife, a parasite, and an evil woman' by one of her lovers' wives during a confrontation (171).

Xuela's manner of engagement with non-monogamous sexual relationships is reminiscent of Lucy's in Kincaid's *Lucy*. It reads as a defensive posture from which she is keen to portray herself as emotionally detached, entirely motivated by pleasure, and always in control. Her descriptions of her sexual encounters with male characters are characteristically marked by a preface or an epilogue that assures the reader of her emotional distance from the man in question. For example, at fifteen years old, after her

first sexual experience with the husband of the household in which she is a boarder, she reports, 'He was not a man of love, I did not need him to be'. Similarly when she seduces her 'white' English employer and later husband, Philip, she presents her act of removing the muslin cloth that bound her breasts as an unaffected act—'I removed the muslin carefully, as if I were alone, and this was because I was in the presence of a doctor, not because I wanted him to find it interesting in any way' (71, 147).

I concur with Kathryn Morris that Xuela's performance of the hyper-sexual *Carib* is to be read as a claiming of 'her own body as a site for fetishisation' and a claiming of her sexual desire (964). Her feminist performance of unruly femininity is in fact in line with that of the trope of the philandering Caribbean male and has the effect of troubling 'the power of the phallus as the organizing principle of fetishism', which in turn 'sets herself apart from the patriarchal social order' (Kathryn Morris 964). I also interpret Xuela's performance of the stereotypical Carib hyper-sexuality as an ironic commitment to the figure of the cannibal Carib. I suggest that the timbre—her portrayed interest in securing her own pleasure—of her sexual relationships suggests a self-indulgence that translates to self-possession. It also suggests a devouring of her partners—'white', 'black' and 'coloured'. All of this is evocative of the soucouyant's thirst for blood, which Anatol notes has been connected to sexual rapacity. According to Anatol, in one adaptation of the soucouyant story by C.R Ottley, the soucouyant is limned as evil for her failure to curb her thirst and commit to her dutiful husband (51-52).

I also find persuasive Morris's observation that 'Kincaid constructs a metaphor of sexual devouring as a response to colonial history's objectifying representation of the Carib people as ravenously sexual and cannibalistic' ('Jamaica Kincaid's Voracious Bodies' 954). Indeed, what may be read as Xuela's cannibalisation of her husband, the Englishman Philip, is suggestive of a revenge act for the bad-mindedness levied against

Carib identity and experience. In the closing pages of the text, the portrait she draws of him resembles that of the Caribs in their trance-like stage: ‘He grew to live for the sound of my footsteps, so often I would walk without making a sound; he loved the sound of my voice, so for days I would not utter a word’ (217).

Within Xuela’s performance of the hyper-sexual Carib woman is a simultaneous rejection of the maternal body. During her first pregnancy, she undergoes an abortion process that ‘defined pain itself’ but emerges from the experience with a new sense of self and power: ‘I was a new person then. . . . I had carried my own life in my own hands’ (83). Crucially, during her self-inflicted illness, she enacts, in a dream, the very claiming of Dominica that her ‘black’ and ‘coloured’ contemporaries fear: “East and West, Above and Below, Water and Land: In a dream. I walked through my inheritance, an island of villages and rivers and mountains . . .” (89). Subsequent to this experience, she pledges never to become a mother as a symbol of her dedication to her role as the ethical mourner. Denial of motherhood is framed as a way of ensuring uninterrupted mourning via retention of the emptiness of her life, occasioned by the loss of her own mother: ‘My life was beyond empty. I had never had a mother. I had just recently refused to become one, and I knew then that this refusal would be complete. I would never become a mother’ (96-97). She promises to ‘bear children, but . . . never be a mother to them’ and later, by the time of her marriage to Philip, becomes sterile (96-97).

I interpret Xuela’s commitment to performing the non-maternal body as an enactment of a non-reproductive sexuality that subverts her interpellation as a body that reproduces the status of the oppressed/the Other within Dominican society. Her refusal to procreate is an act of resistance that, to adapt Gilman, locates her as the deviant citizen who ‘is destructive rather than reproductive’ as she ‘provides no continuation of the group’ (*Health and Illness* 66). Near the end of the text, reflecting on her decision to

never bear children, she herself admits: ‘I refused to belong to a race, I refused to accept a nation’ (226). Moreover, her commitment to ensuring that the emptiness of her life, which began with the loss of her mother, is complete places her as the ethical mourner and anti-elegist who troubles the silence surrounding the Carib experience and past and ‘aspires not to remedy the remoteness but to expose it and remove it from its historical vacuum’ (Kathryn Morris 956).

Xuela’s performance of a non-maternal body correlates with that of the soucouyant’s. The latter’s rejection of this body is symbolised by her penchant for the blood of babies, which signals her non-nurturing ways. Anatol reads the solitary lifestyle that is a feature in adaptations of the soucouyant story as representing ‘an option other than the prescribed role of the dedicated, “naturally” nurturant mother’ (52). Xuela in fact appears to reference the soucouyant’s non-nurturing ways as an alternative she is willing to embrace when she speaks metaphorically of eating the children that she would bear: ‘I would eat them at night, swallowing them whole, all at once’ (97).

Added to all of this is Xuela’s performance, throughout the text, of the body of the narcissist. Xuela is re-presented as keen to shun/negate the love of others and vice versa. Xuela in fact claims to thrive in loveless places: ‘Love would have defeated me. Love would always defeat me. In an atmosphere of no love I could live well; in this atmosphere of no love I could make a life for myself’ (29). Xuela, acutely sensitive to the loss of her mother rejects others’ claims on her person—as she does when her father attempts to interpellate her into his new family. She explains, ‘I did not want to belong to anyone...since the one person I would have consented to own me had never lived to do so. I did not want to belong to anyone; I did not want anyone to belong to me’ (104). As the ethical mourner, she engages with the cannibal myth by turning to self-consuming narcissistic love: ‘I came to love myself in defiance, out of despair because there was

nothing else' (57). And, whilst fully aware that this is not the 'best kind' of love, she claims that it will have to do since 'there is nothing else to takes its place' (57).

Like Lucy, Xuela's preoccupation with mourning the loss of a great 'love affair' with her mother cannibalises her life and restricts her from meaningfully connecting to others. Unlike Lucy, her 'love affair' is with a mother she has never met. In keeping with Spargo's delineation of the constituents of the ethical rhetoric of the anti-elegy, Xuela's mourning for her mother and, by extension, the trauma inflicted on the Caribs as a group, is marked by a belatedness, a 'remembrance of failed intimacy', and the awareness of the irrevocability of her separation from her mother that leaves her aware of the 'impossible, yet nevertheless persistent vocation of intimacy' (129, 143).

I read her performance of the narcissistic body as a direct challenge to the humiliation and self-hatred the Carib colonial trauma inspires in the Carib. It is an ontological challenge to Europeans, like Claudette Desvarieux, whose power to invent both Xuelas inspires despair, humiliation, and self-hatred. Xuela herself addresses the agency that the body of the narcissist offers in the context of cumulative colonial trauma and European bad-mindedness/malice:

it was only that this history of peoples I would never meet - Romans, Gauls, Saxons, Britons, the British people - had behind it a malicious intent: to make me feel humiliated, humbled, small. Once I had identified and accepted the malice directed at me, I became fascinated with this expression of vanity: the perfume of your own name and your own deeds is intoxicating, and it never causes you to feel weary or exhausted. (59)

At the end of the text, the seventy-year-old Xuela is filled with a similar emptiness as when the novel began. She theorises: 'Death is the only reality, for it is the only certainty, inevitable to all things' (228). I argue that this emptiness that she invites and embraces throughout the text is the ultimate challenge to the colonial and national projects. Like Kincaid's Devon, who I examine next in the final section of this chapter, she balks at the performance of the productive body scripted for the Carib and Caribbean citizen.

Conclusion

Overall, Kincaid and John's re-presentations of Carib female identity and Carib experience engage in meaningful re-positionings within current Caribbean narratives of anti-colonial resistance, loss, and trauma. The ultimate suggestion of their engagement with Carib female experience is that Caribbean and, by extension, postcolonial, recuperative efforts should necessarily be concerned with entering into a dialogue with the recuperated past. Rather than rescuing traduced pasts and experiences as relics, there should be a commitment to engaging with/reading continuities and/or discontinuities between Caribbean past and present. Historian Hilary Beckles, for example, has called for a re-framing of Carib resistance within contemporary Caribbean accounts of anti-colonial and anti-slavery struggle⁹⁴.

The suggestion of the texts is that this approach is more appropriate to post-colonial conditions that are marked by, as in the case of Antigua and the Caribbean, a continuing entanglement in the colonial past, and reverberations of epistemological and ontological violence. It is recognition of this that has led, for example, sociologist and anthropologist, Maximilian C. Forte, to argue for the necessity of re-writing the erroneous myth of extinction that has been 'assigned and attached to indigeneity not just in the Caribbean, but across the Americas' (3).

⁹⁴. See his 'Kalinago (Carib) Resistance to European Colonisation of the Caribbean'.

IV.

BOY

Introduction

This final section engages with Antiguan narratives' distinct enunciations of early to late 20th-century Afro-Antiguan proletarian male experiences. Antiguan authors explore the construction of Afro-Antiguan working-class men as, to borrow from Fanon, 'overdetermined from without' (*Black Skin* 87). Singly and together, they inquire into alternate modes of reading Afro-Antiguan expressions of masculinity. Their deconstruction of Antiguan patriarchy is marked by an insistence upon the existence of a discernible hierarchy of Antiguan manhood. This hierarchy interpellates Antiguan men as subscribers to a variation of either of two modes of masculinities—the superscript baker's model or the subscript wharf-rat's model. It is also re-presented as being itself scripted primarily by 'racial 'and class biases that function to interpellate the Antiguan proletarian man as a reproducer of the latter model. Overall, the texts present purposeful examinations of the way in which these two primary elements, along with a scripted compulsory heterosexuality, gender biases, and the bad-mindedness attendant to the peripheral status of Antigua, collude to order distinct Afro-Antiguan labouring-class male identities.

I examine Jamaica Kincaid's *My Brother* and Joanne C. Hillhouse's *Dancing Nude in the Moonlight* as case studies of recuperative enunciations of Afro-Antiguan working-class male identity and experience. I preface this examination with an analysis of the hierarchy of Antiguan manhood as elaborated in select Antiguan texts that interact with the re-presentations offered in *My Brother* and *Dancing Nude*. In my prefatory analysis, I look at Antiguan authors' exploration of the role the persisting nexus between 'race' and class—a legacy of colonialism—plays in scripting the differentiated

experiences of Antiguan men. I also foreground the tripartite criteria for Antiguan male significance or worth and acceptable performances of the wharf-rat's body, as extrapolated from the texts. My intent is to anticipate the appropriate socio-economic, cultural, political, and historical matrices referenced in *My Brother* and *Dancing Nude*'s deconstruction of Antiguan patriarchy. I deem this necessary for the grounding of the implications of their rescue of the wharf-rat.

In *My Brother* and *Dancing Nude*, Kincaid and Hillhouse offer interventionist accounts that interrogate the myths that produce Afro-Antiguan proletarian men as subscribers to 'aberrant and dysfunctional expressions of masculinity'⁹⁵ (Barriteau 334). They de-mystify the Afro-Antiguan working-class man's body by [re]locating/grounding expressions of masculinity within the appropriate historical and social sites/matrices. Their approach braves what Beckles identifies as a common complaint against historians' attempts to historicise the position of the postcolonial 'black' male who has been identified as 'physically defeated' and 'socially at risk'. According to Beckles, indispensable historical evidence is 'often set aside, condemned and discredited as an apologetic voice for particular antisocial types of masculinities' ('Black' 226). Hillhouse and Kincaid's refusal to 'set aside' historical evidence in their accounts of Afro-Antiguan manhood coincides with Kenneth Ramchand's prescription that the construction of Caribbean masculinity (as well as femininity) not be treated 'as a new problem generated by the given moment' ('Calling All Dragons' 312).

I interpret *My Brother* as an anti-elegiac deconstructive account that rescues the wharf-rat by historicising his confinement within the line, that is, within the masculinity scripted for him in accordance with his 'race' and class. Kincaid as, to invoke Spargo, the 'ethical mourner' belatedly protests Antiguan society's role in and attitude towards

⁹⁵. Barriteau notes that early anthropological literature on Caribbean men and families was marked by a structural functionalist discussion that asserted Caribbean men's marginal roles in the family and located the 'lower-class Negro' family as the site of impaired expressions of masculinity (334).

Devon's life as a wharf-rat and his death by HIV-AIDS. My analysis is underpinned by a focus on the text's engagement with hegemonic notions of male and individual worth.

Three primary aspects of the text retain my attention. First, the functioning of the mother-son relationship as a metaphor for the relationship between patriarchal Antigua and the Afro-Antiguan working-class male citizen. Second, the unreliability of the mourner-narrator and her largely bad-minded readings of her deceased brother's body. Third, the compulsory heterosexuality underpinning Antiguan patriarchy. I construe these three aspects as informing upon the interstices within which Afro-Antiguan proletarian men are expected to negotiate their performances of the wharf-rat model.

I similarly approach Hillhouse's *Dancing Nude* as a deconstruction of the wharf-rat mode of masculinity. Contra Kincaid, Hillhouse offers a largely positive perspective on existing possibilities for late 20th century Afro-Antiguan working-class men's negotiation of the line. She too interrogates conventional notions of male significance and worth. My analysis of her text focuses on two factors that are re-presented as playing a significant role in the delineation of the interstices of the wharf-rat mode of masculinity. First, Antiguan and Caribbean discourse on illegitimacy, and second, the performance of the prescribed hypermasculinity.

I. 'the blessings were not equal'

Antiguan authors perceive the peculiar variations in the socio-economic locations of Antiguan men and the resulting hierarchy of Antiguan manhood as the legacy of the island's colonial history. Their texts highlight the durable effect of English colonialism on the island's social, economic, and political culture. Socio-economic relations are portrayed as marked by a historically 'impregnable and lasting nexus between skin-colour on the one hand, and the deprivations of power, influence, authority, legitimacy and status on the other' (Nettleford, *Inward Stretch* xii). This lasting nexus and English

colonialism's role in it is a main preoccupation of, for example, Kincaid's *Mr. Potter*. Mr. Potter's voice, functioning as a metonym for his existence, is described as being 'full of all that had gone wrong in the world for almost five hundred years' (23). Antiguan calypso too is in fact replete with Afro-Antiguan proletarian male protests against the 'black' man's depersonisation as occasioned by 'white' men's political influence and continuing stranglehold on the island's economic resources, as I demonstrate in the following chapter.

I suggest that Antiguan texts' portrayals of the persisting link between 'race' and class and the resulting implications for Afro-Antiguan male identity engages with what Mills defines as 'the Racial Contract'. For Mills, 'white supremacy, both local and global, exists and has existed for many years' and can 'illuminatingly be theorized as based on a 'contract' between whites, a Racial Contract'⁹⁶. The 'Racial Contract' is 'political, moral, epistemological, real and economically . . . an exploitation contract' (*The Racial Contract* 7, 9). It categorises 'one subset of humans' as 'white' and 'full persons' and the 'remaining subset' as 'nonwhite and of a different and inferior moral status, subpersons'. Mills describes its purpose as always being 'the differential privileging of the whites as a group with respect to the nonwhites as a group, the exploitation of their bodies, land, and resources, and the denial of equal socioeconomic opportunities to them'. He asserts, as Antiguan texts do, that it has produced a 'globally color-coded distribution of wealth and poverty' (*The Racial Contract* 11, 36).

By way of example, it is the Racial Contract that King Smarty Jr. protests in his 1993 calypso 'Never Again'. In that song, he cautions, 'Watch yuhself black man / ...with their expansion plan on dis land / ...We still feeling last slavery pains / We can't let dat happen again' (verse 1, see page 293). The calypsonian paints a portrait of an

⁹⁶. Crucially, Mills also observes that though all 'whites' are 'beneficiaries of the Contract', not all are 'signatories to it' (*The Racial Contract* 36).

Antigua in which the ‘black’ man is once again being interpellated to the lower rungs of the social hierarchy by ‘Jews and Arabs, Gentile, Yankee, German’ and ‘all white nation[sic]’ intent on controlling key island resources (verse 3). The calypso elaborates a tradition of Afro-Antiguan thought, as referenced, for example, in *Mr. Potter* and *The Boy from Willow Bend* that, in the case of Antigua, the ‘signatories’ and ‘beneficiaries’ of *the Racial Contract*, that is, the group of non-‘black’ men interpellated as bakers has undergone much expansion.

A connecting concern explored in the texts is the delimitations the island’s economic peripherality, and its general, to adapt Hillhouse, Dead End Alley-ness, imposes upon Afro-Antiguan proletarian men and Afro-Antiguans in general⁹⁷. Instructively, the texts’ accounts render the Dead End Alley-ness/bad-mindedness inherent to the island’s peripheral status as delimiting or affecting Antiguan men in differentiated ways. In *Mr. Potter*, the nexus between ‘race’ and class is made to account for the businessman Mr. Shoul, limned as a former subscriber to the equivalent of the wharf-rat model in his native Lebanon/Syria, living comfortably in Antigua in a three-car garage house. He is re-presented as an interpellated performer of a variety of the baker’s model of masculinity while Afro-Antiguan men, like Mr. Shepherd and Mr. Potter—principal of his own school, and chauffeur for Mr. Shoul, respectively—are situated in the wharf-rat category.

Significantly, *Mr. Potter* and other Antiguan texts’ deconstruction of Antiguan patriarchy reveal that the two main modes of masculine performances are further divided into sub-hierarchies. By way of example, on one hand, Mr. Shepherd is portrayed as interpellated as a wharf-rat in relation to a performer of the baker model, Mr. Hall, a Creole Antiguan ‘descended from generations of the triumphant’. The reader is informed

⁹⁷. In Hillhouse’s *Willow Bend*, the protagonist, Vere, lives in a place called Dead End Alley. At least two of the characters identify the name as being symbolic of the suffocating conditions suffered by residents.

that between the two, ‘the blessings were not equal’ (90). Mr. Hall is able to buy a new car from England whilst Mr. Shepherd can only afford to buy his (Mr. Hall’s) old car. I understand this as a metaphor for the remove of the Afro-Antiguan man from the global community of men of worth. His body is not only barred from expression of the baker’s mode, his contact/relationship with significant global baker figures and trappings of baker-hood is also mediated by local bakers. In turn Mr. Shepherd is positioned as a superscript variety of the wharf-rat in relation to Afro-Antiguan proletarian men like Mr. Potter. He is their mediator—it is not insignificant that when Mr. Potter learns to drive, he does so using Mr. Shepherd’s second-hand car.

Connected to all of this is Antiguan texts’ engagement with the idea of self-imposed exile/migration as a route of escaping the inhospitable conditions of the island engendered by its peripheral status. They re-present this route as an option that is, due to financial limitations, not equally accessible to all Antiguan men. By way of example, in *Dancing Nude*, on one hand, the well-to-do ‘brown’ Daniel Lindo is able to migrate to Canada as a way of escaping his suffocating mother, Antigua, and his then pregnant lover. On the other, migration is not represented as an option for his ‘black’ working-class son, Michael, who is employed in a low paying job and has suffered huge financial burdens. Similarly, in *Mr. Potter*, while the sea surrounding the island is a kumbla confining Mr. Potter’s movement, Mr. Shoul is re-presented as empowered by mobility—‘many things came his way, good and bad, and he stayed when it was good and left soon after things got bad’ (6-7).

A predominant feature of Antiguan texts’ account of Antiguan patriarchy is their engrossment with the notion of Afro-Antiguan proletarian male worth/significance, as delimited within Antiguan society. The hierarchy of Antiguan masculinity is typically re-presented as underpinned by a compulsory heterosexuality. In turn this compulsory

heterosexuality is re-presented as marked by an accent on productivity as the hallmark of male significance or worth. Kincaid's initial summation of Devon—'Nothing came from him; not work, not children, not love for someone else'—is useful as a guide for my examination of the constituents of Afro-Antiguan male productivity (*My Brother* 13). Her heteronormative expectations of her brother, supported by the accounts enunciated in other Antiguan texts, delimit Afro-Antiguan male worth as determined by a tripartite criteria—heterosexual reproductiveness, professional productivity, and emotional connectedness to others.

The Antiguan case largely matches that of the regional as far as scripted sexual norms and performances are concerned. In her mapping of Caribbean sexuality, Kempadoo points to regional legislations—themselves remnants from the colonial period—that outlaw same sex intercourse and sodomy. She notes that these legislations support 'stigmas and discriminations against all homosexual acts, gays, lesbians, transgenders and "all sexuals"' in the region (7, 6). For his part, Chevannes, in his discussion of Caribbean values of sexuality, observes that homosexuality is conventionally viewed as a 'male "disease"'. According to him, males who subscribe to this model of sexuality are treated with 'contempt and hostility'. So stigmatised are homosexual tendencies that adolescent males are often driven to premature performances of the body of the heterosexual male to avoid the burden of suspicion (487-488). Moreover, scholars such as White and Carr, and Crichlow have observed the role religious beliefs—particularly conservative Christian beliefs— instrumental in the scripting of codes of respectability in the region, play in the limning of heterosexuality as norm and non-heterosexuality as deviant and immoral.

Jacqui Alexander offers a most useful account of the nexus between nationalism and sexuality in the region and the way in which it informs discourses of citizenship,

belonging, and in turn individual worth. In her assessment of two like pieces of legislation passed in the Bahamas and T&T in the 1980s, she spotlights legislators' engendering of a discourse that invoked nostalgia for a time when there was, seemingly, no homosexuals, lesbians, and people living with HIV-AIDS in the territories. She notes that with this move, 'heterosexuality becomes coterminous with and gives birth to the nation'; its antithesis is perceived as capable of unpicking the nation (364). According to her, in a region in which 'Not just (any) body can be a citizen', the heterosexual body is favoured as being of worth/significance. She asserts: '*some* bodies have been marked by the state as non-procreative, in pursuit of sex only for pleasure, a sex that is non-productive of babies and of no economic gain'. In her view, state moves to reconstruct the nation are marked by a simultaneous recuperation of the nation as heterosexual. Therefore, bodies which reject 'the heterosexual imperative of citizenship' are viewed as posing 'a profound threat to the very survival of the nation' (360).

Alexander's assertion that the state requires sexually reproductive bodies spotlights the heteronormative link conventionally posited between Afro-Caribbean male significance and sexual reproduction. This link engages with what Caribbean gender theorists agree is a long held perception that the siring of children is 'proof beyond question that a boy has made the transition to manhood' (Lewis, 'Man Talk' 6). The majority of the novels referenced in this thesis re-present Antiguan and Caribbean male reputation as connected to a hyper masculine performance that stresses sexual prowess and virility. The greater the number of women with whom a man has sired children, the more elevated his masculine status.

Antiguan texts re-present Antiguan patriarchal society's endorsement of this criterion of hypermasculine performance as at odds with the asserted adherence to and privileging of the strict sexual and moral codes informed by the Christian church, the

middle-class, and colonial/post-colonial ideas of reputability. Crucially, the texts demonstrate that bakers and wharf-rats alike undertake performances of the hypermasculine Antiguan man. However, Antiguan and Caribbean patriarchal societies are depicted as keen to limn such performances of hypermasculinity as a peculiarity of the Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean working-class/lower-class. Societal endorsement of hypermasculine performances are re-presented as marked by an understanding that such expressions, while the privilege of the baker, are the markers of the wharf-rat's inferior status and worth.

I suggest that the ideological distancing of the wharf-rat and baker's performances of hypermasculinity is informed by an anxiety as occasioned by, to adapt Alexander, 'black' nationalist masculinity's need to prove itself a capable replacement for European 'white' rule in the Caribbean. Her assessment of the T&T and Bahamian cases rings true for the rest of the region. She notes that in both cases, Afro-Caribbean male leaders were keen to 'demonstrate moral rectitude, particularly on questions of paternity' and thus distanced themselves from 'irresponsible Black working-class masculinity that spawned the 'bastard', the 'illegitimate' . . . criminalized for irresponsible fatherhood by the British' (367). In Antigua's case, a 1995 state report asserted that 'Non-marital unions are mainly to be found in the lower socio-economic strata' (*State Reports CEDAW* 34)

Afro-Antiguan working-class men's neglect of their children is also re-presented as an accepted component of the hypermasculine performance. This too is reproduced by Antiguan and Caribbean patriarchal societies as a peculiarly [subscript] wharf-rat performance. In *Mr. Potter*, for example, Nathaniel Potter has fathered twenty-one children, of whom he only knew eleven, with different women. He is re-presented as feeling no remorse for his neglect of his children or their mothers; his performance is later re-enacted by his son, Mr. Potter. Kincaid directly contrasts the hypermasculine

performances of the Potter men and other like wharf-rats with Mr. Shepherd, the superscript variety of the wharf-rat. The latter is portrayed as a committed performer of middle-class respectability; all of his children—all boys—are born within wedlock. It is not insignificant that his sons, ‘boys born without a line drawn through them’, all die while ‘all the wayward boys’ thrived (103). This I read as in keeping with Barrow’s observation that the region has severely tested the positioning of the co-resident nuclear family as being ‘natural, universal and essential’ (x).

I interpret the hypermasculine performance enacted by the Potter men and other like wharf-rats as a defensive posture meant to combat the bad-mindedness attending the persisting ‘othering’ of the working-class Afro-Caribbean man. By way of example, in *T.A.O.M.M.*, the life of the dispossessed ‘black’ man Roland, is portrayed as narrow and insignificant—the legacy of the ‘black’ man’s subjugation in colonial Caribbean. It is delineated as reduced merely ‘to the number of times he brought the monthly flow of blood to a halt’ (197). Unlike the ‘white’ man, Roland has no claim to a country—‘a small island is not a country’—and is made to perform the body of the subjugated amnesiac—‘he did not have a history; he was a small event in somebody else’s history’ (176). Tellingly, when Xuela’s body refuses to bear his child, the expression on his face is a combination of ‘confusion, dumbfoundedness, defeat’ (175).

The defensive hypermasculine posture is marked, as hinted above, by a sanctioning of the domination of women as encouraged by Antiguan and Caribbean patriarchy. In the texts, the Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean working-class woman’s body is represented as forced into submissive postures. Typically, she is portrayed as resigned to the idea of hypermasculine performances as a male privilege—as with Tanty in *Willow Bend*, resigned to boarding the children from her husband’s extra-marital affairs. She is also portrayed as suspended in a performance of the angry ‘black’ woman who attacks—

verbally and/or physically—the other women with whom her former/present male partner has entered into a sexual relationship. This is the posture of, for example, Roland’s wife in *T.A.O.M.M* and Annie’s father’s former lovers in *Annie John*. It is therefore female and not male sexuality that is rebuffed and Antiguan/Caribbean patriarchy left untroubled, as discussed in the first section of this chapter.

I also suggest that the Potter men’s performances highlight the retention of the posture of the ‘anti-father’ imposed upon the enslaved ‘black’ man’s body. Beckles observes that, ‘slavery, as socio-legal status, completely marginalized and alienated black fatherhood’. According to him, the focus was upon ‘black’ motherhood; new-borns derived their socio-legal status from their mothers. Slave owners, therefore, ‘had neither social nor economic interest in black fatherhood’, which made ‘black’ fatherhood, as defined by and compared to ‘white’ fatherhood, for the most part invisible (‘Black Masculinity’ 230, 232). Importantly, the retention of the ‘anti-father’ posture has been linked to the creation of the types of non-cohabiting unions and non-nuclear family forms early researchers of the Caribbean family defined as ‘promiscuous’, ‘brittle’, ‘deformed’ and ‘disfunctional’ (Barrow x). According to Barrow, it was only in the 1980s that scholars ceased relying upon ‘borrowed theoretical assumptions and methodologies’ and began interrogating the Caribbean family using ‘ideology and experience historically and culturally patterned within the region’ (xi).

An example of a crucial rebuttal to early studies of Caribbean families that is pertinent to my later discussion of *Dancing Nude* is Mindie Lazarus-Black’s interrogation of the claims in the oft-quoted *My Mother Who Fathered Me*⁹⁸. Her reframing of Antiguan mother and fatherhood in ‘My Mother Never Fathered Me’ is an excellent accounting of Antiguan kinship norms. She aptly elaborates the deconstruction of the

⁹⁸. The title for Edith Clarke’s 1957 text was inspired by a sentence in George Lamming’s *In the Castle of My Skin* in which the narrator offers, ‘My father who had only fathered the idea of me had left me the sole liability of my mother who really fathered me’ (11).

Afro-Antiguan male identity and family experience undertaken by Hillhouse, in particular. A persuasive case is built against Clarke's hypothesis that women in the Caribbean 'father' children. Lazarus-Black argues that for Clarke and others, the 'sense of what it meant to be a mother or a father derived from middle-class, colonial, and Christian-influenced assumptions about raising children'. According to her, in reality, many West Indian parental norms do not match these assumptions since 'gender hierarchy and kinship norms in West Indian societies value and determine differently what men and women do - including how they raise children' ('My Mother' 397, 390).

For its part, the demanded performance of a professionally engaged/labouring Afro-Antiguan male body, like that of the sexually reproductive male body, is also entangled in discourses of citizenship, belonging, and nationhood. This criterion for Afro-Antiguan male worth is referenced in, for example, Afro-Antiguan male calypsonians' persistence in claiming indigeneity on the basis of nation-building labour undertaken by them in conjunction with current and/or previous generations of Afro-Antiguans⁹⁹. I apprehend the criterion of the labouring body as an engagement with the contradictory historical interpellation of the 'black' male body as both labouring and lazy/unhurried. Beckles reminds that Caribbean colonisation was a 'white' male enterprise in which the 'black' man was interpellated as the labouring body necessary for the success of 'white' Caribbean. Crucially too, 'white' male colonists 'privileged the apparatus of mind power over body', appropriating 'for themselves an iconography of the former while projecting an imagery which associated the latter with the black men'. Moreover, colonialists' literature invented the term 'Quashie' to represent their characterisation of enslaved 'black' men as, inter alia, infantile, frivolous, gay, and disinclined to work ('Black Masculinity' 227, 229, 233).

⁹⁹. I engage with this theme in the following chapter.

For his part, Maurice Hall laments the perpetuation of the ‘Quashee’ myth in the ‘still enduring Western caricatures of the Caribbean male as breezily self-assertive, yet devoid of substance, exotic, and anti-intellectual’ (35). I suggest that postcolonial Antiguan and Caribbean insistence upon the labouring body for the Afro-Antiguan proletarian male represents an attempt to re-write the ‘black’ body in service of the national/post-colonial project. I interpret it as Afro-Antiguan and Caribbean anxiety to dispel the bad-minded stereotype of ‘Quashie’—a desire, to cite Alexander, ‘to convey legitimate claims to being civilized’ (367).

Connected to the above, I also understand the emphasis on the labouring body as an engagement with the myth of the male breadwinner. Lewis notes that this concept ‘inhabits an important space in the masculine imaginary’ and is ‘for many men, at the core of the construction of masculinity’. He frames it as functioning to assert and secure male control over women and their reproduction. He also casts the concept as one that has been destabilised due to the ‘feminisation’ of particular jobs and persistent male unemployment (‘Fin de Siècle’ 254). In *Dancing Nude*, Michael’s worries about his employment situation elaborate the importance of the breadwinner myth in Afro-Antiguan working-class male performances of masculinity. He frames his disappointment in his inability to offer his partner, Selena, a comfortable future in the language of inadequacy—‘I don’t have nothing to offer nobody’ and later ‘It just leave me feeling like less than a man’ (65).

The final element of the tripartite criteria for Afro-Antiguan male significance—emotional connectedness to others—gestures towards the dependency of Afro-Antiguan male personhood on membership in and acceptance by the Afro-Antiguan community. In local parlance, this is referred to as ‘having smadee’ (somebody) and is usually used to refer to personhood as obtained via belonging to and acceptance by a family unit. Charles

Mills's theory of smadditization provides an excellent elaboration of this requirement, with which I engage in the final chapter. Mills assert that the Afro-Caribbean struggle for recognition of personhood is a 'collective enterprise'. This is so because it is membership in the 'despised race' that excludes the individual Afro-Caribbean from full personhood ('Smadditizin' 1997 63). This theory is borne out in, for example, Kincaid's *Mr. Potter*. In his case, abandonment and neglect by his biological and surrogate parents, respectively, as well as the lack of an emotional bond with his many children are re-presented as directly connected to his insignificance and 'degradation in the world' (102).

II. Interrogating 'a quick judgement'

I turn my focus now to Kincaid's re-presentation of the interstices within which her deceased brother, Devon, was expected to negotiate his performance of the wharf-rat's body. The tone of *My Brother* is marked by an ambivalence that typically preoccupies critical readings of the text¹⁰⁰. Kincaid's narrative perspective wavers between and metamorphoses from largely self-assured indictment of her brother (as well as her family and Antigua) to self-doubt about her 'quick judgment' of her brother's lifestyle and male significance/worth. Additionally, her remembrance of her brother is inextricably intertwined with, and to some degree interrupted by, an account of the severe disunities characterising her relationship with her mother. I consider these two prominent features of the text a corroboration of Ramazani's suggestion that the modern elegy offers up 'not so much solace as fractured speech, not so much answers as memorable puzzlings' (ix).

For Ramazani, 'the elegy flourishes in the modern period by becoming anti-elegiac (in generic terms) and melancholic (in psychological terms)'. He considers models of "healthy" and "successful" mourning . . . inadequate for understanding the

¹⁰⁰. Such as in Kezia Page's reading of the text as 'an obvious remittance text in subject and tone' and Sarah Brophy's interpretation of it as a diasporic melancholy that allegorises the asymmetrical relation between Antigua and the US (97; 266).

twentieth-century elegy'. He instead proposes an account of 20th-century poetic elegies that I find a useful paradigm for examination of *My Brother*. His account argues that the psychic basis of the modern elegy is melancholic—that is, recalcitrant or violent—mourning as opposed to the conventional compensatory mourning (xi). Melancholic mourning is 'unresolved, violent and ambivalent'. Importantly, he describes melancholic mourners as prone to attacking the dead¹⁰¹ as well as themselves, and refusing 'such orthodox consolations as the rebirth of the dead in nature, in God, or in poetry itself'¹⁰²(4).

I counter critical readings that approach the novel as Kincaid's exploration of the significance of Devon's death (Soto-Crespo), an elaboration of a 'failed life' (Bouson), and the relegation of homosexual subjectivity (Rahim). Contra these approaches, I read *My Brother* as a fixation on locating meaning for Devon's life that metamorphoses into an interrogation of the constituents of Afro-Antiguan male/individual significance. I also recognise in it Kincaid's exploration of the fearsome proximity between Devon's life and the existence she herself would have led had she not escaped the biological and island mothers. As Bouson as well as Paravisini-Gebert aptly observe, the novel is a 'self-narration' and Devon, Kincaid's 'parallel self' (144; 38). Moreover, the erasure that I read in the novel is one that erodes the link between non-heterosexual performances and the diseased citizen's body. It also expunges the notion of a homogenous Afro-Antiguan male experience and expression of masculinity. What critics like Bouson read as an accounting of 'shameful family secrets', a settling of 'old scores', and a talking back to the mother, I

¹⁰¹. Kincaid publicly chastises Devon for being carelessly promiscuous, indolent, and at fault for his decline—'he would not change his ways; he would not become industrious . . . he would not become faithful to one woman or man' (195). Moreover, the intimate details of his physical suffering and deterioration as a person living with HIV-AIDS are put on display—'his penis looked like a bruise flower . . . it was covered with sores and on the sores was a white substance' (91).

¹⁰². In Kincaid's case, she spurns the Christian notion of being reunited with Devon and her family in the afterlife—'I did not want to be with any of these people again in another world. I had had enough of them in this one' (194).

engage with as a ‘talking through’ that is peculiar to anti-elegiac mourning¹⁰³ and Antiguan mourning rites¹⁰⁴ (146).

My examination of Kincaid’s anti-elegiac engagement with Devon’s negotiation of the line begins with an assessment of her portrayal of the mother-son—Mrs. Drew-Devon— relationship. I interpret this relationship as a metaphor for the relationship between the Afro-Antiguan male citizen and patriarchal Antigua. Kincaid’s indictment of the mother—biological and island—as culpable in Devon’s fate is framed within the localised discourse of bad-mindedness. In this regard, her treatment of Devon’s fate is in keeping with Spargo’s prescription of the anti-elegy’s protest of the ‘unjust death as a socially determined event’ (4). I also analyse Kincaid’s unreliability as a narrator and the bad-mindedness inherent in her judgements of Devon. My final point of examination is the significance of Devon’s overall negotiation of the wharf-rat model and engagement with the tripartite criteria of Afro-Antiguan male significance/worth.

Kincaid references several instances that are meant to highlight her mother’s culpability in Devon’s cancellation by the line as well as confinement within its interstices. Mrs. Drew is portrayed as predisposed to bad-mindedly curtailing the autonomy and individual worth of Devon. For instance, her destruction of a lemon tree planted by Devon is cast as a bad-minded/thoughtlessly evil erosion of the latter’s already negligible male significance and individual worth—‘I felt ashamed. That lemon tree would have been one of the things left of his life’ (13). By way of another example, Mrs. Drew and Devon’s plan to build the latter a little room next to her bedroom is cast as a

¹⁰³. As Ramazani persuasively argues, and *My Brother* demonstrates, ‘the modern elegist tends not to achieve but to resist consolation, not to override but to sustain anger, not to heal but to reopen the wounds of loss’ (xi).

¹⁰⁴. It is useful to locate Kincaid’s mourning within a tradition of Antiguan mourning rites. For example, the ambivalent tone of *My Brother*, correlates to the overall wavering tone of the remembrances at Mr. Potter’s funeral—‘On and on went the stories of love and hatred’ (Kincaid, *Mr Potter* 50).

further enclosing of Devon rather than the liberatory act intended by her mother—‘The room to be built would be small, the size of an ordinary tomb’ (79).

Mrs. Drew is also indicted for her selective performance of the body of the mother. Kincaid re-presents her Afro-Antiguan proletarian mother as largely enacting the posture of the anti-mother. Mrs. Drew is limned as capable of exhibiting an intense motherly love only when her children remain within, to adapt Juneja, the ‘protective but often suffocating enclosure’ of the line (or kumbla) (‘Contemporary’92). On one hand, Kincaid asserts: ‘She loves and understands us when we are weak and helpless and need her’ (16-17). On the other, she reveals that performances enacted in a bid for self-autonomy are greeted with hostility by Mrs. Drew—‘It is when her children are trying to be grown-up people—adults—that her mechanism for loving them falls apart’ (17).

The timbre of the relationship between Devon and his mother parallels that between Antiguan society and Afro-Antiguan proletarian men. In turn the culpability of Mrs. Drew in the confinement and cancellation of her son is an unmistakable metaphor for the island’s like role in Devon’s life in particular, and its working-class male denizens in general. By way of illustration, the differentiated allowances Mrs. Drew extended to Devon and Jamaica references patriarchal Antigua’s comparatively lenient policing and surveillance of its ‘black’ working-class male bodies. Kincaid recalls days when Devon would ‘lie on his bed in a drug-induced daze’. She asserts, ‘His mother would not have allowed him to do this if he were female; I know this’. Evidence for this assertion is provided by an earlier memory in which her mother is angered by her lying in bed, reading books—‘for she was sure it meant I was doomed to a life of slothfulness’ (44). This spotlights Antiguan society’s major role in the ‘black’ working-class man’s cancellation by the line and his confinement within its interstices. Unlike his female

counterpart, he is considerably less burdened to enact modes of respectability or to petition for a significance that is beyond his prescribed station as a wharf-rat.

Furthermore, Mrs. Drew's apparent predisposition to deprive her son of an autonomous and valued existence also functions as a metaphor for the island's built-in bad-mindedness towards men it delineates as wharf-rats. The Antigua of *My Brother* mirrors the Antigua of *A Small Place* with its non-functioning ancient traffic lights, badly-equipped hospital, and economic inequity. It is insignificant in the global scheme of things—'Antigua is a place like that: parts for everything are no longer being made anywhere in the world; in Antigua itself nothing is made' (24). Devon is re-presented as the likely product of this Antigua. The ruin and deterioration that is portrayed as pervading Devon's life and body functions as much a metaphor for a defeated and unruly masculinity as it does for the inherent decay and stagnation Kincaid views as marking the island. His HIV-AIDS infected body is made to function, to cite Rahim, as a symbol of 'the hell Kincaid escaped by immigrating to the "prosperous North" where her career as a writer blossomed' (11).

In addition, Kincaid's comment on her mother's bad-minded mode of mothering is not unconnected to her re-presentations of Antiguan society's bad-minded mode of 'nation-ing'. It in fact correlates to her re-representation of Antiguan society as quick 'to disparage anyone or anything that is different from whom or what they think of as normal' (40). By way of example, in the text, an HIV-positive man Freeston comes to be regarded by 'ordinary people' as having made himself a 'pappy-show', after publicly announcing his status in the hopes of raising public awareness about the disease¹⁰⁵ (146). He is viciously taunted by young Antiguan men for his homosexuality and is also abandoned by his long-time physician. His ostracisation is re-presented as mirroring the

¹⁰⁵. 'Pappy-show' refers to 'A thing, situation, proceeding or event that is ridiculous or embarrassingly foolish; a nonsensical state of affairs' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 428).

overall treatment of those living with the disease. Not only are they isolated from the rest of the patients at the local hospital, they are also excluded from the community of citizens for whom it is worthwhile to allocate monies for medicinal care.

Importantly however, *My Brother* tempers the indictment of the biological and island mothers with an embedded commentary on their tenuous positions within the local and global community of mothers. This embedded narrative spotlights Kincaid's now outsider gaze and the way in which her portrayal of Antigua appears, to cite Page, 'in tandem with "First World" perceptions of the Caribbean' (90). By way of illustration, Kincaid engages with the memory of the army of red ants that almost killed infant Devon as a foreshadowing of the 'small things'—the HIV-AIDS virus—that would later kill him from the inside. Her surface reading glosses over the fact that Mrs. Drew was present to save her infant. It also does not engage with the fact that the ants were encouraged by okra trees Mrs. Drew had planted too close to the house.

I interpret Mrs. Drew's role in the appearance of the ants and her subsequent destruction of the okra trees 'in a great fit of anger' as a symbol of the almost untenable position from which Afro-Antiguan working-class women must enact performances of motherhood (12). It is not insignificant that the okras meant as a source of food for her family metamorphosed into a source of danger. This signals the frailty of the Afro-Antiguan working-class' bid for survival from their economically peripheral position in a likewise peripheral island. It is in keeping with the island-mother as Kincaid portrays her—having, for example, to side-line the personhood and citizenship of HIV-AIDS infected Antiguan bodies given the limited financial resources available for health care. It also parallels the threat the island's main industry, tourism, with its bedfellows—dependency on foreign capital and foreign ownership—poses to Antiguans' petition for

personhood, and the sovereignty of the nation/nation-state, as I discuss in the following chapter.

I turn now directly to the question of Kincaid's reliability as narrator. Throughout the text, and true to the anti-elegy, Kincaid repeatedly brings attention to her lack of knowledge of and intimacy with Devon. By way of example, early in the text, she spotlights the bad-mindedness informing her re-presentation of Devon's lifestyle and habits—'This is a quick judgement, because I don't know my brothers very well' (7-8). As another example, in relating Devon's omission of her name from amongst the names of his brothers and mother, she admits—'his sister, not being included in the roll call of family . . . seems so natural, so perfect; he was so right! I had never been a part of the tapestry' (175). The timbre of their relationship elaborates one of the three elements of the ethical rhetoric of the anti-elegy as delineated by Spargo—'remembrance of failed intimacy' (129). In Kincaid's case, her remembrance is constituted by recognition of the permanent separation that now exists between her and the now deceased Devon. It is also constituted by the actual lack of intimacy with the latter while he was alive¹⁰⁶. Her repeated admission of the latter is more than sufficient signal that an interrogation of her value judgements about Devon is a useful way to engage with the novel.

Kincaid's unreliability as narrator is also suggested in her decision to end the novel with a fond remembrance of her father-in-law and literary mentor, William Shawn, rather than of Devon. Contra Leigh Gilmore, and Bouson, I do not interpret Kincaid's homage to Shawn strictly as a sign of the latter's worthiness or Devon's immense unworthiness (119; 163). Rather, I contend that it signals her recognition that her brother

¹⁰⁶ In Spargo's conceptualisation, contra the elegy's rhetoric of intimacy, the anti-elegy is marked by recognition that 'the other cannot really be recovered through a mending memory of intimacy'. Anti-elegiac mourners thus 'boldly confront their irrevocable separation in time as a sign of ethical difference. . . . the position of the belated mourner serves to remind the elegist of the impossible, yet nevertheless persistent vocation of intimacy' (143).

remained a stranger to her and that she knew, as she admits, ‘nothing about his internal reality’ (164). It also signals the unresolved feelings evoked by Devon’s death and the ambivalent timbre of her relationship with him and her family.

I agree with Brophy that Shawn is introduced by Kincaid to ‘furnish a point of stability that could release her from melancholy’. According to her, ‘Shawn symbolizes everything that Devon is not: Shawn stands at the center of the metropolis sophisticated and supportive (indeed, one of the crucial agents) of Kincaid's career as a writer’ (274). As the antithesis of Devon, the circumstances of Shawn’s life and death are considerably less complex and despondent. I therefore read Kincaid’s homage to him as an attempt to escape the uncertainty, ambivalence, and unresolved anguish marking her relationship with Devon and her engagement with his life and death.

The recognition of Kincaid’s fallibility as narrator is key to assessing Devon’s negotiation of the line and engagement with notions of individual and Afro-Antiguan male worth. Lorna Down offers a most useful account of the overall indeterminacy of Kincaid’s narrative as it relates to the deconstructive efforts preoccupying the novel. She characterises *My Brother* as a double-layered narrative. For her, the re-presentation of Devon’s life as ‘indeterminate, marginal, and unimportant is continually being deconstructed so that another narrative emerges’ (19). This ‘other narrative’ repugns ‘the stereotypical reading/writing of the brother’s life as well as other HIV/AIDS victims as insignificant, as “wutless” [worthless]’. It does so by ‘interrogating what constitutes significance and reveals a life that has its own meaning’ (20).

I bear Down’s account in mind in my following assessment of the novel’s re-presentation of Devon’s negotiation of the line and engagement with notions of Afro-Antiguan male worth. I begin with his engagement with the constituent elements of the prescribed hypermasculinity. Devon’s lack of offspring— as indicated in Kincaid’s initial

summation of the worthlessness of his life—is not unimportant. Devon is indeed portrayed as a hypersexual creature who frequently engaged in casual and unprotected sex—‘My brother told me that he could not go two weeks without having sex’ (67). However, his hypersexual performance runs counter to the full enactment of hypermasculinity expected of/prescribed for the wharf-rat. His childless state positions him as a subversive body that is at odds with the prescribed body of worth as represented by the procreative male citizen’s body. It also un-lines him from being a reproducer of the wharf-rat model. His subversive body therefore troubles/destabilises the hierarchy of Antiguan manhood which underpins Antiguan patriarchy.

The un-lining facilitated by Devon’s unruly body is taken for granted in what Down identifies as the surface layer of Kincaid’s narrative. This is obvious in Kincaid’s delineation of Devon—‘He doesn’t make anything, no one depends on him, he is not a father to anyone, no one finds him indispensable’. It is similarly clear in her bad-minded comparison of him to his father—‘He cannot make a table, his father could make a table and a chair, and a house; his father was the father of many children’ (70). However, Kincaid’s ‘other’ narrative troubles this easy association of the dissimilarity between Devon and his father’s performances to the resulting insignificance of his life. This narrative delineates Devon’s father as ‘a man so lacking’ who, in both illness and health, ‘had made a family that he could not properly support’ (133). In *Mr. Potter*, Kincaid boasts of curtailing the cancelling and confining power of the line: ‘The line that is drawn through me, this line I have inherited, but I have not accepted my inheritance and so have not deeded it to anyone who shall follow me’. (143). In *My Brother*, Devon can make a claim to doing the same.

Very significantly, Devon’s un-lining of himself from the compulsory heterosexuality’s accent on productivity is also facilitated by his largely secret

performances of a non-heterosexual body. His performances of a homosexual body intervene into the bad-minded erasure of the non-heterosexual male body from Antiguan and Caribbean conceptualisations of citizenship, belonging, and in turn worth. His performance of an aberrant sexuality also identifies as erroneous the suggested homogeneity of Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean male experience and identity. The novel belatedly reveals that Devon was but one member of a group of men who gathered at a particular 'safe' house to 'simply meet and be with each other and not be afraid' (161). I read this as paralleling the text's belated [re]insertion of the homosexual body and experience into literary imaginings of postcolonial patriarchal Antigua and the Caribbean.

Kincaid employs her double-layered narrative to great effect in communicating Devon's un-lining from the prescribed compulsory heterosexuality. For most of the novel, the immediate narrative sustains a depiction of Devon as a dedicated performer of the hyper-heterosexuality prescribed for the wharf-rat. Kincaid recalls, for example, several instances when Devon appears so irrevocably a performer of the wharf-rat's hyper-heterosexuality that even in his visibly diseased state, he attempts to convince women to enter into sexual relations with him. However, her belated/late(r) revelation of her discovery of his homosexual performances disrupts this narrative. It complicates and introduces doubt into her location of Devon in the community of heterosexual Afro-Antiguan men who are a 'grave danger' to women—'men who are only urges to be satisfied . . . men who cannot save themselves, men who only know how to die' (69).

The late introduction of such substantial doubt prods the reader into re-engaging with the preceding narrative and Kincaid's judgements/delineation of Devon. I read Kincaid's delayed revelation of Devon's homosexual performances as a rejection or destabilisation of, to cite Down, a 'single, fixed reading' of his life. I agree with Down's suggestion that Kincaid's deferral is meant to emphasise the fact that there are

‘limitations to knowing another, that it is all another “quick judgment”’ (25). I suggest that the ambivalence Kincaid introduces with her belated revelation is a cautionary tale against Antiguan society’s tendency to misrepresent Afro-Antiguan working-class men as constituting a homogenous bloc. It is also caution against apprehending Afro-Antiguan proletarian men as one-dimensional immobile/confined performers of the composite gender, ‘racial’/ethnic, and class identity prescribed for them. Moreover, I interpret the indeterminacy/ambivalence created in the text by the late reveal of Devon’s homosexual performances as a metaphor for what Rinaldo Walcott identifies as the crumbling of ‘heterosexual mythic blackness . . . when confronted with the evidence of black queers’—‘it’s sexual other’ (76).

Furthermore, I suggest that Kincaid’s postponed revelation revises the non-heterosexual body’s confinement as a diseased and deviant body. Like *Down*, I interpret the delayed communication of Devon’s homosexual performances as a destabilisation of ‘the stereotypical connection of homosexuality and AIDS’ (25). In the 1980s and early 1990s, the initial rapid spread of the disease among those identified as homosexuals in the region led to a quick association between HIV-AIDS and ‘aberrant’ lifestyles (Howe 44). This association is referenced, for example, in King Short Shirt’s 1988 ‘AIDS’. In that calypso, King Short Shirt, in outlining behaviours that placed citizens at risk of contracting HIV-AIDS, cautions ‘You can’t get AIDS/ If you boys from boys abstain’. Importantly, though Kincaid initially blames Devon’s careless performance of a hyper-heterosexual lifestyle for his contraction of HIV-AIDS, her late reveal of his homosexual performances disallows the relocation/transfer of blame. Her engagement with her brother’s non-heterosexual body is instead marked by an indictment of Antiguan society. She indicts the latter for its confinement of Devon within the line, overriding his personal autonomy, and for its inherent hostility to bodies it considers unruly. She in fact parallels

Devon's aberrant performance with her own as a writer and notes that, like Devon, she 'could not have become myself while living among the people I knew best' (162). I interpret this as a positive location of homosexuality as the authoring of personal autonomy rather than as 'a special effect in need of repair' (Rinaldo Walcott 86).

Kincaid also indicts herself for previous bad-minded and confining judgement of Devon. I engage with her self-indictment as a critique of her initial attempts to colonise Devon's body via her 'now privileged North American' neo-colonising gaze (125). This is evident in her self-castigation for her initial ignorance and arrogance surrounding her understanding of the extent of Devon's suffering—

the anxiety when it appeared on his face, would have seemed to me, who knew nothing about his internal reality, as another kind of suffering, a suffering I might be able to relieve with medicine I had brought from the prosperous North; but I did not know then, I only know now¹⁰⁷. (164)

I suggest that Kincaid's self-critique represents an engagement with what Page identifies as the 'inequalities of the exchange' between Caribbean citizens stationed abroad in metropolitan centres and those who remain in the Caribbean (82). It destabilises Kincaid's authority as, to adapt Page, a remitter of the text from the so-called 'first world'. In turn it also marks the deconstruction of Devon as the 'insignificant small island man dying of AIDS' (Down 25). Moreover, overall, it spotlights the presumptuousness of Kincaid's bold declaration of intent to rewrite/revise Devon's life as one with significance, given the way in which Devon 'eludes her narrative grasp' (Brophy 272).

My discussion of *My Brother* advances to a close with an assessment of Devon's engagement with the remaining two elements of the tripartite criterion for male

¹⁰⁷ Devon's 'internal reality', that is, his anxiety occasioned by the double life he was forced to lead—a visible performance of the scripted compulsory heterosexuality alongside a veiled performance of the subversive homosexuality—, echoes Wesley Crichtlow's account of his attempts to hide/erase the 'buller' (homosexual). Crichtlow recalls: 'Being intimate with girlfriends, or having multiple sexual partners, was another way to exhibit my toughness and masculinity and to erase public suspicion about my being a buller man' (123).

significance—performance of the labouring body and emotional connectedness to others. I begin with his engagement with the latter by again referencing Kincaid's unreliability as a narrator and the bad-mindedness inherent in her value judgements about Devon. I suggest that Kincaid's judgment of Devon's worth as a body capable of reproducing love is informed by a hierarchy of emotional connectedness that privileges her performances with her Vermont family as superior to her Antiguan family's¹⁰⁸. This is made evident, for example, by her unvoiced thoughts to a suggestion that she takes Devon with her to the US for treatment. Tellingly, she frames Devon's chaotic carelessness as not only incongruent with her ordered life in Vermont but also a threat to the emotional connectedness of her family—'no, I can't do what you are suggesting—take this strange, careless person into the hard-earned order of my life: my life of children and husband, and they love me and love me again, and I love them' (49).

I contend that Kincaid's hierarchy of emotional connectedness is destabilised by her omission from the 'tapestry' of her Antiguan family—its experiences, memories, and identities. Her alienation from the group signals her inadequacy as an arbiter of the timbre of the emotional connectedness performed by the group. Moreover, contra her summation—'not love for someone else'—Devon was not without emotional bonds to others at the time of her inventorying. He had 'smadee'¹⁰⁹. Ironically, this is made evident in Kincaid's initial dismissal of his existence as characterised by nothingness—'No one, other than the people in his family and his mother's friends from her church, came to visit him' (14). Mrs. Drew is in fact limned by Kincaid as a superior performer of the body of the devoted mother, during his illness. I suggest that Kincaid's main narrative enacts a bad-minded neglect of Afro-Antiguan conceptualisation of worth as inextricably

¹⁰⁸. Indeed, her delineation of Vermont itself versus that of Antigua is analogous to Cassin's depiction of Antigua as a dark and degenerative parallel of England.

¹⁰⁹. Indeed, he also considers Kincaid as his 'smadee' as evidenced in his expressions of love for her.

connected to the 'having of smadee'. This is a curious omission given her engrossment with her vulnerability to her family's needs and their retaining influence. 'Having smadee' signals an important emotional connectedness to and acceptance as a member of a family, which, as I discuss in the next chapter, is a vital requirement for Afro-Antiguan personhood.

Devon's engagement with the required labouring body is marked by a subversive performance that is at odds with conventional notions of success and in turn significance. He is limned as averse to both caution and industry, which are re-presented by Kincaid as essential marks of the productive and worthy male body. He is positioned as a performer of an aberrant masculinity and personhood in relation to his brothers, particularly Dalma, who function from within postures of 'caution and industriousness' (195). Unlike Dalma, for example, who pursues three diverse occupations, Devon's employment history is summed up in the phrase 'He once had a job' (13). Moreover, Kincaid reveals a string of behaviours—including petty theft and an involvement in a fatal armed robbery—that portrays Devon as more likely to attempt to siphon the profit from the labour of others.

I suggest that the frustration marking Kincaid's attempt to attach meaning to Devon's life is largely engendered by her reliance on a framework of significance/worth that is at odds with/ unsuited to Devon's peculiar engagement with the line and the notion of significance. Her vision of the ideal masculine performance Devon could have enacted and the meaningful life he could have enjoyed reveals a bias towards Western conceptualisation of success and significance. For example, during her recollection of her brother's skill with gardening, she positions famous British gardener and designer Russell Page as an emblem of success her brother could have emulated had he 'caused his life to take a different turn' (11).

I consider persuasive Down's argument that the unexplored potential that Kincaid views as 'an indication of an unrealised life' is actually the distinctive mark of Devon's challenge to significance and success as typically defined by/in the West (24). I suggest that Devon's challenge is evident, for example, in his conversion to Rastafarianism. Tellingly, Kincaid dismisses Devon's conversion by reducing it to 'positive feelings' for a 'king of a small country in a landlocked part of Africa' and the smoking of marijuana (175-176). She neglects engaging with Rastafarianism itself as a peculiarly Jamaican-Caribbean movement founded on an 'Ethiopianist interpretation of scripture' in which 'the very fabric of white Euro-American society . . . responsible for centuries of black oppression and exploitation, emerges as a new Babylon from which the community must remain separate' (Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert, 2003 186).

Kincaid is not unaware of the disunity between Devon's and her own understanding of and engagement with the labouring body and notions of significance. This is highlighted in her recognition that the dead Devon would have perceived her American acquaintances' 'devotion to the routine, the ordinariness of pure, hard work' to be 'devoid of satisfaction'. I interpret as an admission of her own feelings her certainty that Devon would 'have done everything he knew how to accentuate to them the futility, the emptiness of the thing called life' and so engendered their dislike (105). I however also read in her subterranean narrative recognition of the enabling properties of Devon's unruly performance. I agree with Down's assessment that Kincaid's recognition of Devon's face as 'someone who had lived in extremes, sometimes a saint, sometimes a sinner' (*My Brother* 83) is suggestive of or acknowledges a 'life fully lived . . . with its own rhythms and on its own terms' (24). I suggest that Kincaid's acknowledgment underwrites her 'rescue' of the wharf-rat as a formality. As Down suggests, Devon's significance is like that of the passion fruit vine her mother had destroyed as observed by

Kincaid—‘I could only notice it [the missing passion fruit vine], not attach any significance to it, but there is significance to it all the same’ (127).

III. ‘people with name and respectability’

In comparison to *My Brother*, *Dancing Nude* presents a more straightforward portrayal of its protagonist’s negotiation of the line and engagement with notions of significance.

Michael subverts the wharf-rat mode scripted for his station primarily through two major acts of un-lining. He un-lines himself from the societal shame/burden of illegitimacy by rejecting the conventional Western-inspired framework used to delineate kinship and belonging. He opts instead for a model that is informed by the local concept of ‘having smadee’. Michael also enacts a simultaneous un-lining of himself from the scripted hypermasculinity by committing to performances that are in keeping with the hegemonic respectable masculinity officially sanctioned by Antigua society. His realignment in this regard is framed in moral terms. This realignment rejects the model of a superscript masculinity that is framed in terms of class, as prescribed for and performed by his well-to-do biological father.

In *Dancing Nude*, the subscript variety of the wharf-rat mode as scripted for Michael on the basis of his illegitimacy is doubly prescribed. He is interpellated as a subscript wharf-rat on moral grounds; he is the product of a sexual encounter that occurred outside of the respectable confines of marriage. The identity of the subscript variety of the wharf-rat is also limned as his inheritance owing to his mother’s lower-class status. His well-to-do biological father had abandoned him in a class-conscious society in which the nuclear family is considered ideal and other family forms deviant or insignificant. The significance of Michael’s neglect by his biological father is signalled in his paternal grandmother Tanty Lindo’s boast that her family ‘came from good people’ and were ‘people with name and respectability’. Her father had been an overseer on one

of the larger plantations; her own husband was a head teacher at a prominent private school, and later chief advisor on education policy to the prime minister.

An especially crucial element of the criteria of respectability that Tanty Lindo delineates is her own husband being ‘at least half white and not a bastard either’. Her husband’s father, unlike her own son Daniel, had ‘taken’ her husband, that is, acknowledged/accepted his paternity and ensured that he had gotten ‘a good education and everything’ (36). In a conversation with his girlfriend, Michael’s dismisses Tanty Lindo’s ideas of the import of station, family background, and colour as ‘laughable’. However, the text makes it clear that her criteria for respectability and his status as an ‘illegitimate’ have long haunted him, leaving him with a sense that he ‘didn’t fit the mould of that proud Lindo lineage’ (36).

In the past, the ‘illegitimate’ child in Antigua and the region was scripted as a performer of subpersonhood. As Eileen Boxill reminds, legally, he or she was considered ‘*filus nullius*, meaning child of no one’ (92). Societal attitudes towards the ‘illegitimate’ encouraged discrimination as occurred in the denial of the privileges and rights typically enjoyed by the child born in wedlock. By way of illustration, Lazarus-Black relates anecdotal evidence of past discrimination against ‘illegitimate’ children in Antigua, which included separate baptismal services and barred entrance to certain private secondary schools. In *Mr. Potter*, Kincaid’s exploration of illegitimacy as a literal and metaphorical line drawn through the wharf-rats and dictating their experiences and fates is in fact an apt elaboration of Lazarus-Black’s assertion that ‘until very recently legitimacy status, in combination with gender and skin color, defined a person’s life chances in Antigua’ (‘Alternative Readings’ 999, 998).

In *Dancing Nude*, Michael’s mother, Delora, is portrayed as having undertaken two main acts to improve her son’s life chances and overwrite his illegitimacy. Firstly,

she committed to regularly taking the younger Michael—in ‘his best shirt and pants and a too-big tie’—to visit Tanty Lindo and other members of the Lindo family. This act, repeated for years, was meant to coerce the Lindos into acknowledging Michael as one of their own. For Delora, the Lindos claiming of Michael as their ‘smadee’ meant her son would ‘get what was coming to him’—the inheritance of a personhood that is in keeping with the social ranking of the well-to-do and respectable Lindo family (2). Secondly, Delora also attempted to literally name her infant son out of the wharf-rat model by naming him after his biological father, Daniel Lindo.

Delora’s naming act is imbued with much significance. It is a performance designed to destabilise the efficacy of the depersonisation promised by the line that appears on her son’s birth certificate. Importantly, however, Hillhouse depicts the personhood Michael is meant to perform on the basis of his connection to the Lindos as an ill-fit for the young boy. Much like Cassin’s Morea, the ill-fitting wardrobe his mother chose for his visits to his biological father’s family—the ‘too-big tie from God-alone-knew-where that hung down to his hips’—functions as a symbol of his body’s incompatibility with the identity of the Lindos. His ill-fit with the Lindos is also apparent in the alienation the adult Michael remembers feeling, and still feels, during his visits to Tanty Lindo. I interpret his having been made to feel ‘out of place’ and ‘begging for approval’ from his paternal grandmother as a parallel of Antiguan society’s historical situating of the ‘illegitimate’ outside the margins of respectability. Likewise, his memory of his grandmother ordering him to sit on a chair rather than her ‘good couch’ references Antiguan society’s withholding of privileges and in turn full personhood from the ‘illegitimate’ (2). Moreover, his extant feelings of alienation are suggestive of the

continuing stigma attached to children born out of wedlock and, in general, to non-marital unions¹¹⁰.

The adult Michael undertakes the significant and enabling act of rejecting gaining the Lindos' acknowledgment of themselves as his 'smadee' as a central route to claiming personhood. He settles instead upon three alternative strategies to escape cancellation by the line and confinement within its interstices. Firstly, he un-lines himself as an 'illegitimate' by overwriting the burdening connection to his biological father that was inscribed upon his body by his mother's naming act. He rejects his legal name as the retention of a superficial link 'to a man he'd never met, who'd never wanted him to begin with' (15). He opts instead to embrace 'Michael', a nickname and tongue-in-cheek gesturing to Michael Jackson that he earned from the 'fellas' in his younger years after appearing on the cricket field with a jheri curl. His claiming of an identity as 'Michael' is therefore not only an act of un-lining but also one of realignment.

Michael's deliberate realignment to the community of 'fellas' that appears on the cricket field, socialises on the 'block', and teases him mercilessly during his wooing of Selena, is significant. Linden Lewis has observed the importance of the 'lime', that is, 'hanging out' with other men, as an important 'site of male socialization' in the Caribbean. According to him, 'liming with de boys' is 'an important psychic and gendered space in which masculinity is constructed, negotiated and contested' ('Fin de Siècle', 258). In keeping with Lewis's observations, I suggest that Michael's realignment of his affiliations to 'the fellas' represents a healthier and an enabling route to evading the cancellation and confinement promised by the line. On one hand, his interaction with 'the

¹¹⁰ Lazarus-Black, for example, notes that in a 1993 sitting of the Antiguan parliament, illegitimate children were identified as a 'social problem' and illegitimacy as the 'scourge of our region'. According to her, legislators were also united in lamenting the great number of unwed mothers and illegitimate children present in the country as well as the poor conditions in which they lived ('My Mother' 392).

fellas' is marked by a sense of belonging and acceptance; he is able to negotiate with the options of masculine expressions presented/enacted by them. On the other, his interaction with the Lindos, particularly Tanty Lindo, is marked by a sense of intimidation, alienation, and begrudging allowances that serve to foster his interpellation as a subscript variety of the wharf-rat.

Secondly, Michael un-lines himself as an 'illegitimate' by rejecting the criterion of the scripted hypermasculinity that interpellates him as a reproducer of the subscript wharf-rat model. This rejection is limned as an extension of his quarrel with Daniel Lindo. His care to remain childless is framed as an eschewing of his father's performance of the sanctioned hypermasculinity—'he didn't want any surprise babies like he'd been' (16). Significantly, near the text's end, he asserts his peculiar male personhood as distinct from that of his father's. His mother's caution that he not ruin his relationship with Selena, since it was in his blood to do so, is met with the retort 'I'm nothing like him' and the assertion 'I met him. He's weak. I'm not weak. I'm a man' (131). His care to remain childless is also framed within a desire to enact a performance of the hegemonic respectable masculinity. By way of example, during a conversation with his maternal uncle, Uncle Wellie, he expresses his wish to have 'a wife, children, the whole thing'. He also unhesitatingly rejects his uncle's suggestion that he enter into a non-cohabiting union with a female partner of his choosing - 'you don't need one of them in your house to be a daddy'. He rebuffs his uncle 'You know how I feel about children outside of marriage' (11).

Thirdly, Michael's un-lines himself from the burden and shame of illegitimacy by rejecting the conventional Western-inspired framework used to delineate kinship and belonging. By the text's end, after his first encounter with his father and the death of his Uncle Willie, he grows into awareness that it was the latter who had taught him 'about

being a man' and had been 'one of the best fathers anybody could want' (131, 121). Michael's new-found awareness regarding the roles played by his uncle and his biological father in his life and their meaning bears out Lazarus-Black's argument that Antiguan kinship norms value 'differently what "fathering" entails' and 'how it is accomplished'. According to her, Antiguan kinship and gender norms afford men options in fathering. She notes that the degree, type, and duration of the support the biological father offers to his child/children are dependent upon a number of factors such as his relationship with the mother, pressure from other friends, 'his age, the ages and number of children he has and his own sensibility about what 'fathering' should entail' ('My Mother' 397,394).

Furthermore, and importantly, Lazarus-Black observes that, especially in cases in which the biological father is absent from the household in which the child/children lives, 'fathering' becomes linked with particular tasks—'such as paying something for maintenance, school fees and special items that are expensive'. She points out that Antiguan kinship norms 'enable men to bestow 'support' at their prerogative' and allow them to be selective about when to contribute since 'community norms are flexible about when and to whom a man pays child support'. According to her, in the end, the support from the biological father is viewed as a 'gift', even in cases where it has been ordered by the courts ('My Mother' 394).

In Michael's case, Daniel Lindo's performance of 'fatherhood' involved the withholding of all forms of support from his biological son. Significantly, his neglect of Michael and Delora was approved by his family, particularly his mother. This is in keeping with Lazarus-Black's observation of the important role a man's female relatives in particular play in his interactions with his child. She notes, for example, that for non-resident unions where the man doubted the paternity of the child, a female relative would be sent to visit the child to ascertain whether or not the man should 'take' him/her.

According to her, in these situations, the man would be likely to ‘take the child’ only if this relative decides the baby is in fact ‘family’ (‘My Mother’ 397).

By the close of *Dancing Nude*, Michael renders the Lindos’ ‘taking’ of him irrelevant. He completes an un-lining that rescues him from the burden and shame of illegitimacy engendered by his biological father and his family. The legitimisation act he enacts is clearly informed by the home-grown concept of ‘having smadee’. His personhood and sense of family and belonging are reorganised strictly around those who did/do ‘take’ him such as his mother, Uncle Wellie, ‘the fellas’, and Selena—the woman he intends to marry. I suggest that his new job at the radio station as a full-time sports analyst/commentator, correspondent, and producer also functions as a symbol of his resolution of his quarrel with his illegitimacy and questions of his worth. At the start of the text, he is limned as the West Indian cricket player discarded due to injury. At its end, he has been elevated to a position of respect—a critic of Caribbean men’s sporting efforts¹¹¹.

Conclusion

On the whole, Antiguan texts spotlight the important role postcolonial literary producers play in setting the agenda for discussion of pertinent issues and questions of identity currently sidelined by both Caribbean fiction and the still fledgling fields of Caribbean gender and sexuality theory. Kincaid’s *My Brother*, for example, has been praised for stepping ‘out of the kumbla of protective silence’ around AIDS and the experiences of those living with the disease in the region (Down 16).

¹¹¹. This is immensely significant given the functioning of sports, particularly cricket, in the region as a major symbol of Caribbean masculinity and metaphor for resistance. In *Dancing Nude*, the famous Antiguan cricketer, Vivian Richards, is in fact described in Michael’s stream of consciousness as having a ‘sense about him as he stepped up to the crease that he was going to do battle for all black West Indian people’ (10).

Moreover, Antiguan authors' deconstruction of Antiguan patriarchy not only belatedly interrogates/destabilises past bad-minded scholarship on family and gender relations in the region but also offer caution to future scholarship of Caribbean gender and sexuality. Their query of the nexus between gender, class, 'race', and power recommends maintaining 'focus on the gender relations among men' so as 'to keep the analysis dynamic' and 'prevent the acknowledgment of multiple masculinities collapsing into a character typology' (Connell 76). They also assert the necessity of reading masculinities in the context of local iterations of manhood/gender in order to produce relevant/non-bad-minded accounts of peculiar masculine performances/expressions of masculinities.

CHAPTER III:

‘YOU HAVE SMADEE’: PERSONHOOD AND THE ANTIGUAN CALYPSO

‘I call in to the radio, tell them watch how they talkin’, ’cause you have smadee’
(‘Audrey’ in Joanne C. Hillhouse’s *Oh Gad!* 235).

I. Introduction

This final chapter examines Afro-Antiguan sentiments on Antiguan identity as connected to the national question and as archived in Antiguan calypsos. Antiguan calypsos’ articulate the peculiar responses of small-islanders to their territory’s subordinate position within the ‘global village’ and continuing entanglement in British colonialism and neo-colonial relationships and processes. The calypsos’ re-presentations of such responses are marked by a preoccupation with combatting the subhuman and subjugated body imposed upon the Afro-Antiguan during the colonial and postcolonial periods. It is this preoccupation with combatting the body of the subhuman that accounts for this chapter’s focus on the primarily ontological and epistemological challenges to colonial and neo-colonial discourses inscribed in the generally ethno-nationalist stance of Antiguan calypsos.

Typically, within Antiguan calypsos, working-class Afro-Antiguans are re-presented as indigenes with an organic connection to the land, and the nation, to borrow from Anderson, is ‘imagined’ as a homogenous bloc of besieged working-class Afro-Antiguans. Antiguan calypsonians, like their counterparts in the written tradition, persist with a peculiar recuperative project. Their project militantly petitions for acknowledgment of Afro-Antiguan personhood and re-writes the collective memory of the Afro-Antiguan nation in the face of the epistemological and ontological bad-mindedness inherent in colonial and neo-colonial discourses.

The calypsos analysed in this chapter explore similar themes as Kincaid's still-controversial *A Small Place*, which also engages directly with the national question. However, I observe that their exploration of, inter alia, local government corruption and the corrosive effects of the cumulative trauma of British colonialism, as well as present-day neo-colonialism, on Afro-Antiguan and small-island autonomy is marked by a tone of hopefulness and a spirit of defiance absent in Kincaid's text. The calypsos challenge the colonised body of the Afro-Antiguan, revise the historical depersonisation of the 'black' indigene, and [re]invent the nation as manifestly autonomous, even as they anxiously bemoan the beleaguered and endangered state of both.

The dissonance I observe between the tone of Kincaid's text and that of Antiguan calypsos' lyrics accords with Juneja's observation of the different outlook the Trinidad calypso, as oral history, has on 'the black experience' as compared to 'that available in recorded history, even when this history is written by West Indians'. She notes that, on one hand, in texts such as Eric Williams' *From Columbus to Castro* and V.S. Naipaul's travelogue, *The Middle Passage*, 'the masses remain exploited and abandoned victims of colonial oppression'. On the other hand, in the calypso, the masses are viewed from a vantage point which re-presents them 'as shapers of their own history' ('We kind of music' 47).

I suggest that further research on the peculiar material conditions via which calypso texts are produced will allow for an account of this dissonance. I speculate that such research is likely to provide an important account of how factors such as performance or authoring within the state-organised/sanctioned space of carnival and the expectations of the audience influence and interact with the texts produced with regards to calypsonians' choice of subject matter, re-presentations, and the overall tone of the calypso. Such an account would in turn encourage us to consider how meaning and text

might be differently produced and authorship differently defined in peculiar literary traditions in the postcolonial world¹¹².

I return now to the present focus of this chapter and to note that Antiguan calypsos' petition for acknowledgement of Afro-Antiguan proletarian personhood and the autonomy of the Afro-Antiguan nation typically engages with three thematic concerns. Firstly, the calypsos query the erosion of the autonomy of the Afro-Antiguan nation and sovereignty in the face of its continuing entanglement in British colonialism and neo-colonial relationships and processes. They also query the autonomy-eroding effect of the island's subordinate position as a small island within the so-called 'global village'. Antiguan calypsonians demonstrate awareness that the bad-mindedness marking the island's 'history of colonial subjection and postcolonial dependency has made national sovereignty and regional self-determination hard to sustain' (Puri 12).

Furthermore, they are resistant to allowing, to cite from Behdad, 'the predicament of globalization' to overshadow 'crucial issues such as imperialism and postcoloniality' or 'dissimulate neo-imperial relations of power' ('On Globalization' 63). This chapter demonstrates that calypsonians do not conceive of 'globalisation' as

a process of integration of all parts of the world in the international division of labour of the capitalist system and a concomitant shift of power from nation-states to transnational corporations and agencies of international capital (Dupuy 521).

Rather, as small-island residents, they intervene into globalisation discourses with the suggestion that 'space is not collapsed; it is being reorganized' (Puri 9). Their suggestion echoes Puri's assertion that 'this reorganization continues to be hierarchal' so that the term 'global village' is a falsehood as far as it is used to refer to an 'inclusive community and international equality' (Puri 9).

¹¹² For example, during calypso competitions, calypsonians often alter rehearsed lyrics based on the instantaneous value judgements received from the gathered audience. Also, calypsonians' deliberate interpellation of audience members as co-authors makes the case for calypso as a community-authored/performed text.

Secondly, and connected to the first concern outlined above, the calypsonians interrogate the relationship between local political leaders and foreign capitalists as occurs in Antigua. These two groups are re-presented as united in the praxis of a Byzantine bad-mindedness aimed at un-homing the Afro-Antiguan indigenes and re-imposing upon them the body of the subhuman. This accounts for the note of panic and alarm of recognition that reverberates throughout the calypsos. Within this note of panic and alarm of recognition are references to what Rex Nettleford aptly describes as ‘the tenaciously held perceptions among Caribbean people that there exists a seemingly impregnable and lasting nexus between skin colour on the one hand, and the deprivations of power, influence, authority, legitimacy and status on the other’ (*Inward* xii). The calypsos protest this nexus and position its demise as necessary for the success of the petition for Afro-Antiguan personhood.

Thirdly, the calypsos ground the re-invention of Afro-Antiguan self and nation in what Hall dubs the ‘symbolic return to Africa’ (‘Negotiating’ 31). They commit to this grounding to counter past and present epistemological and ontological bad-mindedness informing individual and collective Afro-Antiguan identity. The calypsos’ recuperation of both sets of identities involves, in large part, an ethical engagement with memory that intervenes into, and revises, the historical amnesia imposed upon Afro-Antiguans and peoples of the African diaspora. As Nettleford reminds us, ‘the need for roots and the attendant quest for identity’ are ‘natural to peoples everywhere’. He argues that this phenomenon ‘may be said to inhere in a people’s desire to collate and codify their past collective experience as well as to lay foundations for the realization of future aspirations’ (‘National Identity’ 59). Antiguan calypsos support this view and also confirm the peculiar case of the peoples of the African Diasporas of the ‘New World’ who, according

to Hall, have thus far been unable to discover their location in modern history minus the symbolic return to Africa ('Negotiating' 31).

My examination of the calypsos' exploration of the three themes outlined above involves a simultaneous analysis of the calypsonians' preoccupation with claiming the Afro-Antiguan proletariat as their *smadee*. I preface the second section of this chapter with a discussion on the calypsonians' anxious engagement with their personal investment and role in the *smadditization* project. The role of the calypsonian and his duty to 'the people' is a discussion that persists and engrosses critics, calypsonians, and audiences. The calypsonians' sentiments on this issue contribute to the extant debate on the role of the artist in the Caribbean, as was famously raised by C.L.R. James in 1959, and wider discussions of the role of the artist in post-colonial as well as [fairly] new nations, as was foregrounded by Chinua Achebe in 1964¹¹³. It would be remiss to ignore this issue/theme in my discussion of a tradition so occupied with it.

This chapter's scrutiny of Antiguan calypsos' engagement with the three major themes I have outlined also features a coinciding engagement with four main techniques calypsonians employ in their re-presentations of Afro-Antiguan identity: call and response, 'bad-john talk', humour, and masquerade. Typically, via form as well as content, Antiguan calypsos employ call and response to at least three ends. Firstly, it is a means of establishing a connection between the calypsonian and his/her intended Afro-Antiguan working-class audience; it transforms the individual into the collective. Secondly, it coaxes the audience into performing/co-authoring the text with the calypsonian; it transmutes monologue into dialogue. Thirdly, leading from the previous two functions, it allows for the re-claiming of the voice historically denied to the Afro-Antiguan; it troubles historical silence into speech.

¹¹³. See James' 'The Artist in the Caribbean'. See also Achebe's 'The Role of the Writer in a New Nation'.

Calypso critics tend to agree that the ‘chorus and chant of a typical calypso’ derives from ‘the call and response pattern of [West]African songs’, which ‘invite singing from the audience’ (Juneja, ‘We kind of music’ 39). They also observe that calypsos tend to utilise certain devices to ensure audience participation and ‘enhance the rapport between singer and audience’. For example, ‘calypsoes frequently employ the pronoun “we” as well as other first person plural pronouns. By way of another example, calypsonians also punctuate their songs with ‘interjections that directly address the audience’ (Juneja, ‘We kind of music’ 40). Overall, the consensus is that the call and response pattern with each verse ending ‘with a repeated chorus which the crowd soon learns to recognize’ foregrounds the art form as a communal expression, an outcome which, as I elaborate in this chapter, is crucial to the calypso’s project of recuperating Afro-Antiguan personhood (Hebdige 39).

‘Bad-john talk’ is my descriptor for the boasting language that typifies Antiguan calypsos. It typically asserts and/ or flaunts the autonomy of the art form, the calypsonian, and the Afro-Antiguan proletariat, even as it bemoans bad-minded attempts by to circumvent the agency of all three. Antiguan calypsos generally portray calypsonians and working-class Afro-Antiguans as ‘bad-johns’. The Creole English term bad-john typically refers to someone, usually a male, with a reputation for violence, bullying or aggression. I argue that Antiguan calypsonians offer a positive reinterpretation of the figure of the bad-john as a ruffian. Aggressive conduct and acts of violence, literal or figurative, are represented as elicited by the pervasive bad-mindedness affecting the Afro-Antiguan personising project.

I read Antiguan calypsonians' 'playing' bad-john and engagement with 'bad-johnism' as both an affirmation of the agency of the Afro-Antiguan proletariat and a reference to its willingness to employ literal or metaphorical violence to sustain/strengthen its agency¹¹⁴.

The consensus amongst calypso critics is that the language of calypso is inherited from a number of traditions¹¹⁵. It is usually identified as being primarily the enduring legacy of the 'midnight robber' and the West African griot/wandering minstrels, the latter of which 'were both oral historians and social commentators for their people' (Juneja, 'We kind of music' 42). Bad-john talk is particularly reminiscent of the 'robber-talk' of the midnight robber¹¹⁶. Robber-talk is described as, 'A practised speech' consisting of 'bragging of personal, satanic powers, and characterised by meaningless strings of words interspersed with unreal threats to persuade the listener to throw money in a bag' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 381). In the case of Antiguan calypsonians, robber-talk manifests in the threats and boasts constituting bad-john talk that is meant to convince/remind their targeted audiences of the personhood and agency of the Afro-Antiguan proletariat.

With regards to the humour utilised by Antiguan calypsos, I argue that it is generally of the 'skin-teeth' variety. Allsopp describes skin-teeth as the 'smile or grin of a false friend; a cynical little laugh baring the teeth' (*Dictionary* 512). My understanding of skin-teeth humour is in line with that referenced in the local aphorism, 'every skin teeth na (not) laugh', which is a caution to carefully assess smiles/grins/laughs to allow

¹¹⁴. To 'play bad-john' is 'To make a show of violent behaviour; to pretend to be a ready ruffian'. 'Bad-johnism' is generally understood as 'Violent and lawless conduct in the open' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 66). As used in this chapter, it refers to aggression, that is, literal/metaphorical violence, undertaken to further the smadditization project.

¹¹⁵. Warner, addressing the issue of the language of the calypso, reminds those seeking a 'clear-cut and exact definition of the calypso' that the 'modern calypsonian is the sum of many traditions, any of which may surface from time to time'. He notes that 'calypsonians reach back into what became the oral tradition of which they are part and use elements of it either singly or in conjunction with others' (*Kaiso!* 29).

¹¹⁶ Warner opines that calypso's language in general has inherited both the boasting of the 'midnight robber' and the bravado of the latter West African griot (*Kaiso!* 41).

for an accurate interpretation of a situation or a person¹¹⁷. As used in colloquial language, the aphorism refers to both literal smiles/grins/laughs as well as actions that are seemingly friendly/ helpful/ cheerful. I also apprehend skin-teeth humour as a coping mechanism deployed by Antiguan calypsonians. I suggest that this function of the ‘skin-teeth’ is referenced in/ connected to another regional aphorism—‘tek bad things mek laugh’ (take bad things make laugh)—, which advises using humour as a tool for battling adversity or bad-mindedness.

Antiguan calypsos’ skin-teeth humour, as achieved via the use of puns, wordplay, metaphors, ‘picong’, and et cetera, demonstrate ‘that joking and laughing are not synonymous’¹¹⁸ (Vásquez 8-9). Or, perhaps more aptly, that ‘laughter is ambivalent: it is gay, triumphant, and at the same time mocking, deriding. It asserts and denies, it buries and revives’ (Bakhtin 11-12). The jokes arising out of skin-teeth humour are akin to the variety that Freud labels as ‘tendentious’, that is, jokes with a particular aim (*Jokes* 132). They are intended to negotiate the bad-mindedness facing the Afro-Antiguan and ‘mobilize political agency’ (Vásquez 17).

My discussion of the calypsos’ use of masquerade centres upon two main ways in which it is made to function by Antiguan calypsonians. Firstly, I engage with it as a technique typically employed to explore thematic concerns via, frequently humorous, indirection. In the case of Antiguan calypsos, indirection has less to do with dissembling and more to do with showcasing the calypsonian’s ingenuity at deflecting blame for or masking the sentiments/intentions of his/her calypso. Secondly, I frame masquerade as a technique that allows calypsonians to vary re-presentations of themselves. In this regard,

¹¹⁷. The ‘Cultural Heritage’ page of the Antigua and Barbuda Museum website translates this as ‘All smiles may not be genuine’.

¹¹⁸. ‘Picong’ denotes mocking or teasing that relies upon satirical repartee. Allsopp notes that ‘picong’ is an Eastern Caribbean word with a possible Spanish (‘picar’) or French (‘piquant’) origin. In the Trinidad calypso tradition ‘picong’ references a ‘spontaneous verbal battle in rhymed song between two or more contending calypsonians in wh[ich] the wit and humorous impact of a contender’s improvisation determines his supremacy. . .’ (*Dictionary* 439).

I agree with Harewood's suggestion that a useful way of discussing masquerade as a calypso technique is to view it as 'the dynamic construction of versions of different selves and possible communities' rather than 'as a way of masking some kind of one true self'¹¹⁹ (196). As Harewood persuasively argues, the calypsonian as masquerader is allowed to cite from 'different selves...to create a plurality of meanings' (196). In this chapter, I demonstrate that calypsonians employ masquerade to assert a connection to the Antiguan proletarian audience. They interpellate proletarian Afro-Antiguan as co-author by, to borrow from Harewood, drawing upon masques from the latter's 'canon of selves and their stock of knowledge and experiences' (196).

The thematic concerns of the calypsos, along with the techniques outlined, guide this chapter's reliance upon the theory of *smadditizin'* as articulated by Jamaican philosopher Charles W. Mills in his 1997 and 2010 'Smadditizin''. They also guide the reliance upon the theory of dependency, as discussed in relation to Antigua, by Antiguan social theorist Paget Henry. Both theories provide analytical frameworks that are pertinent to my examination of Antiguan calypsonians' engagement with the praxes of bad-mindedness affecting Afro-Antiguan personhood. The peculiarities of the calypsonians' campaign against the ontological and epistemological bad-mindedness informing re-presentations of Afro-Antiguan identity parallel Mills's major assertions regarding the peculiarities of Afro-Caribbean experience of re-inventing self. Likewise, the calypsonians' anxiety regarding the island's continuing (over)dependency on foreign capital and the corrosive effect this has on Afro-Antiguan proletarian agency and the state's sovereignty parallels the concerns fleshed out in Henry's account of the dependency theory in relation to Antigua.

¹¹⁹ Admittedly, whilst my focus here is on the calypsos' lyrics, Harewood's essay makes a strong case for examining masquerade as an integral part of calypso performance and employs it as a critical framework for apprehending the negotiation of identities established within the performance. However, her use of a single recent calypso performance hints at the difficulties/limitations of utilising such an approach.

The first half of this chapter's title is inspired by an exchange between two characters in Joanne C. Hillhouse's 2012 novel, *Oh Gad!* During this exchange, the Antiguan-born and US-bred protagonist's sense of alienation begins to dissipate after her sister, previously hostile to her, relates defending her against callers to an Antiguan radio programme:

Audrey continued, 'I call in to the radio, tell dem watch how they talkin', cause you have smadee.'

Nikki laughed, a rough cough of a laugh. 'I have smadee,' she repeated. 'You have people, yes,' Audrey said. 'Wha dem think? You drop from tree. I don' mind they talk, you know, so long as they keep it at a certain level.'

'I have smadee,' Nikki mumbled to herself.... (235)

Smadee, as noted before, is derived from the Standard English word 'somebody'¹²⁰. As used by Audrey, it denotes personhood as reliant upon membership in and acceptance by a group—the family. Her assertion that Nikki 'have smadee' therefore invalidates the callers' bad-minded dislocation of Nikki as person, and curtails efforts to impose upon her the body of the amnesiac denied history, home, narrative and nation. It secures for Nikki a place within her immediate family as well as the larger family- the imagined Afro-Antiguan nation. In this respect, Audrey's assertion mirrors Antiguan calypsos' insistence upon [re]asserting the Afro-Antiguan proletariat's possession of smadee.

For Mills, smadditization, as connected to the Jamaican creole term smadditizin', is 'the struggle to have one's personhood recognized in a world where, primarily because of race, it is denied' ('Smadditizin'' 1997 55). He clarifies that though smadditizin' derives from 'somebody', unlike the latter as occurs, for example, in 'the vocabulary of the social snob' it references 'race' rather than class ('Smadditizin'' 1997 54-55). In this regard, he asserts that European colonialism is at the root of the ontological significance 'race' has acquired. He advances the suggestion that smadditization be viewed as 'the

¹²⁰. 'Smadee' or 'smaddy' also exists in the Creole English lexicon of other Caribbean territories such as Jamaica and St. Croix.

central, paradigmatic experience of the oppressed in the Caribbean region' since smadditizin' 'encapsulates the many dimensions of struggle of those historically subordinated in the Caribbean'. He suggests that political, cultural, moral, epistemological, and ontological dimensions characterise the struggle ('Smadditizin'' 1997 54-55). This delineation works well for Antiguan calypsonians' depiction of Afro-Antiguans as having to combat pervasive bad-mindedness in their bid to recuperate personhood and agency.

Mills describes the struggle as being political 'insofar as it involves demands for better representation and self-government, and a challenge to relations of power and domination'. It is cultural to the extent that it involves a 'repudiation of derogative representations of oneself'. Morally, it is involved with 'questions of moral entitlement and exclusion, of what the rights and wrongs of the past and present are.' Its epistemological nature is revealed in its 'contestation of what counts as knowledge, as the official version of history, and what sources of knowledge are legitimate'. And, it is ontological to the extent that it calls for an upset of the 'accepted hierarchy of social being' and 'the self-assertion of those regarded as lower beings' ('Smadditizin'' 1997 55).

Importantly, Mills defines smadditization, contra individualist Cartesian and existentialist problems, as 'a collective enterprise' (1997 63). His formulation captures a main sentiment Antiguan calypsos articulate regarding the Afro-Antiguan smadditization project as an African diaspora project. Antiguan calypsonians do demonstrate awareness that their project concerns individuals historically considered sub-persons who 'unlike a Cartesian self or a Sartrean chooser' are 'not fully there to the person population to begin with' (Mills, 'Smadditizin'' 1997 62). Thus, whilst each person must approach the question of his/her identity on his/her own, the success of the engagement with questions of identity is dependent upon the 'advance of the collective project'. This is because it is

not ‘individual idiosyncratic failings’ but membership in the ‘despised race’ which bars the individual from full personhood (Mills, ‘Smadditizin’ 1997 63). Mills understands that, ‘Collective denigration requires collective salvation’ (‘Smadditizin’, 2010 176). Or, to put it another way, as Hillhouse’s Audrey intimates, to be smadee, you must ‘have smadee’.

The dependency theory essentially ‘explains development as being constrained by the unequal exchange relationships that exist between the nations that are developed and those that are viewed as developing’ (Keita 134). In discussing this theory in relation to Antigua, Paget Henry historicises the island’s dependency noting that in the early stages of the colonial era, the ties between colonial economies and local manufacturers and markets were lopped in favour of connections to imperial markets and producers ¹²¹ (‘Antigua and Barbuda’ 22). This resulted in a dependency on: outside markets to induce demand; extraneous entrepreneurs to produce capital and important investments; and outside technology to ensure competitiveness. According to him, as with other formerly colonial societies, ‘these problems of external dependence and countering them with an internally driven economic dynamic’ are very real for Antigua (‘Antigua and Barbuda’ 22).

Henry asserts that the island ‘will have to make a radical transformation’ if it intends like other ex-colonial societies to withdraw its economy from ‘its colonial heritage of dependence’. He maintains that the character of this necessary disruption ‘must be such that it re-establishes substantive links between local demand, local production and local investment’ (‘Antigua and Barbuda’ 22). In his estimation, Antigua is, at present, ‘in the first postcolonial cycle of economic dependence’, which ‘has been marked by a shift from British demand for sugar to British and North American demand

¹²¹. Henry’s discussion is in relation to both islands of the twin island nation-state.

for tourist resources and facilities' ('Antigua and Barbuda' 24). Following his explanation, this phase adheres to the state capitalism model, that is, the Antiguan economy is currently one 'in which the major investment decisions are made by an alliance between the state and the capitalist class, rather than by the latter alone' ('Antigua and Barbuda' 25).

Henry notes that the thinking of St. Lucian economist and Nobel laureate, Arthur Lewis, heavily influenced the early economic policies of the ALP, especially in the 1940s and 1950s. Lewis framed the shift from plantation sugar to industry in 'the language, theory and practice of Fabian or democratic socialism' ('Antigua and Barbuda' 24). For Lewis, 'a democratic socialist transition to industry had two main goals: 1) increase total income; 2) redistribute it more equitably' ('Antigua and Barbuda' 24-25). In Lewis' model, Caribbean economies would follow in the footsteps of postcolonial US by relying on foreign capitalists to carry out management and investment roles that were beyond the capacity of local capitalists and the state ('Antigua and Barbuda' 25). According to Henry, Lewis was aware of the risks involved in mimicking the US' strategy, namely the reinforcement of colonial patterns of development and failure at achieving the goals of economic autonomy and democratic socialism ('Antigua and Barbuda' 25).

Henry's account of Antigua's failure thus far to attain economic autonomy and adhere to a democratic socialism model identifies two factors as root causes. Firstly, local political elites were unable to levy key demands of the Lewis model against foreign capitalists¹²². Secondly, local political elites also failed to persuade foreign capitalists to 'make Antigua and Barbuda their home and help to create an indigenous bourgeois class' as had happened in the case of the US. These failures 'left the major investment decisions in the hands of an alliance between the state and a constantly shifting foreign

¹²². An example of such demands would be the wielding of 'the power of state work permits to force foreign capitalists to apprentice local ones' (Henry, 'Antigua and Barbuda' 25).

capitalist class' (Henry, 'Antigua and Barbuda' 25). Thus, the Antiguan economy whilst it did undergo significant growth experienced no revolutionary transformations capable of disrupting this trend. In fact, as Henry laments, and as the calypsos considered in this chapter bemoan, the economy became and remains characterised by an increased dependency on 'foreign capital and foreign investment decision-making' ('Antigua and Barbuda' 26).

II. Personhood and Antiguan Calypso

Antiguan calypsonians' preoccupation with the recuperation of Afro-Antiguan personhood/ the smadditizin' of the Afro-Antiguan proletariat is marked by an anxiety to assert the calypsonian's own organic connection to the group. This is in keeping with Hillhouse's Audrey and Mills' formulation that membership in the group is vital to the [re]construction of self. Typically, the calypsonians re-present themselves as being twice-burdened with the task of acquiring smadee and [re]constructing self. They re-present themselves as having to [re]claim a self that is, most immediately, a member of the Afro-Antiguan working-class community as well as a self that is a member of the calypso fraternity, which is itself a peculiar and, as they re-present it, crucial subset of the Afro-Antiguan proletariat.

The calypsonians' anxiety over their personal investment in the smadditization process/project is hardly surprising given that the calypso is conventionally regarded as an expression of 'grassroots sentiments' and 'the true mirror of the soul and sentiment of the people'. The calypsonian in turn is expected to be 'very close to the everyday lives of the Caribbean people' (Warner, 'Calypso, Reggae' 53, 56). Addressing the role of the calypsonian and the connection between the calypsonian and 'the people', Queen Ivena insists, 'I always believe a calypsonian supposed to be there to tell the people what is going on in their country and uplift society' (Personal interview). For his part, King Short

Shirt asserts, ‘You just don’t get up and go up the road and come down the road and don’t know what is going on. . . . I stay in touch’ (Personal interview).

Juneja confirms the expectancy of a close relationship between calypsonian and ‘the people’ noting that, in small-island societies, calypsonians who ‘perform every year in the same arena are much more visibly and meaningfully members of their community than any recording artist in America can hope to be’ (‘We kind of music’ 40). In a similar vein, Guilbault, expounding on the Trinidadian case, notes calypso’s longstanding implication in the ‘articulation of the nation-state, national belonging, politics of representation, and power relations’ (*Governing* 1). She argues that calypso, ‘regulated by laws and policed by public morality’, has played an integral role in the ‘articulation of Trinidad cultural politics for more than a century’ and that the art form ‘constituted the terrain on which to address issues of identity and senses of (be)longing’ (*Governing* 61). Moreover, O’Marde, in reference to the Antiguan case, asserts that ‘inclusion of Calypso Competitions in official Carnivals’, consecrates the art form as ‘the voice of the people in the festival, as the artistic expression that best represented and presented the worldview of the people’ (‘The Role’).

One of the most well-known militant petitions for recognition of membership in the Afro-Antiguan proletariat appears in King Short Shirt’s 1976 ‘Nobody Go Run Me’¹²³. In this calypso, King Short Shirt engages with a personal smadditization project and campaigns for his re-election as a member of and spokesperson for the downtrodden Afro-Antiguan proletariat. He initiates his campaign by dispelling a major myth lending to his sense of disconnection from ‘the people’. He abnegates interpellation as the affluent

¹²³ . This calypso is King Short Shirt’s response to the then previous government’s attempts to have removed the beach bar he had erected as a squatter on government owned land. There is no mention of the bar/ his squatting in the calypso in which he re-presents himself an impoverished calypsonian and Afro-Antiguan—a positioning clearly designed to lend credibility to and draw support and sympathy from the group for his woes.

calypsonian who has risen above the station that has been, as the calypso implies, assigned to him based on his 'race'. He relates:

Night and day ah (I) ketching (catching) hell
 People t'ink (think) ah doing well
 Just because ah sing ah few calypso
 But dat is my misery
 Calypso don't make money. (Verse 1, see page 298)

The calypso is so structured that the verses concern themselves with issuing the call for the masses to re-elect the suffering calypsonian into their fold whilst the chorus anticipates a favourable and bad-john or indignant response from the group on the calypsonian's and their own behalf: 'Dey (they) go have to beat me / Dey go have to eat me! / Or dey heads go roll / ...Nobody go run me / From where me come from!'

Throughout the calypso, King Short Shirt draws upon, to borrow from Harewood, masques from a 'canon of selves' familiar to an Afro-Antiguan working class aware of the pervasiveness of bad-mindedness in an island divided by party politics (196). In the first verse, he masquerades as the everyman who just happens to be a calypsonian. He assures his audience that he has an 'axe to grind / Just like any other man / Existing in poverty on dis giant ghetto land'. In the second verse, he is the everyman suffering the fallout attendant to having political views contrary to those of his friends. In this verse, the pronominal references- 'I' and 'me', as present in the rest of the calypso, become 'we' and 'us': 'Life ain' much for us to choose / Some we win and some we lose'. This transition to the first person plural is intended to remind the proletariat of the calypsonian's organic connection to it. It is also meant as a prompt for the proletariat to recognise itself in the masque employed- a self that experiences the peculiarities of small-island life as outlined by the calypsonian.

King Short Shirt's 'I' returns for the full length of the third verse in which he masquerades as another self familiar to the Afro-Antiguan proletariat—that of the

Antiguan facing the threat of losing employment because the island's elites are 'playing God'. He sings: 'But I hear some people high / In our society / Dey don't like my calypso / Because dey can't control me / So dey plan to kick out my ass!' By the fourth and final verse, King Short Shirt fully [re]claims his calypsonian self, and masquerades as the calypsonian, as referenced in the chorus, and as popularly understood—the bad john issuing a political and ontological challenge to the elite's praxis of bad-mindedness: 'Tell dem I don't give ah damn / I am going to sing my song exactly as I see it / . . . tell them I ain' running no wey (where)!'

The repeated command 'Tell dem' mirrors the first lines of his chorus in which he urges the audience to: 'Tell dem! Tell dem for me! / No dice! I ain' go eat lice! / I ain' going to grow old / Sitting in the cold'. This command represents a reversal of conventional roles—'the people' are interpellated as messenger/voice of the calypsonian—that highlights the calypsonian's confidence that his two selves—everyman and the calypsonian- 'have smadee' to defend them. In other words, in 'Nobody Go Run Me', the Afro-Antiguan proletariat is interpellated as the 'Audrey' to King Short Shirt's 'Nikki'.

King Short Shirt's petition for smadee in his 1987 'True Antiguan' is also worth mentioning for the way in which the calypsonian destabilises both the notion of 'the people' and the calypsonian as the 'voice of the people' in order to further his claim. In the variations of the calypso's chorus, King Short Shirt produces at least three Afro-Antiguan bodies—'idle young people', 'delinquent children', and 'lazy people'—that are at odds with the body of the model/productive Afro-Antiguan proletarian (see page 301). Committed via the masque of the patriotic Afro-Antiguan, this destabilisation facilitates the calypsonian's petition for smadee by, to borrow from Bloom, clearing space in the

nation for the calypsonian via a ‘misreading’ of members of the Afro-Antiguan proletariat¹²⁴.

Besides the masque of the patriotic Antiguan, in ‘True Antiguan’, King Short Shirt draws upon at least two other masques in his campaign to [re]claim membership in the Afro-Antiguan proletariat: that of the wrongfully accused calypsonian and that of the duty-bound calypsonian. His masquerade as the calypsonian accused of neglecting ‘the people’ and being a cohort of the then ruling party is facilitated through his relation of being interrogated by a politician aligned to the then opposition party. It is a masque that the calypsonian knows will not tax the imaginations of ‘the people’, for whom, on a small and intimate island like Antigua, such encounters between politician and the ordinary citizen are not alien. So, he relates: ‘Donald Halstead flag me down to tell me/Shorty boy you acting strange / . . . Tell me, how much Lester pay? / Man to man, I demand an explanation’.

The masque of the wrongfully accused calypsonian coupled with the masque of the patriotic Antiguan facilitates the scolding he offers to the subsets identified in the choruses and the approbation he invites from the whole:

When I see lazy people
On their backside complaining
Life has no hope
It hurt me.
If we utilise every opportunity
What a glorious land this will be!

Via the use of the first-person plural, as in the last two lines above and elsewhere in the calypso, he interpellates ‘the people’ as his *smadee*. Appearing to anticipate rejection, he

¹²⁴. Commenting on this ‘misreading’, O’Marde asserts that the calypso disappointed those Afro-Antiguans whom King Short Shirt ‘gave cover...to sing condemnation as though it was not theirs’. According to him, the calypso indulges in the bad-mindedness the calypsonian is meant to protest: ‘the victims of the national socio-economic deterioration- including "the youth" . . . are blamed for their circumstance’ (*Nobody* 173).

admonishes: ‘We are all one people / ...But if we pulling and tugging... / ...We will rip Antigua apart’. By the end of the calypso, the third masque, that of the duty-bound calypsonian, is drawn upon to defend the calypsonian’s recent reticence in maintaining an anti-government stance and to re-assert his loyalty to ‘the people’ and the art form: ‘I must awake my people... / As long as strength in my body / Dey don’t have to pay me / I will sing as I see’.

King Short Shirt’s assertion ‘I will sing as I see’ echoes his ‘I am going to sing my song exactly as I see it’ in ‘Nobody Go Run Me’. This line as it occurs in ‘True Antiguan’, coupled with his insistence that he must ‘educate’ and ‘activate’ ‘the people’ references the necessity of his [re]claiming of his role as voice of ‘the people’ and in turn the need for the calypsonian to assist ‘the people’ in [re]claiming its voice¹²⁵. This is in keeping with Mills’ assertion that a crucial component of smadditizin’ is ‘the struggle for the Word, for the power to name and re-name’ (‘Smadditizin’’, 1997 66). Mills argues that the Word ‘is what names, imposes a certain set of categories, prescribes a certain set of understandings, crystallizes a certain set of memories and corresponding amnesias’ (‘Smadditizin’’, 2010 180-181). According to him, the Word can be seen as ‘magical’ as it names ‘things in and out of existence’ (‘Smadditizin’’, 1997 66).

In other words, silence, or the lack of a voice, allows for the reduction of the person to object (sub-person) whilst speech operates as the mark of subjectivity and agency. Or as Mills elaborates, ‘If one does not have the Word, one will have no name, and can then be named by another’ (‘Smadditizin’’, 1997 66). For him, smadditization requires ‘the valorization of oneself as an agent of moral and cognitive evaluation, articulating counter-knowledges’ (‘Smadditizin’’, 2010 176). He cites Edward Brathwaite’s *History of the Voice* which ‘describes the importance of reclaiming the

¹²⁵. Even in the face of his destabilisation of the bloc.

voice, of being able to speak for oneself rather than being spoken for, and spoken by, in a feat of ventriloquism, others' ('Smadditizin', 1997 66).

Antiguan calypsonians, at one point or another, all reference/elaborate the importance of [re]claiming the voice—both the calypsonian's and 'the people's'—as a conduit to the claiming of smadee and engagement in the Afro-Antiguan smadditization project. Indeed, calypsonians' engagement with the smadditization process across the region is marked by a similar frequently expressed recognition of the import of the voice to the [re]claiming of personhood. By way of example, the Vincentian calypsonian, King Poorsah, in his 1988 'Mouth in Me Mooma', rails against the bad-mindedness of then Vincentian Prime Minister, James Mitchell: 'You is a joker, you tell me / Shut up and that's all / Am saying 'No sir / Am human after all'!' In his chorus, he mocks and asserts: 'Yuh muss be t'ink me lef me mouth inna me mooma / Yuh must be t'ink say me nah Vincy too'¹²⁶.

For her part, Antiguan calypsonian, Queen Ivena, typically expresses confidence of the social levelling and personal and political autonomy achieved via the [re]claiming of the voice. Queen Ivena's assertion and insertion of herself as a leader and voice of 'the people' in the Afro-Caribbean male space of the calypso represents an intervention into the androcentrism marking Afro-Caribbean nationalist discourse 'which excludes women from the realm of constructive action' (Torres-Saillant 70). Interestingly, unlike the offerings of Queen Singing Althea analysed in the previous chapter, Queen Ivena's calypsos are not typically gynocentric. They are, however, uncomplicatedly Afrocentric, which, I suggest, rather than obscure the Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean woman in the local, regional and diasporic smadditization project, posit her inclusion as natural or a given—a treatment validated by Queen Ivena's own successes against male calypsonians.

¹²⁶. 'You must be think I left my mouth in my mother / You must be think I am not Vincentian too.'

In Queen Ivena's calypsos, the voice of the calypsonian is a menace to plans to cannibalise the autonomy of the Afro-Antiguan proletariat. In 'Ivena's Agenda' (2003), for example, she informs the audience of her plans to launch a revolution in the face of attempts to impose upon 'the black man and his nation' the body of the subhuman. She promises: 'Anytime you hear people suffer / Call Ivena!' Employing bad-john talk throughout all four verses of the calypso, she repeatedly flaunts the autonomy of her calypsonian voice: 'Dey want me to prostitute / But I have to sing the truth! / ...Yes, dey want me sing fantasy / Sing for party and dress up sexy / And ignore more issues and local values / ...If dey think I'll turn a blind eye / Well dey damn lie! /Calypso prostitutes they're after / Pass Ivena!' (see page 304).

Likewise, in her 2004 'After Lester', she masquerades as the calypsonian elected by 'the people' to utilise the voice in their defence. She relates being guided by the group on how to treat the then newly-elected prime minister should he grow bad-minded as the previous did: 'Like Lester, if he should get slack / And backtrack on the people's contract / Ivena, you have the right to attack!' (see page 306). A similar masque is employed in her 2005 'Leggo de calypso' in which she relates being advised: 'You've got to call a spade a spade / And you may have enemies made / But when you encounter dem / Gyal (girl) drag (bring) out your razor blade!' (see page 307).

A decade prior to Queen Ivena's 'Ivena's Agenda', King Smarty Jr.'s 'The Role of the Calypsonian' employed the masque of the calypsonian beleaguered by his peers, and skin-teeth humour via the use of 'picong', to inform Afro-Antiguans of the pressure being exerted on him to sing songs that were more up-tempo and less politically charged. He relates:

Progress and Solo warn me- Smarty,
 You and Zachari
 Singing too much
 Serious song in we competition

Look how dose up in de top t'ree (three)
 Like Lady Falcon and King Shorty
 Add to de spirit of Carnival wit' deir bacchanal. (Verse one, see page 294)

Like Queen Ivena, he shrugs off the body of the 'bacchanal'/party artist and reasserts his role as the 'bad-john' calypsonian, loyal to 'the people': 'But how can I condemn de government / Den (then) tell people celebrate on de pavement? / . . . I go sing my song / I don't bound to wear aryuh crown!'

As the examples above suggest, a marked feature of Antiguan calypsonians' celebration of the integral role the calypsonian has played in [re]claiming Afro-Antiguan proletariat voice and in turn agitating for the acknowledgement of Afro-Antiguan personhood, is the delineation of the art form as being marked by a tradition of 'bad-johnism'. Richie Francis's 2012 'Sacred Duty', offers a genealogy of calypso that outlines a historic engagement with bad-johnism as a mode of securing flight from oppression:

They say it was born in the heart ah slavery
 Our freedom song on the plantation
 And though it was banned
 We persist with bravery
 It was our tool against oppression
 The black man didn't have no choice
 It was our only voice
 Our forefather's legacy
 To ensure a democracy. (Verse 1, see page 327)

He also deftly claims the Afro-Antiguan proletariat as his smadee by positioning himself within the calypso tradition as a bad-john dedicated to the Afro-Antiguan smadditizin' process: 'But what was fearless in the days of old? / (Calypso) / What every politician wished to control/ (Calypso) /We never need no license for we mout' / . . . So I cannot go

on stage / To wine away me heritage / Is only four chorus and verse / Four hundred years of tears to reverse'¹²⁷.

In his 2012 'Freedom for Mandela Again', King De Bear, builds on Richie Francis' enunciation of the import of the calypso/calypsonians as 'the voice of the people', the 'eyes of society', and 'defenders of the freedom of the citizen' (Rohlehr, *A Scuffling of Islands* 339). King De Bear employs the masque of the disappointed and scolding calypsonian as well as skin-teeth humour via 'picong' to chastise fellow calypsonian King Zachari for denigrating the calypso's voice by ignoring local issues affecting Afro-Antiguans: 'You pretending like you don't know / With you outdated calypso' (see page 323). Employing bad-john talk, he, like Richie Francis, clarifies the role of the calypso voice by referencing the bad-johnism ingrained in the tradition, and claims the Afro-Antiguan proletariat as his smadee: 'Let me mek (make) it clear / Me and all politicians ah (are) friend / But it's my duty as a messenger / To fight for the downtrodden / And for that, I will never beg pardon'.

I will return periodically throughout this chapter to the calypsonians' personal engagement with the smadditization project. For now, I turn to examining the calypsos' persisting anxiety over the question of the erosion of the autonomy of the Afro-Antiguan nation and the Antiguan nation state. In the discussion that follows, I historicise this worry as the affect of anxiety engendered by realisation of the island's continued entanglement in British colonialism and neo-colonial relationships and processes, and its subordinate position within the 'global village'.

Antiguan calypsonians' immense anxiety about the erosion of the autonomy of the nation and nation state is typically grounded in an expressed recognition that the success

¹²⁷ A popular Caribbean dance move accomplished by 'swinging the hips vigorously while thrusting the buttocks back and forth' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 606). The calypsonian's refusal to 'wine' is a rejection of the body of the soca artist. During his performance at the 2012 Calypso Monarch Competition, he employs skin-teeth humour, performing the move, to mock this body (Government of Antigua Barbuda, 'Richie Francis').

of the smadditization struggle is dependent upon the island's full dismantling of all colonial ties. The calypso tradition is marked by an anxiety that British colonialism and its praxes of bad-mindedness still exist as a menace for the small island. Prior to and after the island's gaining of independence, calypsonians queried both the 'anti' in 'anti-colonial' and 'post' in 'post-colonial'. This along with their articulation of the threat presented by the character of relations with the US 'stress the continuity—the persistence in the present . . . of colonialisms both old and new' (Brydon and Tiffin 8). In other words, the calypso tradition is marked by enunciations of small-islanders' realisation that, as Mills argues, 'the world against which smadditizin' as a process needs to be initiated is still in many ways intact' ('Smadditizin'' 1997 55). They challenge this world by intervening into the discourses that support it with, to adapt from Brydon and Tiffin, decolonising scripts that 'write back' against colonial and neo-colonial discourses and produce 'alternative ways of seeing and living in the world' (11).

King Short Shirt's 1977 'Illusion' is an excellent example of Antiguan calypsos' querying of the 'anti' in 'anti-colonial' and the expression of anxiety regarding continuing colonial ties with Britain¹²⁸. In that calypso, King Short Shirt outlines a tradition of deceit that began with the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1834. He depicts the freedom granted to the slaves then as an 'illusion' and maintains that this 'illusion' has survived into the 20th century—'You told de youths dat dey were free / And slavery has lost its sting / But dey're not foolish; dey can see / You're lying deep within' (see page 300).

The calypso re-writes regional leaders' 'talk of progress, love and justice, peace and unity' as well as the celebratory script of the already independent nations as subservience to an illusion—'My brethren you are riding an illusion'—and 'cowardice

¹²⁸. The calypso was published four years prior to Antigua being declared an independent state and ten after it was granted Associated Statehood.

and shame / Against our ancestral name¹²⁹. Referencing a tradition of Afro-Caribbean bad-johnism via examples of Antiguan, Guyanese, and Jamaican heroes ‘who died to make us free’, he raises a worry that persists in Antiguan calypsos: the possibility of a complete relapse of the Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean smadditization project—‘Must all dese warriors die in vain / While we go back to slavery once again?’(verse 2).

Interestingly, and undoubtedly a sign of the times, King Short Shirt views Antigua as inextricably linked to the other territories and imagines the nation as a homogenous bloc of Afro-Caribbeans. His assertion that the territories need to approach the smadditizin’ process as a group is in keeping with Mills delineation of the smadditization struggle as a collective endeavour. It is predicated on the collective trauma the group continues to suffer—‘We have no hold on these our native islands / Our hands are tied / We don’t control our actions’ (chorus). The calypso articulates Afro-Caribbeans’ readiness to engage with the ontological and political dimensions of the smadditizin’ process: ‘The economical polices are disheartening / people voices are ringing / We are tired of living a life of total subjection / Told what to spend and what to keep / God knows sometimes we ain’ have enough to eat’ (verse 3). It urges regional political leaders to respond to ‘the people’s call by claiming all Afro-Caribbeans as their smadee: ‘The struggle has only just began / We’ve got to carry on/Uniting these West Indian lands / May take us generations / But independent in this region don’t mean one damn / If we can’t be independent as one’ (verse 3).

King Obstinate’s ‘The Truth’, published seven years after King Short Shirt’s ‘Illusion’, issues a like protest against the autonomy-eroding effect of continuing colonial ties. The calypso engages with a query of the ‘post’ in ‘post-colonial’ by suggesting, like King Short, that freedom from British colonialism was but an illusion: ‘dis year we join in

¹²⁹ The Big Four territories had already been declared independent nations in the 1960s.

celebration / Freedom from bondage and oppression / Ah hundred and fifty years of emancipation / To celebrate is to be misled' (verse 1, see page 320). To support his contention, he gestures to visible remnants of the successes of British cultural imperialism—the names of places and streets in Antigua: 'Ah hundred and fifty years since Britain say we free / Yet so much English names still remain in my country'.

The lament and query in 'The Truth' stands in stark contrast to the enabling themes of 'The Message', published by King Obstinate a year earlier. In the latter, the calypsonian delineates the Afro-Antiguan nation and nation-state as bad-johns. He ascribes to both a hyperbolic agency that renders them as unassailable and re-writes the disparity in the power shared between the small-island and world powers. He deftly alternates between the masque of the forgiving /kind calypsonian and the bad-john Afro-Antiguan nation/nation state that employs bad-john talk to caution Britain, the United States, Europe, and foreign investors/capitalists.

By way of example, in his address to foreign investors and capitalists who are indicted for attempting modern day colonial practices, the forgiving calypsonian assures: 'Now we control our assets and funds / We forgive you the wrongs you have done / Without malice and hate / Love from King Obstinate' (4th chorus, see page 319). However, quickly following this, the bad-john is drawn upon to caution: 'But don't exploit my people again / Because Antiguan will demand / That you leave our land / So don't exploit my people again'.

Two further interesting examples to note are Calypso Val's 2000 'Our Own Destiny' and Queen Singing Althea's 2005 'Hypocrisy of Democracy'. These two calypsos intervene into the male-dominated discussions of the national question as related to the autonomy-eroding neo-colonial relations existing between Antigua and the US. Calypso Val's 2000 'Our Own Destiny' deals specifically with the praxis of bad-

mindedness marking the superpower's economic and political policies as imposed upon Antigua and the rest of the region. Calypso Val's intervention is striking since the calypsonian is a 'white' female Canadian citizen by birth publishing a petition for recognition as a Caribbean citizen in a traditionally Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean male space. It may be argued that she performs a role similar to that of the 'black' character who sanctions the segregation of the lepers in Cassin's opening vignette in *With Silent Tread*. The accusations and statements issued by her were/are likely received by Afro-Antiguan audiences as a ventriloquised admission of US and 'white' Western guilt¹³⁰.

'Our Own Destiny' intervenes into the US' government's historical articulation of its foreign policy as guided by a benevolence and respect for other independent territories that is grounded in anti-colonialism, democracy, and non-interventionism¹³¹. Employing the familiar metaphor of the predatory eagle, Calypso Val accuses the superpower of exhibiting neo-colonialist behaviours that debilitate political and economic autonomy in the region:

America of thee I sing
 I see you've spread your eagle's wing
 And we who sit here in its shade
 Wonder if we'll fit in with the plans you've made
 We can't control our destiny
 While you wrecking our economy
 It seems to me that the eagle's spread
 Is just another chain that must be shed! (Verse 1, see page 326)

She also communicates, through the use of skin-teeth humour facilitated by picong, her apprehension of multi-national corporations, such as Chiquita or Bonita, as representatives of the US, or backed by Western superpower might. She satirises the US'

¹³⁰. This is particularly likely since a common local tendency is to treat the US and Canada as a homogenous territory.

¹³¹ 'The Monroe Doctrine' (1823) and the 'Good Neighbour Policy' (1933) are two such articulations. The first cautioned European powers against attempts to further colonise lands in the Americas or intervene in the functioning of the then newly independent Latin American states. The second proclaimed the United States' dedication to respecting as well engaging in beneficial mutual trade agreements with its Central and Latin American 'neighbours'. It also affirmed the superpower's opposition to armed intervention as had occurred in its occupation of, for example, Haiti (1915-1934) and Nicaragua (1912-1933).

interventionist moves on behalf of such companies against growers in the region: ‘They don’t want us to market our bananas / ... They must know our bananas are much sweeter / Than anything from Chiquita or Bonita!’ (chorus).

Like King Short Shirt in ‘Illusion’, Calypso Val positions regional engagement with the political and ontological dimensions of the *smadditizin*’ process as necessary for the [re]claiming of Caribbean states’ autonomy. Importantly, her entreaty intervenes into King Short Shirt’s male discourse –his call upon Caribbean ‘brethren’ and invocation of Caribbean male ‘bad-johns’—and enlarges it. She locates the Caribbean female alongside the Caribbean male in the smadditization struggle: ‘It’s time for the people of the Caribbean / It’s time for every man and every woman / To cast away their fear and make a stand / . . . Yes it’s time for the people to see / We’ve got to control our own destiny’ (chorus).

‘Our Own Destiny’ also interrogates US foreign policy’s delineation of the drug (marijuana) trade and offshore banking as illicit and harmful and the Caribbean as havens for both. Her rebuttal identifies the hypocrisy inherent in the US’ bad-minded delineation of the region’s economic ventures: ‘But they are growing lots of marijuana / In many states, to name one, California / . . . Don’t let me start to talk about the amounts / Of money they have locked away in Swiss bank accounts’ (chorus). Still on the topic of biases present in US’ foreign policy’s language, she also intervenes into the past discourse of the ‘gold standard’¹³². Labelling it a fallacy, she [re]positions the exploitation of migrant Caribbean labour in the US in its place: ‘But I will tell the truth neighbour / World economy is built on cheap labour / We work below minimum wage / At any legal ‘alien’ stage’ (verse 2).

¹³². The ‘gold standard’, according to Bordo, ‘was a commitment by participating countries to fix the prices of their domestic currencies in terms of a specified amount of gold’. He notes that though ‘the last vestiges of the gold standard disappeared in 1971, its appeal is still strong’ (n.pag).

Importantly, the Caribbean migrant experience, as Calypso Val depicts it, not only destabilises the ‘gold standard’ but also troubles the idea of an ‘inclusive community and international equality’ suggested by the term ‘global-village’ (Puri 9). Indeed, her ‘And finally we get our green card / To work real hard to send the money a yard’ may be read as evidence corroborating ‘the continuation, and possibly the intensification, of national inequalities- inequalities that only a tiny fraction of the world’s population can attempt to mitigate by migration’ (Puri 8).

With regards to the calypso’s troubling of US’ foreign policy’s declaration of a pro-democracy stance, Calypso Val re-presents the super-power as nursing a contradiction between the praxis and the theory of democracy as a system and doctrine. She scripts the US government as bad-mindedly imposing upon less powerful territories a version of democracy antagonistic to that which it practices at home. She references, for example, the US government’s role, via its Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), in the 1973 coup d’état, led by the then commander-in chief of the Chilean army, Augusto Pinochet, which overthrew the then elected and first socialist President of Chile, Salvador Allende.

Calypso Val makes a point of highlighting the charges of human rights violations later brought against Pinochet in the late 20th century, after near two decades of dictatorship rule of Chile. She juxtaposes this with the US’ disapprobation and handling of the smaller Caribbean territories pursuit of relations with communist Cuba—‘Maurice Bishop of Grenada / Was killed for dealing with Cuba’. Scripting the superpower’s influence in the region as facilitated by Caribbean states’ economic dependency, she urges the latter to adopt a corrective ontological and political posture that will preserve their sovereignty: ‘America is all for democracy / But only in the confines of its own

country / And if we're sitting around with our hand out / They can democratically push us about' (verse 4).

Calypso Val's interrogation of the contradictions marking the US government's discourse and praxis of democracy is enlarged in Queen Singing Althea's 2005 'Hypocrisy of Democracy'. In this calypso, an epistemological protest is lodged against the West's bad-minded praxis of the theory of democracy and its attendant glorification of the system as a primary mark of civilisation. The calypso also features a secondary epistemological challenge against the bad-mindedness or hypocrisy marking the universal praxis of democracy. Queen Singing Althea, masquerading as the enlightened teacher-calypsonian, engages first with this secondary challenge. She asserts: 'Democracy / translated from de Greek / Means the rule of the people / ...But it's a grand illusion / An act, an empty role / That de masses are in control' (verse 1, see page 314). She elaborates: 'That is the hypocrisy of democracy / . . .The few who rule the subject class / Like to use de people as tool / They tell you it's your choice / But... / The people's voice eh (don't) have no say at all' (chorus).

Her query of the US' peculiar praxis of the theory of democracy mirrors Calypso Val's scoffing at the bad-minded and hypocritical praxes of democracy and interventionism marking the US government's relations with less powerful territories. Continuing as the enlightened teacher-calypsonian, Queen Singing Althea both intervenes into and borrows from contemporary US discourse on terrorism to directly accuse the superpower of committing acts of terror in the region: 'Check America / De Vanguard of Liberty / Say they oppose terror/ but exporting oversea / Will plot against Castro / Communism eh (is not) dey friend'(verse 4). Significantly, US intervention into Antigua's online gaming industry is cast as an act of US' terrorism. The superpower is scripted negatively as an evil bad-john zeroing in on a weak target: 'Against lil' Antigua /

With our online casino / They flex their might and power / Thank God for the WTO¹³³,
(verse 4).

Over the course of the calypso, Queen Singing Althea unravels Western civilisation as a myth that has been persistently communicated to the non-Western world. Her intervention represents an engagement with the cultural, epistemological, and ontological dimensions of the smadditization project as it rejects the uncivilised body imposed upon so-called 'third-world' inhabitants by Western democracy discourse and contests the legitimacy of the Western account of the world. Queen Singing Althea accuses: 'They condemn the bullet / And advance de ballot box / But when you check out history / Dem white folks have some nerve / Which natives they didn't bury / They put on Reserve'. She scoffs: 'So this civilised system / Dat they want we try / Began in blood and mayhem / And continues with lie'.

Queen Singing Althea's re-writing of the foundation upon which so-called Western civilisation rests as one marked by brutality, and the West as seemingly ignorant/hesitant to acknowledge this, mirrors Kincaid's revision of English civilisation in *A Small Place*. It also builds upon/contributes to the female Afro-Antiguan/Caribbeanist tradition of intervention into European colonial discourse's delineation of self and Other. In *A Small Place*, Kincaid asserts: 'They don't seem to know that this empire business was all wrong and they should, at least, be wearing sackcloth and ashes in token penance of the wrongs committed, the irrevocableness of their bad deeds' (23). This brings to mind Jamaican poet, Jean 'Binta' Breeze's similar sentiments in 'Aid Travels with a Bomb' in which she observes: '400 years from the

¹³³. In 2003, Antigua lodged a formal complaint with the WTO that charged the US with violating international trade agreements by prohibiting United States citizens from participating in offshore online gambling. Though Queen Singing Althea celebrates the outcome of this case, the US has yet to comply with the conditions of the WTO's rulings.

plantation whip / to the IMF grip / . . . They rob and exploit you / of your own / then send it back / as a foreign loan' (136).

Likewise, American sociologist and Caribbeanist Mimi Sheller accuses the West of whitewashing its history as colonial powers and the Caribbean's role in its development. She asserts that, 'The imagined community of the West has no space for the islands that were its origin, the horizon of its self-perception, the source of its wealth' (1). According to her, this whitewashing and silencing of the Caribbean mean that 'the North can now present itself as the hero in the piece, graciously donating democratic tutelage, economic aid, foreign investment, military advisers, and police support to the Caribbean region' (1).

To return directly to the calypsos, King Smarty Jr. too in his 1987 'Pirates' targets English involvement in the 'blood and mayhem' Queen Singing Althea re-presents as marking the foundation of the Western nations. In 'Pirates', like Kincaid's Annie, King Smarty Jr., re-inscribes British discourse of discovery and civilisation: 'They kill off the Indians / Who live on these islands / Then forced the Africans / To toil dey plantations / ...And dey build an empire far and wide / Then left us to suffer with no place to hide' (verse 1, see page 292). He employs the trope of the pirate to revise British historical records, which hail historical figures such as Henry Morgan and Francis Drake as 'privateers'.

King Smarty Jr.'s revisions of European colonial discourse coalesce in the assertion of a continuing tradition of European/Western bad-mindedness. Past English bad-mindedness is linked to the present threat of neo-colonialism: 'The pirates coming; they coming to fight / Ah say the Morgans killing again / And the Drakes roaming again / And the Barclays slaving again / Oh what a shame' (chorus). The calypsonian's revision mirrors Kincaid's similar rescript in her late 1980s treatment of Horatio Nelson, John

Hawkins and others, as ‘English maritime criminals’ (*A Small Place* 24). Kincaid in fact returns to this theme in the 1990s in *My Brother* in which she relates her brother sharing the same sentiment as her regarding ‘the great hero-thieves of English maritime history’- ‘“Dem tief, dem a dam tief”’ (95).

I move on now to Antiguan calypsos’ preoccupation with the concern that local political leaders and foreign capitalists are united in the praxis of a Byzantine/convoluted bad-mindedness aimed at un-homing and re-imposing upon the Afro-Antiguan proletariat the body of the subhuman. The calypsos’ exploration of this theme is marked by an engagement with three main concerns. First, the failure of post-colonial nationalism. Second, the importance of land ownership/access to the smadditizin’ process. Third, the autonomy eroding quality of Western cannibalism as practised upon Antigua. The calypsos’ explorations of these three main concerns are in turn marked by an assertion that matches that which Gauch notes of Kincaid’s revelations in *A Small Place*. The calypsos reveal ‘Antigua as a *place*—no matter how small—in its own right’ and ‘transforms the Antigua perceived as an extension of English and American space into a place that is occupied, lived and dwelt in’ (Gauch 911).

The calypsos repeatedly return to Afro-Antiguan proletarian disappointment with local political leaders’ particular brand of engagement with a local nationalist project. They express a disappointment that the consciousness engendered by the nationalist project rather than, to adapt Fanon, ‘being the immediate and most obvious result of the mobilization of the people’ has been transformed into ‘an empty shell, a crude and fragile travesty of what it might have been’ (*Wretched of the Earth* 148). Or, more specifically, they bemoan, to adapt Hintzen that nationalism as transformed by local politicians, with its emphasis on ‘modernity’ and ‘development’, ‘leads not to less inequality but more, not to more self-determination but less’ (111, 106).

Moreover, for Antiguan calypsonians, the *smadditizin*' process is predicated on Afro-Antiguan proletarian right, as indigene, to access, use, and own land. This is unsurprising given the historical significance of land/land ownership as connected to it being a prerequisite for political enfranchisement, which was itself a primary marker of personhood, and history/memory in Antigua and the rest of the Caribbean. Besson foregrounds family land as a 'pan-Caribbean institution, typifying Afro-Caribbean peasantries in general' ('A Paradox' 17). He asserts that the free village movement in the region 'represented one of the most dramatic reactions of Caribbean peoples against plantation slavery' ('Family Land' 64). According to him, for Afro-Caribbeans, family land 'symbolized their freedom, and provided property rights, prestige and personhood' to a group that 'had not only once been landless, but property themselves' ('A Paradox' 18). He stresses that it was family land which was the basis for the creation of 'family lines and the maximization of kinship ties, in contrast to the kinlessness of the enslaved' ('A Paradox' 18).

Addressing the Antiguan case directly, Besson notes that the formerly enslaved, within a year of being freed, established the region's first independent villages which led to the evolution of family land in these communities. According to him, these lands and communities afforded the formerly enslaved 'economic, social, and cultural autonomy in a context of the continuing plantation system in Antigua' ('Land, Kinship' 92). What is more, he shares encountering, over a century later, in 1993, 'in a context where tourism is now engrossing Antiguan land...oral histories of family land transmitted in such communities' ('Land, Kinship' 86). The calypsos' anxious insistence upon re-presenting the island as Afro-Antiguan communal/family land is undoubtedly a legacy of the memory of past deprivations suffered by the group as well as the character of the free villages that emerged and evolved as a challenge to such deprivations.

Connected to the latter point above is Antiguan calypsos' anxiety over the threat presented to the autonomy of the Afro-Antiguan nation and the nation state by foreign capitalists/investors' unchecked consumption of Antiguan resources, particularly its lands. Antiguan calypsonians invoke the cannibal myth to frame the neo-colonial relations spawned by the island's dependency on foreign capital/investments and the collusion of local political leaders with foreign investors/capitalists. Portraying investors as greedy and bad-minded outsiders unsatisfied with the share of resources with which the Afro-Antiguan proletariat is willing to part, the calypsos revise the cannibal myth, which 'haunts the foundational moment of European presence in the Caribbean islands' (Sheller 143). In their anti/post-colonial context, it is the Westerner, along with other outsiders, who is written as cannibal. This, I argue, is a writing back to the anthropological gaze the West has held upon the Caribbean since the 'age of discovery'.

Instructively, Sheller observes that the figure of the cannibal 'has come to stand for a number of different ways in which relations between colonising and colonised bodies and nations might be imagined' (149). According to her:

The individual body is projected onto the social body or polity such that metaphors of eating, ingesting, and vomiting come to describe international relations of empowerment and disempowerment' (149).

I consider particularly useful her note about the various valences of the Creole English words for eating and being eaten. She points to one such word, 'nyam', which, as Allsopp defines it, is 'To eat (voraciously); to eat . . . as crudely as an animal would' (Sheller 145; Allsopp, *Dictionary* 410).

As the following discussion will show, Antiguan calypsonians do indeed re-work the myth of the cannibal around Caribbean notions of eating as enunciated in 'nyam'. They portray Western and foreign investors/capitalists as having an insatiable appetite for Antiguan resources. This portrayal references the variety of Antiguan/Caribbean Creole

English words connected to eating which translates to, for example, being ‘eagerly desirous, longing and greedy’—‘lickrish’, ‘craven’/ ‘craben’—or being a mixture of covetous and craving—‘cravichous-minded’ (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 346, 175-176).

Queen Ivena’s 2001 ‘The Old Road Fight’ is a recent and immensely militant example of the calypsos that engage with the three main concerns calypsonians tackle in their re-presentations of the worrisome alliance between local political leaders and foreign capitalists. ‘The Old Road Fight’ registers a personal-communal protest against efforts of foreign capitalists, as supported by the Antiguan government, to un-home and [re]impose the body of the subhuman upon the Afro-Antiguan proletariat. In it, Queen Ivena draws upon the masques of the angry Old Road villager, the voice of besieged Old Road villagers, and the voice of the Afro-Antiguan working class in general.

The central issue in the calypso is the Afro-Antiguan proletariat’s inherent and superseding right, in their view, over that of other groups present in Antigua, to access to and use of available land. The calypso’s engagement with the moral dimension of the struggle for recognition of personhood is apparent in its first six lines. The Irish investor, Patrick Doherty, is othered as the disrespectful and ‘lickrish’ outsider, who, after being allowed to settle amongst the natives—his resort had already been established in Old Road—repays them in a bad-minded manner: he attempts to encroach upon more of their territory. Queen Ivena’s delineation of the investor as the disrespectful outsider is reminiscent of Kincaid’s skin-teeth delineation of Western cannibalisation of Antigua as ill-mannered behaviour: ‘We thought these people were so ill-mannered and we were so surprised by this, for they were far away from their home’ (*A Small Place* 29).

Queen Ivena delineates Doherty’s plans as injurious to the Old Road smadditization project in two major ways:

So, wit’ disrespect
He want to go through me land

To build highway
 And to mash up my production
 Dere is no more land to give
 I have no alternative
 I must preserve my land
 So dat my children could live! (See verse 1, see page 302)

Firstly, Doherty's planned expansion project threatens Old Road residents' way of life and means of earning a livelihood¹³⁴. The investor's 'disrespect' therefore undermines both the cultural and economic autonomy of Old Road residents. The line 'There is no more land to give' points to the reluctance of the angry/frustrated Old Road resident to endure more sacrifices/disrespect for the sake of the island's 'lickrish' tourism product. It may in turn be read as an epistemological, ontological, and political challenge to the discourse of development characterising post-colonial nationalism as has been articulated by past and present governments of the island and the rest of the region. That is, it may be read as the refusal of the Afro-Antiguan proletariat to perform the body of the sacrificial indigene committed to making 'the sacrifices necessary now in order to have a more prosperous Antigua'¹³⁵, (Bird 43).

Queen Ivena's calypso references and builds upon a rich tradition of Afro-Antiguan and Afro-Caribbean bad-johns' refusal to sacrifice autonomy, as attached to ownership of/access to land, for the sake of promised economic development. Across the region, the consensus is, as King Smarty Jr. asserted in his 1994 'What Black Power Means': 'Land is power. Without it, life has no worth.' Another example of regional engagement with this theme is Barbadian calypsonian King Mighty Gabby's 1982 'Jack', which remains immensely popular across the region. This calypso protests the island's

¹³⁴. In 2001, prior to the publication of 'The Old Road Fight', Old Road residents did in fact protest the expansion of the resort on the grounds that the new road being constructed through the mangrove swamp posed a threat to the survival of the village's fishing community. They also expressed fears of beach erosion and their properties being put at risk of flooding should Doherty be allowed to complete the project.

¹³⁵. Lester Bird, then chairman of the ALP, in a 1978 address to the party while tabling a call for independence, placed the onus on party members to motivate 'the people' to make the sacrifices necessary for the island's development.

tourism industry's disruption of residents' traditional way of life: 'I grow up bathing in sea water / But nowadays, that is bare horror / ... Cause Jack don't want me to bathe on my beach / Jack tell them to kick me out of reach'. Employing bad-john talk, King Mighty Gabby issues a political and ontological challenge that still resonates with Afro-Caribbeans across the region and in the diaspora: 'Tourism vital, I can't deny / But can't mean more than I and I'. These lines in fact resonate in Antiguan poet, John Hewlett's, 'African-Antiguan-West Indian': '365 beaches offered to those who seek the sun/ Yet an inner light brightens the dispossessed; This is Antiguan! / "Tourism vital, we can't deny, / But that can't mean more than I and I" '(157).

What Queen Ivena, King Mighty Gabby, Hewlett, and others reference is the way in which tourism, operates as a 'lickrish' industry that 'can, within a very short period of time, change in a dramatic and permanent way the environment of any small state' and the danger that this presents 'to the environment and social fabric of small island states' (Vassiliou 39). Pattullo offers an apt example of water use in the tourist industry versus residential use. Pointing to the 'water supply problems' affecting many parts of the region, she notes: 'but tourists expect unlimited supplies: with their post-beach showers and baths, they are estimated to use six times as much water as residents' (41).

I return briefly now to Queen Ivena's 'The Old Road Fight' and the second major way in which Doherty's plans are re-presented as injurious to the Old Road smadditization project. Queen Ivena's 'I must preserve my land / So that my children could live' is indicant of her awareness of the import of access to/ownership of land to the smadditizin' process as well as her apprehension that present acquiescence to Doherty's plans would hinder future engagements with the smadditizin' process. She re-presents the struggle for recognition of personhood as being as necessary an engagement for future Afro-Antiguan proletarians as it is for the present. In this way, she asserts not only that

‘the world against which smadditizin’ as a process needs to be initiated is still in many ways intact’ but that it will remain intact beyond her generation (Mills, ‘Smadditizin’ 1997 55).

King Smarty Jr. too in his 1993 ‘Never Again’ exhibits an understanding of the need to apprehend the Afro-Antiguan proletarian smadditization project as requiring a long-term commitment. This is communicated in the link he establishes between the cannibalism as was practiced upon the ‘black’ body in slavery Antigua and the cannibalism presently being attempted by various outsider groups, as connected to their attempts to consume choice lands on the island¹³⁶. Hence the caution: ‘Watch yuhself black man / ‘Cause dey t’ink here is Canaan / With their expansion plan on dis land/It seems like their motto / Is to cram Blacks in ghetto’ (verse 1, see page 293). In King Smarty Jr.’s case, the affect of anxiety is occasioned by the typical worry that the smadditization project will suffer relapse: ‘And is slavery they want to attain / We still feeling last slavery pains / ...We can’t let that happen again’ (chorus).

King Smarty Jr.’s ‘Canaan caution’ is evidence of the calypsonian’s apprehension of the island’s figuration by threatening outsiders as an equivalent of the biblical ‘promised land’—a space that is up for grabs, rather than a place long inhabited by Afro-Antiguans. His engagement with the cannibal myth is evident in the lines ‘Dey moving at such a rate / Chinese grabble up Diamond Estate’. The use of the Caribbean Creole English word ‘grabble’, itself an archaic Standard English word, which means to grab/seize hold of roughly/violently, fits well in the discourse of cannibalism (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 264). ‘Grabble’ as used by King Smarty Jr., and the suggestion that the ‘grabbling’ that is occurring is being done at a rather quick rate, brings to mind both the

¹³⁶ For Mimi Sheller, ‘the slave body was literally consumed by capture, forced transport, “seasoning”, work regimes, physical punishment, sexual exploitation, the appropriation of children from their parents and so forth’ (151).

Caribbean Creole English word ‘nyam’ as well as the more closely connected word ‘grabilicious’ which is a ‘blend of greedy or grab and avaricious’ (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 267).

Queen Ivena engages with a similar re-writing of the cannibal myth in her 2004 ‘Cry Cry Baby’. In this calypso, she elaborates on investors, like King Smarty Jr.’s Canaan-seekers, who threaten to un-home the Afro-Antiguan indigene via their ‘lickrish’ attempts to ‘nyam’ the island’s resources, in general, and available lands, in particular. Employing skin-teeth humour, she relies upon the trope of a ‘greedy baby’, complete with the sounds of a crying infant, to rewrite the ALP’s positioning of US-born capitalist Allen Stanford as an important investor. The US-born businessman is delineated as infantile in his ‘lickrishness’ and as intent on cannibalising the island’s resources: ‘He want airport, he want free port / He want seaport, he want country, he want city / He want laundry to wash dirty money! Cry cry baby, want everything he see’ (chorus, see page 305).

I suggest that Queen Ivena’s depiction of the ‘white’ American Stanford not only re-writes the cannibal myth but also intervenes into colonial myths and praxes that infantilised the ‘black’ Caribbean population in general and kept the enslaved ‘black’ man ‘in a child-like welfare-subsistence relation’ (Beckles ‘Black’ 233). ‘Cry Cry Baby’ portrays the North American investor as the baby cannibal who had been reliant upon greedy ALP politicians to secure, to continue the metaphor, his feedings. Its use of the adjectival ‘cry cry’ to describe Stanford is significant. ‘Cry cry’ denotes a child who is whiney ‘and given to much noisy crying’ (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 180). This contributes to the overall ridiculous image of Stanford, as portrayed by her, as the overly ambitious and belligerent cannibal: ‘He can’t get dem islands we Antiguans inherited / So he displaying tantrums / His face and eyes flaming red’ (verse 2).

Ultimately, it is not just the cannibalism that Stanford attempted to practice on Antigua that worries Queen Ivena. Rather, she is also anxious about the island's susceptibility as a small place, dependent on foreign capital, in the 'global village'. That the island is swallowed whole on the world stage, that is, is made invisible/obscure, is not, as this thesis has thus far shown, a concept/reality that is alien to Antiguan. In 1981, during the country's first address at a United Nations General Assembly, then chairman of the ALP Lester Bird repeatedly referenced the smallness of the island. Antiguan (and Barbudans), he stressed, 'are very conscious of the smallness of our country. We are under no illusion that, on our own, we have the power to affect world trends and developments' (77). I suggest that an underlying worry in 'Cry Cry Baby' concerns the very inequalities between the superpowers and the small place referenced by Bird. The fact that a rich North American villager could 'end up as king' in her Antigua weighs heavily on Queen Ivena.

Just as significant is Queen Ivena's re-presentation of the divide between the Afro-Antiguan proletariat and the ALP politicians, that is, the failure of post-colonial nationalism. On one hand, Stanford, the powerful 'white' North American is able to bribe ALP politicians with 'big big money' in return for their subservience—'when he call dey must run quickly'—and assistance with projects that are injurious to the proletariat's personhood and at odds with its notion of investment/development: 'Who invest / But not infest / Is what we had on we mind'. On the other hand, the proletariat is re-presented as steadfastly committed to the Afro-Antiguan national project. It is the proletarian bad-johns who are re-presented as bringing a quick halt to 'baby Stan's' kingship plans by voting the ALP out of office: 'Now de people wise up / And make all this nonsense stop / He crying and sucking his lollipop' (verse 1).

Queen Ivena commits to a similar indictment of post-colonial nationalism, as performed by the Antiguan (ALP) government, in ‘The Old Road Fight’. She employs skin-teeth humour via picong to ridicule ALP politicians for, in her view, colluding with Doherty to un-home/cannibalise Afro-Antiguan Old Road residents. Local leaders are represented as traitorous and neo-enslaved people who, having abandoned the Afro-Antiguan national project and isolated themselves from the Afro-Antiguan masses, will also find themselves excluded from their ‘master’s’ inner circles. The suggestion is that this group of local elites nourish the bad-mindedness of yesteryear’s social hierarchy that supports the raced-based ‘deprivations of power, influence, authority, legitimacy and status’ (Nettleford, *Inward* xii). The suggestion is also that ALP politicians are engaged in their own personal struggle for the recognition of ‘white’ personhood that will get them no further than the outside of the figurative ‘Great House’.

Queen Ivena’s suggestions in ‘The Old Road Fight’ are in line with Mills’ formulation of ‘the racial contract’ as marked by rigidity in its structure as far as the ‘nonwhite’ body is concerned. Mills theorises that the ‘nonwhite body’ as situated in ‘the racial contract’ upon which global ‘white supremacy’ is based, ‘is a moving bubble of wilderness in white political space, a node of discontinuity which is necessarily in permanent tension with it’ (*The Racial Contract* 53). Queen Ivena not only refers to the permanency of this tension but also, via picong, ridicules the ALP politicians for being content with it and averse to engagement with the smadditization project—‘But dem Uncle Toms / Dey always very happy / To appease massa (master) / Just to sit on his gallery’ (verse 1).

‘The Old Road Fight’ not only ridicules the ALP politicians but places them outside of the Afro-Antiguan nation. An important way in which this is facilitated is via the call and response structure established between the verse and chorus. For example, in

the first verse, the first-person singular voice of Queen Ivena leads with the mocking of the subservient body the ALP politicians perform in relation to the ‘white’ Doherty. In the chorus, a first-person plural voice invites proletarian Old Road to respond with an agreement to reject the ALP politicians, identified as being in collusion with Doherty, as their ‘smadee’. Proletarian Old Road is also invited to deny suggestion that the ‘Uncle Tom’ body performed by elected elites is a true representation of them or the self they hope to [re]construct in the smadditizin’ process. This distance the Afro-Antiguan Old Road proletariat is invited to place between itself and the ALP politicians is emphasised by the expressed intent in the chorus to ‘Fight dem whedda black or white’¹³⁷.

Paget Henry theorises that, in the case of Antigua, the distance that has emerged between political leaders and ‘the people’ is a result of the lengthy period for which leaders, in the case of the ALP, have held the reins of power. He notes that political leaders’ relations with the economic elite have intensified this distance. Patronage too has altered the relationship between leaders and ‘the people’ from one of solidarity in struggle to clientelism and the institutionalisation of the island’s two-party system, which resulted in sharp societal divides (‘Decolonization’ 308-309). Elaborating the relationship between the local political elites and foreign elites, Henry asserts that the former, ‘irrespective of which party is in power’ play a subordinate role, which ‘grows out of the externally dependent nature of the institutions of peripheralized societies’ (‘Decolonization’ 306).

According to Henry, foreign elites tend to be willing to invest if they think profits are to be had and the local political elite ‘through its control of the state apparatus-guarantees a number of basic property rights, and conditions of capital realization and

¹³⁷. The militancy of and challenges issued in ‘The Old Road Fight’ acquires deeper meaning when one considers the fact that it did actually precede, by about two months, the most militant action undertaken by Old Road residents as occurred with the firebombing of several of the resort buildings in October of 2001.

expatriation, all in an effort to make capital “feel at home”. Importantly, he points out, as Queen Ivena and other Antiguan calypsonians realise and lament, that ‘cheap land has become a part of the offerings of the political elite’ (‘Decolonization’ 307). He further observes that ‘a system of economic concessions, legitimacy needs, investment needs, patronage, and corruption has come to define the relationship between the foreign and local elites’ (‘Decolonization’ 307-308).

The ideological distance between the Afro-Antiguan proletariat and the political elite, and the resulting disenchantment of the former with the latter, is in fact a theme with which Queen Ivena persists in her most well-known calypsos. In her 2003 ‘Robin Hood’, she re-presents the ALP politician as a ‘Robin Hood in reverse’ for whom ‘the rich man interest comes first’. Employing skin-teeth humour via indirection, Ivena juxtaposes the trope of Robin Hood as she first encountered him, most probably in her school texts—‘In England you does take / From de rich and give to de poor / My teacher would give you / A high percent for your score’—with the trope as has been re-written and is re-presented by the local ALP politician in the Antiguan post-colonial context—‘But now you come to Antigua / Ah find dat you make a switch / Man you taking from the poor to give to the rich’(verse 1, see page 303).

A like accusation resonates in King Short Shirt’s ‘Power and Authority’ in which the calypsonian charges political elites with ‘Prostituting de island / to all and sundry’ and laments ‘Dey peddling my people’s right’ (chorus, see page 299). Likewise, in King Obstinate’s 1993 sequel to ‘Coming down to talk to you’, ‘I Already Talk to You’, then Prime Minister V.C. Bird is accused of nourishing the historically ‘race’-based social hierarchy and neglecting Afro-Antiguans, including the calypsonian himself, who have made tremendous contributions to the island in favour of outsiders. King Obstinate laments for the Afro-Antiguan proletariat—‘They geeing (giving) way all the land / And

craping up all Barbuda sand / I lost me birthright / Now eating out the white man hand'
(verse 2, see page 322).

'Craping up' (scraping up), as used in Antiguan Creole English denotes a violent scratching motion used to remove an object. In King Obstinate's calypso, it suggests the cannibalistic violence enacted against both land and 'the people'—a suggestion that is confirmed by the lines that follow. King Smarty Jr.'s 'Draw the Line' too speaks to a similar 'craping up' of Afro-Antiguan birthright. In that calypso, the calypsonian relates: 'Stanford and Rappaport / And Chinese behind Lester fort / With Antiguan passport' (verse 4, see page 296). As with King Obstinate's calypso, it is not just natural resources that are being 'craped up' or cannibalised by foreign elites, with the help of the local politicians, but also the Antiguan identity and all the attendant rights/privileges.

For her part, Queen Ivena portrays [ALP] politicians as not just eagerly placing the poor at a disadvantage for the benefit of the rich but also 'lickrishly' enriching themselves in the process. In 'Robin Hood in Reverse', she identifies Allen Stanford, as the ALP's 'white friend' and accuses both of participating in a convoluted bad-mindedness aimed at impoverishing the Afro-Antiguan proletariat. In her estimation, the ALP politician is not just lickrish but parasitic as well: 'Robin Hood, Robin Hood / Schemes not working too good / You make schemes for dem schemes / To milk money from de workers / So that you and your friends / Could build up your Swiss coffers'(verse 3, see page 303). These charges are echoed by Antiguan-born, Canadian resident poet, Clifton Joseph, who too portrays the local politician as a lickrish figure. In his '(I remember) Back Home', he laments: 'politicians get rich, the people don't matter / progress gets lost in the trail of the dollar / ...back home gots to get better' (116).

Queen Ivena's re-presentation of the ALP's convoluted scheming mirrors that of King Smarty Jr.'s in 'Draw the Line'. In 'Draw the Line', King Smarty Jr. provides a

devastating re-write of the Birds as kin to the Haitian Duvalier dynasty: ‘Like dem wicked Duvaliers / From nearby Haiti / It’s deceiving, wheeling and dealing / By dis dynasty’ (verse 2, see page 296). In his ‘Pirates’, the indictment is less harshly worded, but present all the same. In that calypso, King Smarty Jr. draws attention to the leaders’ part in the economic piracy undertaken by foreign investors and the effect it has on the economic autonomy of the Afro-Antiguan proletariat: ‘Dey bribing we leaders / Wit’ plentiful dollars / To get deir concessions / And all deir exemptions / Dey putting all the burden / On de backs of the poor / With sky-high prices and tax evermore’ (verse 3, see).

The Antiguan politician is not only re-presented as lickrish and distant from ‘the people’ as well as the Afro-Antiguan smadditization project but eager to mask evidence of both. In Queen Singing Althea’s 2005, ‘Righteous’, skin-teeth humour is utilised via picong to accuse the newly elected UPP of continuing the tradition of disconnect for which it had indicted the ALP: ‘Some of dem done raiding / De local treasury / But dey masquerading / Behind honesty / If de last party / Did steal so much dough / Where dey finding money / To be spending so?’ (verse 4, see page 315). Targeting both the UPP and the pro-UPP Ivena, she derides: ‘Dey now come in office / Yet deir pockets fat / But dem who claim dey righteous¹³⁸ / Ain’ go sing bout that / ALP in power / Dey had plenty chat / But Robin Hood didn’t retire / Who go sing ‘bout that? / Not she!’¹³⁹, (chorus).

Likewise, in her ‘Sunstroke’, published in the same year, Queen Singing Althea again derides the UPP for what she perceives as its hypocrisy—‘The same billionaire¹⁴⁰ / Who deyself condemn / In less than one year / He and dem is friend’—and for abandoning the Afro-Antiguan national project: ‘While my country losing profit / People, check out dey pockets’ (2nd chorus, 4th chorus).

¹³⁸. Ivena is self-dubbed ‘the righteous lady’. She sometimes refers to this title in her calypsos, as in her 2003 ‘Ivena Agenda’ in which she assures ‘No they can’t buy me, I am a righteous lady’.

¹³⁹. This is a reference to Queen Ivena’s ‘Robin Hood in Reverse’.

¹⁴⁰. Allen Stanford.

In addition to Henry's account for the distance between the Antiguan politician and the proletariat, Queen Singing Althea's, Queen Ivena's, King Smarty Jr.'s, and others' laments all reference what Ryan characterises as a common element of government in the Anglophone Caribbean—the scramble for spoils of the office. According to Ryan, governments, particularly newly elected governments, tend to 'assume that winners are entitled to all the spoils of the office' (76). He observes that the 'intensity that characterises the scramble for spoils' is engendered by 'the fact that resources in these poor societies are scarce and politics is viewed as a means of earning a livelihood'. In other words, as he puts it, and Queen Ivena, King Smarty Jr. and the lament of other calypsonians analysed thus far suggests, many politicians 'live "off" politics rather than "for" politics' (78).

Before I advance to examining the final of the three major themes preoccupying Antiguan calypsonians, I pause to both consider more closely and sum up the challenges that Antiguan calypsos issue to the various autonomy-eroding factors and personalities, examined thus far. The chorus of King Short Shirt's 'Nobody Go Run Me' is an apt centrepiece for such a discussion. Many consider 'Nobody Go Run Me' an anthem for the struggling Afro-Antiguan proletariat. Its chorus, permeated with bad-john talk, is typically considered one of the most militant refrains featured in an Antiguan calypso. I read the chorus' recuperation of Afro-Antiguan proletarian agency, history, memory, smadee, and voice as a diligent engagement with the various dimensions characterising the smadditizin' process as described by Mills.

The political dimension of King Short Shirt's engagement with the smadditizin' process is evident in the calypsonian's demands for the amelioration of living conditions for himself and the island's Afro-Antiguan proletariat. He claims for the indigene the right to more than the subsistence existence he/she is being forced to accept as his/her lot.

For the present, King Short Shirt demands a life free of the scavenging that has been imposed upon the group—‘I ain’ go eat lice’. For the future, he rejects a poverty-stricken existence, demanding in its stead security and comfort: ‘I ain’ going to grow old / Sitting in de cold’. The moral dimension of the struggle for the recognition of personhood is as clear here as it is in his 1992 ‘Share the Honey’. In this latter song King Short Shirt’s asserts that the Afro-Antiguan indigene is more entitled than any other group to enjoy the highest standard of living the country resources will allow. In ‘Share the Honey’, he cautions: ‘If honey in dis rock / Antiguans want dey share!’

Moreover, King Short Shirt’s ‘Not me! No way! / ... dey heads go roll’ rails against the body of the sacrificial indigene as imposed upon the Afro-Antiguan by past and present governments. His threat, ‘Dey go have to beat me / Dey go have to eat me!’ is a bad-john’s promise that the Afro-Antiguan has permanently rejected the body prescribed by the political elites. It is important to note that the era in which ‘Nobody Go Run Me’ was published was a peculiar one in the political career of the island. Nine years prior, the island had achieved statehood. According to Henry, the dominance of foreign investors in the newly established hotel industry raised fears that the island would be ushered into a period of neo-colonialism under the US’ flag (‘Antigua and Barbuda’ 26). Afro-Antiguans’ wariness during this period was hardly surprising considering that the government had only just managed to wrest control from the ‘white’ plantocracy in 1969 with its purchase of the sugar estates. Short Shirt’s calypso also came on the heels of the Progressive Labour Movement’s (PLM) defeat at the polls. In early 1976, the party was ousted by the masses, its leader imprisoned for under a year, and the ALP reinstated, after failing to deliver on the promise of better governance for the island¹⁴¹.

¹⁴¹. In *A Small Place*, Jamaica Kincaid summarises this event thus: ‘The event of the Prime Minister whose career ended in political defeat and then jail is a sad event, for people had hoped he would replace the old, dull, corrupt event, with honest, brilliance and prosperity’ (70).

According to O'Marde, the tone of King Short Shirt's chorus mirrors that of the typical calypsos published during this peculiar political era. He characterises the late 1960s/early 1970s as marked by the emergence of a new phase in Antiguan calypso very unlike the previous, which had been typified by 'celebration of economic growth and development, new thrusts in tourism and the white-collar sector'. This new phase, which became firmly established by 1972/3, was 'a reaction to the failure of the benefits of the perceived economic growth to filter to the masses; and also to the increasingly harsh way the political administration used the democratic measures of public order acts and newspaper acts'. It was also, he notes, 'a reaction fuelled by the rising consciousness of the Black Power movement. Statehood competitions were no longer staged as artists found it impossible to draw on congratulatory sentiments' ('Calypso' 40).

Therefore, for King Short Shirt and many working-class Afro-Antiguans, there was, to adapt Hintzen, no wholesale acceptance of the different interpretations being applied to the present inequalities, which resembled those upheld under the old order (106). King Short Shirt's 'Not me! No way!' roundly rejects the rhetoric of post-colonial nationalism, which, to borrow from Hintzen again, re-interprets exploitation of the masses as necessary sacrifice, domination as 'functional organization' and privilege as 'reward' (106). This ontological challenge issued against the prescribed body is in keeping with Mills' assertion that smadditizin' as a process begins in the body, particularly 'for those to whom the word has been denied' ('Smadditizin'' 1997 64).

Mills argues that the 'black' body is 'a stigmatized body, a body that identifies its owner as an inferior being'. Ontologically then, the requirement is that 'this body registers its inferiority in the postures that it takes up and the body-languages that it speaks' ('Smadditizin'' 1997 65). This mirrors Fanon's delineation of the 'black' body as a 'burden' - 'a corporeal malediction' hoisted onto the 'black' subject who has been

othered and woven into a caricature ‘out of a thousand details, anecdotes, stories’ by ‘the white man’ (*Black Skin* 84).

For Mills, since it is the body that is the ‘sign of sub-personhood, the signal of inferiority’, it is ‘with the body that one must contend before all, recovering it, revalorizing it, relating to it differently’ (‘Smadditizin’ 1997 65). Smadditizin’ thus begins when one rejects/‘unlearns the imposed body’, that is, when one rejects the ‘depersonalizing conceptual apparatus’ of ‘the racial contract’ that aims ‘to produce an entity who accepts subpersonhood’ (Mills, ‘Smadditizin’ 1997 65; *The Racial Contract* 87-88). The re-invention of the body necessarily occurs on the material plane and represents the ontological challenge embedded within the struggle for recognition of personhood (Mills, ‘Smadditizin’ 1997 65).

Within King Short Shirt’s engagement with the epistemological and cultural dimensions of the smadditization project is another crucial rejection of another prescribed body—that of the amnesiac. This is reflected particularly in the latter part of the chorus, which I reproduce below:

Me mooma (mother) must nyam
 Me poopa (father) must nyam
 Me woman must nyam
 Me pickney (child) must nyam
 Nobody go run me (repeat x2).

These lines represent a claiming of smadee that serves as a challenge to the so-called ‘nonhistory’ imposed upon the Afro-Antiguan proletariat by colonial discourses, as well as neo-colonialist attempts to un-home them. During the colonial period, the Afro-Antiguan, like other Afro-Caribbeans in the region, was made ‘heir’ to what Glissant refers to as a ‘nonhistory’ and Walcott describes as ‘amnesia’ (61; ‘The Caribbean’ 259).

Glissant reminds us that in the Caribbean scenario, ‘historical consciousness could not be deposited gradually and continuously like sediment’, as with, for example,

European peoples (61). Rather, it ‘came together in the context of shock, contraction, painful negation and explosive forces’. He observes that a negative effect of this ‘nonhistory’ is ‘therefore the erasing of the collective memory’ (62). Hall, for his part, notes that the search for identity, which invariably involves a search for origins, is problematic in the Caribbean scenario since ‘it is impossible to locate in the Caribbean an origin for its peoples’. This is because, ‘everybody in the Caribbean comes from somewhere else’ so that questions of identity are typically about the ‘invention, not simply the discovery of tradition’ (‘Negotiating’ 26-27).

It was on these very grounds highlighted by Glissant and Hall that the ‘white’ Antiguan plantocracy protested the British principle of Trusteeship in the early twentieth century¹⁴². According to Henry, Alexander Moody-Stuart, leader of the Antiguan planters and member of the legislature, along with others protested Trusteeship on the basis that it could not be applied to Antigua and Barbuda or the Leeward Islands since there was no indigenous native ‘race’ present in these islands (*Shouldering Antigua* 59). Moody-Stuart argued that there was but an immigrant ‘black’ race and an immigrant ‘white’ race, and that the latter was the older immigrant of the two:

the slogan which is being raised that these islands belong to the Black Race and must be developed primarily in their interest because they are the native race of these islands, is based on entirely false premises The Negroes are not the native race of the West Indies and have no claim to be considered as such. (Qtd. in Henry, *Shouldering Antigua* 60)

Moreover, Moody-Stuart also asserted that the West Indies was the home of the ‘white’ plantocrats; they had no home to retire to in England and so were rooted in the region (Henry, *Shouldering Antigua* 61).

¹⁴² ‘Trusteeship’ was used to ‘denote the character of British rule over backward peoples’. It involved Britain’s undertaking ‘to watch over the preservation of the native tribes, and to care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral and material well-being’. See ‘The Future of Colonial Trusteeship’, 732.

Near four decades later, King Short Shirt's chorus challenges this discourse and attempts to mend the ruptures of Afro-Antiguan history by re-writing the criteria for belonging and indigeneity. For him, his roots/beginnings are undeniably Antiguan; not only was he born on the island but his lineage or smadee too are wholly Antiguan. His 'Ah was born in this land! / Ah will die in this land!' references the Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean idiomatic expression of the 'navel-string' being 'buried' in a particular place, and the resulting spiritual bond between the person and that place denoted by the expression. The expression itself references the West African influenced 'folk habit of burying an infant's umbilical cord in its parents' home ground, esp[ecially] under a flourishing fruit-tree . . . or in some place of symbolic significance' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 401).

King Short Shirt directly references the idiom and the resultant connection between him and the island in 'True Antiguan'. In the chorus of this song, he sings: 'Ah born in dis country / I love dis country / Don't you think I should care? / I'll fight for my country / Die for my country / Me navel-string bury here' (1st chorus, see page 301). As in the chorus of 'Nobody Go Run Me', his reference to the navel-string burial rejects the body of the amnesiac by reorganising the collective memory of the Afro-Antiguan through the positing of a triangular bond between himself, the land, and 'the people'. Importantly, in the chorus of 'Nobody Go Run Me', he [re]constructs the Afro-Antiguan past, present, and future peopling them with a 'mooma', 'poopa', 'woman', and 'pickney' who must 'nyam', that is, survive on the resources the land has to offer. This is a particularly important revision on the calypsonian's part given, as noted before, the significance of land and land ownership as connected to the claiming of personhood as well as the historic role of family land in brokering Afro-Antiguan proletarian autonomy.

Moreover, the chorus' reinstatement of the Afro-Antiguan family—'mooma', 'poopa', 'woman', and 'pickney'—as a cohesive unit challenges/overrides the disintegration of the African/Afro-Caribbean family as was encouraged during slavery. It also belatedly intervenes into the myths that interpellate the Afro-Antiguan working-class family as, to borrow from Barrow, a 'deformed' and 'dysfunctional' adaptation of the Western co-resident nuclear ideal (*Family in the Caribbean* x). Likewise, King Short Shirt's insistence, 'Me woman must nyam / Me pickney must nyam' repudiates familiar stereotypes of the Afro-Caribbean male—such as that of the absent/delinquent Afro-West Indian father—which pervade Caribbean literature as well as early Caribbean anthropology. King Short Shirt's ultimate suggestion is that with the Afro-Antiguan proletariat's identity being so firmly rooted in Antigua, there is no other home to which it can turn, hence the defiant and repetitive bad-john chant- 'Nobody go run me'.

I now begin to move towards my conclusion by examining Antiguan calypsos' re-invention of the Afro-Antiguan self and nation, as grounded in an engagement with what Hall dubs the 'symbolic return to Africa' ('Negotiating' 26). The calypsonians' engagement with Africa is, to invoke Hall, framed in the language of Rastafarianism ('Negotiating' 35). For them, the 'return to Africa' or Repatriation, as the Rastafarian movement labelled it, is 'linked to notions of cultural recovery through a spiritual connection to the African homeland' (Olmos and Paravisini-Gebert, 2011 186). Their engagement with the trope is marked by a preoccupation with the Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean African slavery and resistance past as well as African diasporic discourses of 'black power'.

An excellent illustration of Antiguan calypsos' grounding of the re-invention of Afro-Antiguan self and nation in an African and Afro-Antiguan past is the 1998 soca track, 'Born in Wadadli', by the band then called L.A. Crew. 'Born in Wadadli' builds

on the tradition established in calypsos such as King Short Shirt's 'Nobody Go Run Me'; it even features the similar refrain- 'Nobody go run me'. It presents an epistemological challenge to the colonial discourse of Afro-Caribbean 'nonhistory' by positing indigeneity as achieved through birth and living on/dedication to the island as well as via a pre-existing organic connection with the land. The achievement of the latter prerequisite is re-presented as a natural result of Afro-Antiguan forbearers' past contributions to the development of the island's economy.

In the first verse, L.A. Crew's 'Ah yah me born / Ah yah me live / Ah yah me come from' (I was born here/ I live here/ I am from here) insists on indigeneity as attached to citizenship by both birth and living on/dedication to the island (verse 1, see page 310). Its 'Me granmama work / Hard pon de land dey / Me granpapa work hard / And nuh get pay / Over 400 years down inna slavery' elaborates, for example, King Short Shirt's claiming of *smadee* as occurs in 'Nobody Go Run Me' (chorus). These lines develop, to borrow from Smith, 'myths of descent and historical memories' by directly referencing the Afro-Antiguan's African/slavery past (*National Identity* 20).

Interestingly, for much of 'Born in Wadadli', L.A Crew enacts a confident claiming of *smadee* that disrupts linear time and re-presents as porous the identity of African/Afro-Antiguan forbearers and current descendants. They effect this economically through the use of the first person singular plural: 'We build dis land yah / Out ah blood sweat and tears / We feel de pain when de whip start to blaze'. Also: 'Look how long / Ah say we build the foundation / We plant the cane / Ah say we do it in the hot sun' (verse 2, verse 1). These lines provide justification for both their militant 'Nobody go run me' as well as their 'me nah go stop jam'. Both of these latter lines echo the sentiments expressed in King Short Shirt's insistence in 'Nobody Go Run Me' that he and his family must 'nyam'. L.A Crew's 'jam' literally means 'To dance vigorously with abandon (usu

[ally] in a crowd)' (Allsopp, *Dictionary* 311). It also figuratively points to the intention to persist, in the face of bad-mindedness, with the vigorous/aggressive pursuit of the pace and quality of life deserved given the significant contributions of the African 'granmama' and 'granpapa' to the island.

A curious thing to note of L.A Crew's 'Born in Wadadli' is the use of 'Wadadli' in the title and in the body of the calypso as well. 'Wadadli' is a corruption of 'Waladli' - the name that was given to the islands by the Caribs. In this instance, L.A. Crew's engagement with the 'return to Africa' involves a co-optation of 'Carib' past that serves to augment the Afro-Antiguan sense of an organic connection to the land by blurring together the periods of African and Carib presence on the island. For L.A. Crew, and other Afro-Antiguans who reference the name with pride, the Carib past is, to borrow from Smith, an ethnic past that is useable in the formation, and de-colonisation, of the Afro-Antiguan nation¹⁴³ (Smith, *The Antiquity of Nations* 227). It is useable precisely because, as Moody-Stuart pointed out, the 'Caribs' have long ceased to be a group visible in Antigua and are therefore no threat to the Antiguan nation as imagined by L.A Crew and other Afro-Antiguans. Thus, whilst Antigua might not be the 'land of "origin"' for the Afro-Antiguan, the appropriation of the 'Carib' past, as added to the African, better allows for the re-writing of the 'repository of historic memories and associations, the place where...heroes lived, worked...and fought' (Smith, *National Identity* 9).

Antiguan calypsos' preoccupation with Afro-Antiguan/Caribbean African slavery and resistance past as well as with African diasporic discourses of 'black power' is exemplified in the oeuvre of Queen Ivena. In 'Old Road Fight', Ivena invokes Antiguan African slave resistance past to construct a tradition of Afro-Antiguan proletariat resistance/rebellion and to engage with the political dimension of the smadditization

¹⁴³. The local beer for instance is called 'Wadadli Beer' and 'Wadadli' enjoys special currency during annual events celebrating A&B's anniversary of independence.

project. Over the course of the calypso, her call to fight the bad-minded, ‘whedda black or white’, progresses from an appeal at a personal level to a ‘black’ diasporic appeal. In verse one, the fight is re-presented as being a personal one fought ‘So dat my children could live’. In verse two, Queen Ivena summons all of Old Road to combat Doherty- ‘So on every front, Old Road will be fighting him’. By verse three, ‘war drums’ have been sounded and Old Road heroes are being congratulated for fighting ‘in the spirit of Africa’. By the final verse, the ‘call to war’ has metamorphosed into ‘a holy war- a revival of black power’. Instructively, in this last verse, she draws upon the image of the conch shell- an instrument Manuel, Bilby and Largey tells us was ‘the adaptation of the Akan *abeng*’- being blown ‘across the land’ as a signal that ‘it’s time for unity’¹⁴⁴ (144).

Likewise, in ‘Cry Cry Baby’, Queen Ivena also re-presents the Antiguan African slave resistance past and present day ‘black Antiguans’ rage’ as part of the same bad-john tradition of resistance that is an important conduit to a successful smadditization project. In this calypso, the spirit of Africa is summoned in the form of ‘King Court’, the Coromantee slave credited with being the ringleader of the 1736 plot that was meant to effect an island-wide takeover (Gaspar 231). Employing bad-john talk, Queen Ivena relates knowledge of ‘baby Stan’s’ plot to cannibalise Afro-Antiguan heritage: ‘We know Stan’s intention / Is to rob our heritage’. She asserts that this move would be but ‘an invitation to test black Antiguans’ rage’. She then assures the Afro-Antiguan proletariat: ‘But de spirit of King Court / Is forever with us / To fight on and defend the people’s trust’. Following from this, like King Short Shirt, she reconstructs Afro-Antiguan memory and future vision. Foreparents, parents, and children—past, present, and future—are all linked in her bad-john promise: ‘We will not go back to slavery / We

¹⁴⁴. The conch shell has been noted for its use by enslaved Africans in slavery Caribbean to communicate across plantations.

shall unite and fight / So those lands in question / Tell that greedy baby / We go keep them to give to we own pickney' (verse 4).

Queen Ivena's construction of the Afro-Antiguan family around the African-Antiguan past and the Afro-Antiguan present reappears in her 2005 'Reparations'. Her main plea in this calypso is for the US and Europe to recompense the descendants of African slaves so that they may fully engage with the smadditizin' process: 'America and Europe / Now it's time to pay up / Better schools and tools / More land and security / Get your calculator' (verse 3, see page 309). Like L.A. Crew, she claims smadee and an African past via the use of the first person singular plural to denote both present day Afro-Antiguans/'blacks' and past Afro-Antiguan/African slaves. Referencing the slavery past, she accuses North America and Europe of disinheriting present-day Afro-Antiguans and peoples of the African diaspora: 'All this money / It's we sweat and we blood / Mix your foundation / All that was mine / You will to your white children' (verse 2). She also reduces the distance between the African diaspora's present and the African past by genealogic constriction and the insistence of her demand- 'Reparations / We want grandfather back-pay / Reparations / We want it right away' (chorus)

As typical of 'reparations calypsos' published at regular intervals around the region, in 'Reparations' Ivena re-presents all of Africa and the African diaspora as a united 'family' that must be paid 'compensation / To improve our condition'. The moral challenge she issues to the 'white criminals' who benefitted 'from illegal profit' is issued on behalf of all 'black' people: 'So now we ask for compensation / . . . You have the gall to stall our request for reparation'. All of this is in keeping with what Davies has observed of the engagement with the Africa theme in Trinidad calypsos. According to her, calypsos dealing with pan-African unity 'stress political and historical identification

of African people in the Diaspora with Africa and also accept a Nkrumahist conception of a United Africa as a political reality' ('The Africa Theme' 75).

King Smarty Jr.'s engagement with the return to Africa is also in line with Davies' observation. In his 1994 'What Black Power Means', his references to 'blacks' and 'black power' encompass Antigua, the Caribbean, the US, and Africa. The calypso re-inscribes the 'black' diasporic body with agency by delineating and linking together the epistemological challenges embedded within the discourse and praxis of 'black power'. For example, he points to Caribbean, African, and US 'black power' subscribers' repudiation of the notion of 'white' culture as being the model for 'civilisation'. He asserts: 'You teach us an evil culture / Based on de almighty dollar / . . . You never t'ought some of us / Would ever ever refuse / To follow you step by step, and walk in your dirty shoes' (verse 2, see page 295).

By way of another example, King Smarty Jr. also outlines the cultural challenge issued to dominant and bad-minded notions of beauty undertaken by subscribers to 'black power', namely the Rastafarians: 'And so when you see a true Rasta / With locks beautiful and clean / Refusing de white man perming cream / Dat's what black power means'(chorus 2). He links these challenges to a political and ontological re-framing of 'blackness' and 'whiteness' that scoffs at 'white' commitment, and expectation of 'black' consent to 'the racial contract'—'So when you see the Black Pant'er / With his clenched fist of Black Power / It's a symbol of deir defiance / To encourage a black resistance / Against the damn racist policies in America' (verse 3).

Throughout his exploration of the various challenges marking the discourse and praxis of 'black power', King Smarty Jr. economically uses the first person plural to invoke a sense of black unity across the three spaces- Africa, Caribbean, and the US, urging: 'But the spirit of justice tells me / These things we have to redeem / Our land, our

gold, and our dignity / That's what black power means!' (chorus). He does the same to delineate the various 'white' threats to 'black power'. Employing the third person singular throughout, he lumps together the 'greedy white men' in the Caribbean, Africa and North America, and accuses them of various crimes committed against 'blacks': 'Millions of our black souls died in your quest for gold'; 'You smiled when Mandela offered reconciliation / While the blacks continued to suffer'; 'You demons, you were happy when Malcolm X hit the ground'; and 'You destroyed we agriculture / ... You come now with grip of NAFTA' (verse 4).

In 'Never Again', King Smarty Jr. returns to the theme of the 'black power' movement as part of a concerted effort spanning the 'black' diaspora. In this calypso, he restores the Afro-Antiguan memory/history by annexing Antigua to the African continent and positioning Antigua squarely within the 'black' diaspora: 'We have got to remember / This is still piece of Africa / And we must also remember / How much black people suffer' (verse 1). Interestingly however, his positioning of Antigua within Africa as a means of re-inscribing the Afro-Antiguan body with agency is marked by a displacement of the Afro-Antiguan experience from particular examples of twentieth-century African experiences: 'So tell all dem white nation / Dat dis land is not Sudan / Is we land dey come cross to claim / . . . We can't let dat happen again' (2nd chorus).

For King Smarty Jr., the claiming of African smadee and, to borrow from Hall, the 'renegotiating' or 'rediscovery' of Africa settles on a spiritual connection between the African/Afro-Caribbean slavery and resistance past and present day Antigua ('Negotiating' 31). Therefore when he rails, 'We still feeling last slavery pains / We can't let that happen again', the 'that' is the un-homing of the Afro-Antiguan as was done to their African ancestors. The 'that' is also attempts in the past to impose the body of the subhuman upon the African, Afro-Antiguan and peoples of the African diaspora. The

‘that’ is the overall bad-mindedness of the attempt to thwart Afro-Antiguan proletariat’s possession of the only thing which can save it from the wretched inheritance of a sub-personhood or depersonisation—having ‘smadee’.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate the import of the Antiguan calypso tradition as a living repository of Afro-Antiguan resistance and perspectives on power, which converses with like calypso traditions across the region. The tradition, conventionally dominated by Afro-Antiguan men, represents an immensely more populous field than the island’s written traditions, both in the number of recognized calypsonians and the number of texts produced annually. Critics across the region have also acknowledged the prolific character of the calypso art form, which, as Lewis puts it, features discourse ‘about everything under the sun’ (Rohlehr, ‘I Lawa’ 327). Moreover, contra the texts in the written tradition, the ‘serious’ calypso is best conceived as a ‘private’ national affair. I apprehend it as a largely ‘honest’ theorising about self and others that is meant primarily for local audiences. It typically utilises Creole/Caribbean English, focuses on the local/national, and is marked by a heavy reliance on communal memory to produce meaning. Via the tradition, calypsonians are able to broach both everyday topics and those typically avoided in polite conversations and by Caribbeanists. Regis provides the apt example of T&T’s calypsos’ engagement with race noting that they ‘have caused much bitterness—or rather, they have exposed the bitterness secreted behind smiles of tolerance . . . they have involved the national community in discussion which, unfortunately, hardly ever reaches the platform of dialogue’ (xi). My ultimate suggestion is that the calypso represents an indispensable base for future research/ ‘academic eavesdropping’, analysis, and theorising of the many nuances of Antiguan and, by extension, Caribbean pre and post-independence experience(s).

CONCLUSION

This thesis has undertaken to intervene into the dominant homogenising readings of the Caribbean and its literatures. It has demonstrated that the obscuration of smaller territories such as Antigua within readings of the Caribbean and Caribbean literatures is not only a symbol of their typical exclusion from imaginings of the region but also a metaphor for and indicant of the displacement of the inequalities and subordination marking their positions within the group. The constituent chapters of this thesis have attempted to produce a compelling case that underlines the need to engage with the neglected literary traditions of the smaller Caribbean territories, and national literatures on the whole.

My thesis has argued for an engagement with the neglected traditions of the smaller territories that will remedy both the displacement of the inequalities marking regional relationships and the conventional deracination of the significant realities of Caribbean differences. It has underscored the role literature has been commissioned to play as a signifier of national identity in the region. It has also asserted that the individual territories' differentiated engagements with the national question and the immense differences marking the region are borne out in the types and timbres of the territories' national quarrels that find expression in their literatures. I have aimed to intervene into both the invisibility of literatures of the smaller territories as well as the invisibility of smaller territories themselves.

My examination of Antigua's oral and written traditions has highlighted their marked preoccupation with 'small-islandness'. It has also foregrounded the recurring expressions of anxiety about the influence of 'small-islandness' on personal and national claims to personhood and nationhood within the global community of men and women and nations. I have demonstrated that this anxiety is not misplaced. The cultural and

economic peripherality of the small island has engendered both the critical neglect of its literary traditions and the non-engagement with its locally produced canons. It has also delimited the Antiguan's performances of certain bodies—such as that of the calypsonian and the writer.

My thesis has also mapped the island's literary traditions as peculiarly engaged with deconstructive and recuperative projects that intervene into the epistemological and ontological bad-mindedness inherent in the construction of Antiguan and Caribbean bodies since the late 15th century. I have shown that Antiguan narratives commit to significant re-positionings of Antiguan and Caribbean bodies that intervene into colonial, neo-colonial and post-colonial nationalist discourses to positively reconfigure their location in imaginings of Antigua, the Caribbean and in turn the world. I have attempted to match the re-positionings and re-configurations articulated and effected by Antiguan narratives with a re-positioning of my own—a corrective reinsertion of Antiguan narratives, as elaborating a discrete national tradition, within Caribbean literary traditions.

Overall, this thesis has spotlighted but a small sample of pertinent but currently sidelined identities, experiences, transnational mappings, and themes that critical engagements with discrete national corpuses are likely to unearth. My hope is that this thesis' engagement with the peculiar concerns of Antiguan narrators and its employment of localised/Caribbean-grown theories and concepts serve as an indicant of the possible range of critical gazes and theoretical directions for our future examinations of the still vastly underexplored Caribbean literary and critical terrain.

I suggest that my thesis and Antiguan narratives' engagement with local and regional epistemologies assert the cultural and ontological autonomy of locally produced knowledge. This assertion is particularly important given the epistemological dominance of Western and non-Caribbean critical discourses/thought in academia and, as

O'Callaghan observes, the diminished primacy of literary theory in West Indian scholarship ('Imagined Nations' 5). This thesis gives us pause to consider the meaningful role community-derived and ingrained knowledge plays in the lives and literatures of post-colonial peoples—such as African-Americans and Afro-Caribbeans—historically denied access, to invoke Mills, to the 'word' ('Smadditizin'' 1997 64).

My thesis has hopefully demonstrated that for such peoples and societies, local community-derived epistemes are indispensable in referring to their experiences, which are located outside of the remit of hegemonic Western theoretical models. As Mills reminds us, 'Language evolves in order to meet needs'; wholesale reliance upon Western theoretical models would therefore mean having to 'resort . . . to awkward locutions because there is no natural semantic/conceptual correspondent . . . in the world of European discourse' ('Smadditizin'' 2010 164). Torres-Saillant has, for example, observed that Afro-American literature, as the corpus of a marginal people who endured centuries of crushing oppression in the US, 'cannot be chronicled by means of the same historiographical taxonomy devised for chronicling the literature of the dominant culture'. He has similarly argued that 'Caribbean literature has a discrete historical development and that it is unlikely to be effectively chronicled by means of the divisions used to chart the development of other literatures' (5, 6). Overall, my thesis has attempted to underscore not only local community-derived epistemes' capacity as tools for pertinent theoretical accounting but also their capacity to effect reconfigurations that engender equitable integration of Antiguan and Caribbean bodies into local, regional and global communities in the face of continuing entanglement in British colonialism, neo-colonial relationships, and quarrels with post-colonial nationalism.

Another key issue that my thesis has raised/registered is the porosity of the boundaries of 'the local'. Throughout this thesis, I have both grounded Antiguan literary

expressions as peculiarly Caribbean and demonstrated that Antiguan narratives' singular engagements with the national question are themselves marked by a simultaneous insistence on the 'Caribbeanness' of their recuperative and deconstructive projects. An assertion that I have attempted to make throughout is that Antiguan narratives elaborate and influence regional traditions and vice versa. Moreover, my reliance upon theoretical concepts formulated by regional critics/philosophers suggests the transnational transferability of community-derived and embedded knowledge that is indicant of a shared historical and socio-cultural space and, in that way, a blurring of territorial boundaries.

Furthermore, I have attempted to spotlight the way in which linear time has been disrupted by both the dominant homogenising readings of literatures from the region and Antiguan narratives' belated and enabling [re]insertions into imaginings of Caribbean literature and Antiguan/Caribbean society. In the case of the former, one of my thesis' main quarrels with conventional maps of Caribbean literary traditions is with their suggestion of canons unfolding naturally over time—typically from the 1950s onwards. Another main quarrel is that these maps not only disrupt linear time but that they commit to negating small-island agency in processes of canon formation in the process. A key comment this thesis has attempted to register on the latter point is, to cite Gandhi, 'that what counts as "marginal" in relation to the West has often been central and foundational in the non-West' (ix).

For their parts, Antiguan narratives' belated and enabling [re]insertions of Antiguan and Caribbean bodies into the literary and national imaginaries transform both into spaces in which the boundaries between past and present are marked by immense slippage. I have read the texts' disruptions of linear time as a suggestion that we in the region are better served by an understanding of time as fluid/porous given our continuing

entanglement in the colonial past and the reverberations of the epistemological and ontological bad-mindedness that was levied against Antiguan and Caribbean bodies. I have also in turn read this as the texts' recommendation that we re-engage with literatures from the region to decipher, for example, continuities and/or discontinuities between Caribbean anxieties past and present and to map genealogies of various Antiguan and Caribbean identities and the important constructs/myths that articulated/produced them.

For my part, the next step in this journey that began with my discovery of *Annie John* would ideally be a re-engagement of my own that allows me to retrace my steps over these last three years in a bid to re-connect with projects that time and space constraints dictated I abandon. For example, my hope is that in the future I will be better situated to seize the opportunity to analyse Antiguan narratives' specific delineations of non-Afro Caribbean masculinities and male experiences. This hope is sparked by the fact that, for example, within the various subplots constituting John's *Unburnable* are intriguing re-presentations of Carib, Lebanese, and 'coloured' male experiences in Dominica. Similarly, Kincaid's *The Autobiography of My Mother* also offer singular re-presentations of 'coloured' as well as 'white'—British expatriate male experiences in Dominica.

Another project I am enthusiastic to undertake is an exploration of Barbudans' differentiated engagement with the national question, as compared to Antiguan, and their national quarrel(s) with Antiguan, as expressed in their oral traditions. I am immensely regretful that my thesis was forced to be complicit in the conventional obscuration of Barbuda in discussions of Antiguan performances of national and literary identity. Barbuda represents a special case in the region given the peculiar timbre of its expressions of national identity as informed by its distinct form of land tenure and bitter discontent with the larger Antigua. I have in fact long thought a fitting transnational study

of the articulation and contestation of the national imaginary would be well served by employing Barbuda and the 'Carib Territory' in Dominica as case studies.

Finally, I have also long cherished the idea of a transnational study of the nuances of regional calypsos' production/articulation of nation in the pre-independence versus the post-independence eras. (I had in fact originally intended to commit to such a study of Antiguan calypsos in the final chapter of this thesis.) I foresee that mapping the continuities and discontinuities in the nations produced/articulated prior and after independence will allow for significant insight into the genealogy of Caribbean nationalisms and 'the people's' reaction to/ role in articulating them.

APPENDIX A

Notes: Authors and Calypsonians

FRIEDA CASSIN

Cassin's *With Silent Tread* was republished in 2002, with an introduction by Evelyn O'Callaghan, as part of the Macmillan's Caribbean Classic series. In her introduction to Macmillan's reprint of this novel, Evelyn O'Callaghan notes that she was first made aware of the text in an article by Antiguan scholar Bernadette Farquhar who had found a copy of the text in the waste bin of the St. John's Public Library in Antigua. According to O'Callaghan, one damaged copy was found to be owned by the Museum of Antigua and Barbuda and another "rather battered copy" housed at the Institute of Jamaica Library ("Introduction" 5).

The text is generally considered to have been published in 1890 or around 1888 to 1892 and has been identified as 'an early example of a Caribbean novel by a woman writer...and probably the earliest novel of Antigua and Barbuda' (John Gilmore vi). O'Callaghan suggests that Cassin's family were likely English derived, resident in the Eastern Caribbean for some period and members of the Antiguan elite ('Introduction' 13, 14). She also suggests that Cassin's involvement with *The Carib*, one of Antigua's first literary journals and her novel being so "very much grounded in the specifics of the place and period" is an indication of 'a long familiarity with, if not birth in, the island' ('Introduction' 14).

JOANNE C. HILLHOUSE

Joanne C. Hillhouse, born in Antigua in 1973, is a resident freelance writer, editor, and journalist. To date, she is the author of two novellas—*The Boy from Willow Bend* (Macmillan 2002; Hansib 2009) and *Dancing Nude in the Moonlight* (Macmillan 2003)—and a full length novel—*Oh Gad!* (Strebtor/Atria/Simon & Schuster 2012). She has also recently published a children's book- *Fish Outta Water* (Pearson 2013). In 2008, *Willow Bend* was placed on the secondary schools' curriculum. Her work—prose, poetry and critical writings—has appeared in a number of publications including the *CLR James Journal*, *the Caribbean Writer*, *POUI*, *Small Axe*, *Ma Comère*, *Sea Breeze*, and *Américas*.

MARIE-ELENA JOHN

Marie-Elena John was born in Antigua in 1963. Until recently, John resided outside of Antigua, but now splits her time between the US and Antigua. Her debut novel, *Unburnable*, was published in 2006 by Amistad, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers. *Unburnable* was nominated in 2007 for the Hurston/Wright Legacy Award in the debut novel category and also long-listed in 2008 for the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award.

SIR LEROY MCLEAN 'KING SHORT SHIRT' EMMANUEL

King Short Shirt was born in 1942 into the working-class community of Point in Antigua. He has earned a reputation for his staunch anti-government offerings in the local calypso

competition and his on-stage (and sometimes off-stage) rivalry with fellow calypsonian, King Swallow. In 2012, Short Shirt marked his 50th anniversary as a calypsonian. To date, he has captured more Calypso King titles than any other Antiguan or Caribbean calypsonian. He has to his name a total of fifteen Antiguan Calypso King titles, seven Road March titles, seven different Caribbean Calypso King titles, and has been named as one of the top fifty calypsonians of the 20th century by Trinidad's TUCO (Trinbago United Calypsonians Organisation). He has also received a number of local and regional awards including a knighthood from the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for his contribution to the art form in 2003, induction into the Sunshine Awards Hall of Fame in 2002, and a Lifetime Award in 2009 from the International Reggae & World Music Awards (IRAWAMA).

LENA 'QUEEN IVENA' PHILIP

Queen Ivena, self-titled 'The Razor Lady', was born in 1973 in the rural village of Old Road, Antigua. She first emerged as a calypsonian in 1998 and has since won a total of eleven calypso crowns: six female Calypso Monarch crowns; three Calypso Monarch crowns and one Caribbean calypso as well as a Leeward Island Calypso Monarch crown. Like Short Shirt, she is best known for her scathing anti-government/anti-ALP calypsos. She is also known for a fierce on and off-stage rivalry with a fellow calypsonian—the 1993-1995 and 2006-2008 female Calypso Queen, Queen Singing Althea. In 2003, Queen Ivena became the first female Antiguan calypsonian to win the Calypso Monarch title – this too against the likes of veterans such as King Short Shirt. She has also received a number of local and regional awards, including recognition from the University of the West Indies' Institute of Gender and Development Studies for her contribution to the growth and development of calypso.

ALTHEA 'QUEEN SINGING ALTHEA' WILLIAMS

Queen Singing Althea was born in in Antigua in 1974. She emerged as a calypsonian in 1993, one year after the return of the Female Calypso Monarch Competition. Self-titled 'Black Berry', she has won a total of six Female Calypso Monarch titles (1993-1995 and 2006-2008) and has been one of the few females to regular appear in the Calypso Monarch finals. Over her career she has earned a reputation for producing calypsos that address gender issues and advocate for gender equality.

APPENDIX B

IRA 'KING SMARTY JR.' HARVEY

PIRATES (1987)

1

Dey kill off de Indians
 Who lived on dese islands
 Den forced de Africans
 To toil dey plantations
 So dey kept on looting to buil' up
 England
 And dey kept on shooting to grab up
 more lands
 And dey build an empire far and wide
 Den left us to suffer wit' no place to
 hide.

Chorus

Ah say de pirates coming
 Dey coming again.
 De pirates coming
 Dey searching for gain.
 De pirates coming
 Dey coming with might.
 De pirates coming
 Dey coming to fight.
 Ah say the Morgans killing again
 And the Drakes roaming again
 And the Barclays slaving again
 Oh what a shame.

2

De fooling we children wit' deir
 education
 And preach deir religion, calling us
 pagans.
 Dose cruel tyrant wit' no mercy

Look what dey done Hiroshima and
 Nagasaki.
 Our rulers give dem the land by the sea
 Where dey build their hotels to loot and
 to spree.

3

Dey bribing we leaders
 Wit' plentiful dollars
 To get deir concessions
 And all deir exemptions
 Dey putting all the burden
 On de backs of the poor
 Wit' sky-high prices and tax evermore
 So when the crisis come again
 The poor shouldn't pay
 And when dey tief we money again
 Let de pirates pay.

4

Now we de oppressed ones should face
 deir aggression
 And build institutions for our liberation
 So when de pirates come again
 Dey will meet us aware
 And when de pirates come again dey will
 get a big scare
 And when de pirates come again, we
 won't have no fear
 And when the masses rise again, dey will
 run out of here.

NEVER AGAIN (1993)

1
 Watch yuhself black man
 'Cause dey t'ink here is Canaan
 With their expansion plan on dis land.
 It seems like their motto
 Is to cram Blacks in ghetto
 And dope and drunk dem and
 Starve them for so
 Oh no, Oh no, Oh no!
 We have got to remember
 This is still piece of Africa
 And we must also remember
 How much black people suffer.

Chorus
 So tell them Israeli
 Jews help enslaving we
 Is we land dey coming to claim
 And is slavery dey want to attain
 We still feeling last slavery pains
 We can't let dat happen again
 Never Again, never again, never again!

2
 Antiguan, you better take heed
 Guard your land to plant your own seed
 Guard it from dose who full of greed
 Like those Hadeed.
 Wit' one suitcase in their hand
 Seeking refuge in our land
 Man, we became deir patrons
 Dey now make million
 Million, million, billions.
 Dose Arabs whom we blacks embrace
 Always despise de black race
 And consider it as a disgrace
 To intermix wit 'de black race.

Chorus
 So tell all dem white nation
 Dat dis land is not Sudan
 Is we land dey come cross to claim
 And is slavery dey want to attain
 We still feeling Africa's hunger pain
 We can't let dat happen again
 Never again, never again, never again!

3
 Jews and Arab, Gentile
 Yankee, German- all is hostile.
 Mafias and Klu Klux Klan didn't fight
 For Black Man birt' right.
 Dey moving at such a rate
 Chinese grabble up Diamond Estate.
 Look Vivi apply for Christian Valley.
 Humphreys want Chinees
 Robbery, robbery! Ask Vivi
 Land we wrestle from Moody Stuart
 Lester want divert to Rappaport
 Let dey tail ketch ah fire
 Cause with demon he conspire.

Chorus
 So tell Lester and all ah dem
 Dis conspiracy got to end
 Is we land dey come cross to claim
 And is slavery dey want to attain
 We still feeling last slavery pains
 We can't let dat happen again
 Never again, never again, never again!

4
 Come join de revolution
 To defend we promised land
 Dis is black man promised land
 A legacy for his children.
 Let we never surrender
 One more inch of Antigua
 Tell Hadeed team and Spencer,
 Rapport and Hector
 Tell them, tell them, tell them
 Now we deep down in the mire
 And Old V.C want retire
 Even my partner Zero
 Did better in calypso.

Chorus
 And now deir track record show
 All ah dem fit to go
 Is dey who should get de blame
 To have us down in de jain
 Dey t'ink we de people insane
 Will we vote for them once again? No!
 Never again, never again, never again!

THE ROLE OF THE CALYPSONIAN (1993)

1

Progress and Solo warn me- Smarty,
 You and Zachari
 Singing too much
 Serious song in we competition
 Look how dose up in de top t'ree
 Like Lady Falcon and King Shorty
 Add to de spirit of Carnival wit' deir
 bacchanal.
 You bringing politics in de first round
 Next time you get pan stage
 De judges begin to frown
 Çause second round is time to wail
 To jump up and shake up yuh tail
 If you continue so, Smarty you bound to
 fail.

Chorus

But how can I condemn de government
 Den tell people celebrate freedom on de
 pavement?
 My holistic rendition won't accept dat
 contradiction
 So let me sing my song
 I don't bound to wear aryuh crown
 Judges will frown and frown
 I go sing my song
 I don't bound to wear aryuh crown!

2

Let me advise you, young man Smarty
 You can make plenty money if you put a
 little more tempo in your calypso.
 Follow de trend of de Mighty Swallow,
 de Mighty Baron, Sparrow and King
 Arrow
 Dey using bacchanal and gone
 commercial.
 De battom line is to make more bread
 Dem serious calypsoes will keep you in
 de red.
 Too much politics bored us for sure
 And will penalise you wit' a low score

And de committee get all the money and
 still poor.

Chorus

Bosnia and Somalia must I ignore
 And sing 'jam and wine 'just for a few
 dollars more?
 We must maintain in this tradition
 An opposition to exploitation.
 So let me sing my song
 I don't bound to wear aryuh crown
 Judges will frown and frown
 I go sing my song
 I don't bound to wear aryuh crown!

3

Certain issue for de media
 Like de Outlet Newspaper
 Cause it take money like hell to fight a
 libel
 De case of Lester an' de money was in
 de Outlet paper weekly
 Dat de role of de newspaper in Antigua
 I hear someone paying off Lukey to run
 and lose in Lester constituency
 Vere Bird Sentinel say dat you know,
 Tim have Rappaport money to show
 An' he bex wit' Lester cause he get none
 de Mafia dough.

Chorus

How must I rely on dese guys?
 Dey will spread half-trute and plenty of
 lies.
 It left to de conscious calypsonian
 To straighten dis dear nation
 So let me sing my song
 I don't bound to wear aryuh crown
 Judges could frown and frown
 I go sing my song
 I don't bound to wear aryuh crown
 Sing my song
 I don't bound to wear aryuh crown
 I go sing my song I don't bound to wear
 aryuh crown (repeat *3)

WHAT BLACK POWER MEANS (1994)

Spoken: Dedicated to . . . and to all black men and women struggling against slavery.
 Land is power. Without it, life has no worth.
 Sung: Free up my people of South Africa.
 Long live great Jah! Long Live Nelson Mandela

1

You win de war in Africa
 You continued your massacre
 Millions of our black souls
 Died in your quest for gold.
 But when you hear black Africans
 Shouting out 'Black Power'
 It's a symbol of revolution
 To redeem a lost generation
 From the claws of greedy white
 Men up in Africa.
 You expected from de blacks
 Bloody retaliation
 You smiled
 When Mandela offered reconciliation
 While de blacks continued to suffer
 You hold on like a demon!

Chorus

But the spirit of justice tells me
 Dese things we have to redeem
 Our land, our gold and dignity
 Dat's what Black power means!
 (repeat)

2

You teach us an evil culture
 Based on de almighty dollar
 We swallowed hook, line and sinker
 Now it's so hard to recover.
 So when you see an Antiguan
 Wearing colours of Black Power
 It's a symbol of his rejection
 Of the culture enforced by white man
 In de Caribbean, Africa and in America.
 You never t'ought some of us
 Would ever ever refuse
 To follow you step by step
 And walk in your dirty shoes
 But while ABS pushing soap opera
 ---- drumming African blues.

Chorus

When you see our hero Vivi wear his
 band of ice, gold and green
 Refusing your blasted blood money
 Dat's what Black power means.
 And so when you see a true Rasta
 With locks beautiful and clean
 Refusing de white man perming cream
 Dat's what Black Power means.

3

You had contracts on our head
 Biko, King and Lumumba dead
 Many of we black leaders
 Dey had to run for cover.
 So when you see de Black Pant'er
 With his clenched fist of Black Power
 It's a symbol of deir defiance
 To encourage a black resistance
 Against de damn racist policies in
 America.
 You demons, you were happy
 When Malcolm X hit de ground
 Black leaders who t'reaten
 You ready to cut dem down
 But don't matter how much you murder
 We taking we freedom now.

Chorus

T'rough t'ick and thin and much
 pressure
 When Jah is still on de scene
 It's his strength of will and commitment
 Dat's what Black Power means!
 Yes, t'rough thick and t'in and much
 pressure
 Mandela changing de scene
 It's a lonely strengt' of character
 Dat's what Black Power means!

4
 You destroyed we agriculture
 Jeopardising our future
 You come now with rip-off NAFTA
 Dat to me is further murder.
 So come on Black Antiguan
 Stand and shout aloud 'Black Power'
 Let us aim for our self reliance
 Let us pledge our total allegiance
 To de struggles of black man here and in
 Africa
 Rise up Ethiopians, stand firm as
 Alkebulan

DRAW THE LINE (1995)

1
 Now he want me to stop singing
 Against white people
 He want me do like Zero
 And sing a lying jingle.
 De man want me purge my conscience
 And say all is nice
 Like Robin Leache from Jumby Bay say
 "Here is paradise".
 Look, he ban me from his paper
 'Cause I paint a different picture
 And I cry for an urgent change
 Here in Antigua
 I see clearly de suffering
 From de present evil system
 But his duncey-head deputy
 And he can't see.
 All his white friends in whom he confide
 Shouls and Michael stick close to his
 side
 But you have some black pride
 You're on my side.

Chorus
 And so we draw de line!
 We draw de battle line
 We can't take dis grind
 So we draw de line, dis time.
 While I sing this country is mine
 He now chanting a foreign line
 Dat go leave Antiguan behind
 So we draw de line.

Rise up you Nubians, freedom is not yet
 won
 De whites still have our gold mine
 And dis time is black man time.

Chorus
 So de spirit of justice tells me
 Dese things we have to redeem
 Our land, our gold and dignity
 Dat's what Black Power means!
 (repeat)

2
 Me grandmother used to tell me
 Like father like de son
 It was easy for him to master
 De art of deception.
 Like dem wicked Duvaliers
 Fom nearby Haiti
 It's deceiving, wheeling and dealing
 By dis dynasty.
 Ask Dr. Lake, our surgeon
 Dey hate all the opposition
 It's de hammer if you're against
 deir position.
 Dey waste plenty US money
 Not to build a public library
 But to give a Bajan Mickey
 From Walt Disney
 Look, red-red Yokodee
 A sergeant in de red army
 Was court-marshalled
 For deserting his old buddy.

Chorus
 And so we draw de line!
 We draw de battle line
 We can't take this grind
 So we draw de line, dis time.
 While I sing dis country is mine,
 Goofy dance one ah Gravy wine
 If dey think everybody blind
 Dey out dey mind!

3

My people does pay every year just to
 hear us preach
 How many would want to pay to hear
 our ruler's speech
 'Cause of fear dey want to muzzle de
 calypsonians
 They know quite well dat we are de
 strongest opposition
 Short Shirt beat them in '71, dey don't
 want to hear certain song
 Kenny Knibbs and Lawrence Mason,
 mind suspension
 We regret that the media stifling under
 the Bird feather
 Dat even deir own ----
 When all radio and all TV is controlled
 by one family
 The playing field as far as I see is still
 bumpy.

Chorus

And so we draw de line!
 We draw de battle line
 We can't take dis grind
 So we draw de line, dis time.
 While I sing dis country is mine
 He chanting a foreign line
 Dat go leave you and me behind
 So we draw the line!

4

When dey coming to play dey ball
 Dey have one mindset
 Taxes, levies and bribery; an extra big
 racket
 As soon as election done, allied wit'
 Columbia
 So dat little brother could get his ammo
 from Venezuela
 We are seeing pellucidly
 Dat de Avian dynasty
 By their practice
 Dey declaring war on we
 Dey manipulating de court
 ----, Stanford and Rappaport
 and Chinese behind Lester Fort wit'
 Antiguan passport
 Now dis General wit' his ten star
 T'ink dat he can see very far
 But even wit' bullet-proof car
 He cyah win dis war.

Chorus

'Cause we done draw de line!
 We done draw de battle line
 We can't take dis grind
 So we draw de line dis time.
 While I sing dis country is mine
 He now chanting a Chineese line
 Dat go leave Antiguans behind
 So we draw de line!

APPENDIX C

LEROY McLEAN 'KING SHORT SHIRT' EMMANUEL

NOBODY GO RUN ME (1976)

1

Night and day ah ketching hell
 People t'ink ah doing well
 Just because ah sing a few calypso
 But dat is my misery
 Calypso don't make money
 But most of them don't know
 Dat I have my axe to grind
 Just like any other man
 Existing in poverty
 On dis giant ghetto land
 But I intend to hang on!

Chorus

Tell dem! Tell dem for me!
 No dice! I ain' go eat lice!
 I ain' going to grow old
 Sitting in de cold
 Not me! No way!
 Dey go have to beat me
 Dey go have to eat me!
 Or dey heads go roll.
*[The above three lines are replaced after
 the third and fourth verses with:*
 Allyuh have to beat me
 Allyuh have to bury me
 More than six feet of mould.]
 Tell them I say:
 Ah was born in dis land!
 Ah go die in dis land!
 Nobody go run me
 From where me come from!
 Nobody go run me lahd.
 Nobody go run me
 Nobody go run me (repeat x2)
 Me mooma must nyam
 Me poopa must nyam
 Me woman must nyam
 Me pickney must nyam
 Nobody go run me (repeat x2)
 Nobody go run me lahd
 Nobody go run me.

2

Life ain' much for us to choose
 Some we win and some we lose
 But sometimes life is so confusing
 Ah had a lot of friends one time
 Whom I used to wine and dine
 And gave dem bread when dey need it
 Now most ah dem against me
 Take me make big enemy
 Simply because I am not
 What dey all want me to be
 And with dey political views I can't
 agree!

3

Twelve years I at CBC
 Work at Halcyon for free
 When dey went bankrupt and had no
 money
 Because of my tolerance
 Dey gave me the assurance
 De job belongs to me
 But I hear some people high
 In our society
 Dey don't like my calypso
 Because dey can't control me
 So dey plan to kick out my ass.

4

Election come and gone
 Some ah dem treat me wit' scorn
 Others put de whole ah Point against me.
 Tell dem I don't give ah damn
 I am going to sing my song exactly as I
 see it.
 Whoever want to make me a political
 enemy
 Who feel dat dey playing God and could
 wreck me life for me
 Tell them I ain' running no wey!

POWER AND AUTHORITY (1976)

1

Power rules de world today
 Power corrupt dey say
 And absolute power corrupts you
 absolutely
 It can change a man who has a heart of
 gold
 Make him cruel, wicked, self-centred
 and cold
 Many men in dis land, many
 organisation
 Fought for freedom and justice
 throughout the land.

Chorus

When dey have power and authority
 Dey don't give a damn about nobody
 Prostituting de island
 To all and sundry
 Dey peddling my people's right
 Exploiting, oppressing,
 Less freedom, more suffering
 Ah wonder how we survive
 Think it over my friend
 Think it over again
 Think it over- don't vex wit' me, Shortie
 Am singing as ah see.

2

Coal we can't even buy
 Murder de price too high
 Malnutrition killing de children
 While we de adults starving
 Yet de prices rising without control
 Young man begging bread by de side of
 de road
 And Chamber of Commerce in dis land
 Ah tell you dey don't give one damn
 De more we try to economise de more
 cost o' living rise.

Chorus

When dey have power and authority
 Dey don't give a damn about nobody
 Dey prostituting de island, milking the
 land dry
 Dey making my people starve
 Exploiting, oppressing,
 Less freedom, more suffering
 Dis t'ing just can't go on.
 T'ink it over my friend
 T'ink it over, carefully, again
 T'ink it over- don't vex wit' me, Shortie
 Am singing as ah see.

3

Work we can't even find
 Life seems a waste of time
 Not'ing to do but sit around de corner
 and lime
 Though frustrated, some would rather
 starve dan beg
 Others turn to crime and steal what dey
 can get
 And de judges have no sympat'y
 Dey hammering everyone dat dey ketch
 Even lil' children are jailed without
 regret.

Chorus

When dey have power and authority
 Dey don't give a damn about you or me
 Ah wah dey do?
 Lock we up when dey catch we
 Smoking little Tampee
 While de social rich are freed
 Exploiting, oppressing,
 Less freedom, more suffering
 A poor man's life is really hard indeed.
 T'ink it over my friend
 T'ink it over, carefully, again
 T'ink it over- don't vex wit' me Shortie
 Am singing as ah see

ILLUSION (1977)

1

You told de youths dat dey were free
 And slavery has lost its sting
 But dey're not foolish; dey can see
 You're lying deep within
 Slavery has not left our doors,
 Not yet I'm sure
 We have got to fight the battle some
 more
 The time has come for every man in the
 Caribbean
 To forge one common destiny
 Designed to make our people free
 We have got to stand up for
 The right to lead the lives we choose
 To change, enhance or to refuse.

Chorus

If you t'ink the battle is done
 My brethren you are riding an illusion
 An illusion.
 You talk of progress, love and justice,
 peace and unity
 All illusion.
 We have no hold on these our native
 islands
 Our hands are tied
 We don't control our actions
 Come leh we forward together in a social
 endeavour
 Our goal? Social control, we'll slave no
 more, we'll slave no more
 Only then we'll slave no more
 We'll beg no more, we'll stoop no more.

Only then we'll kneel no more.

2

We cannot live forever more
 Subjected from shore to shore
 Reflecting cowardice and shame
 Against our ancestral name.
 Are dey no warriors left among us to rise
 and shine?
 No heroes left to rise up unto the shrine?
 No martyrs in our history for the youths
 to know?
 Prince Klaas died to make us free
 Cuffy died to make us free
 Garvey died to make us free,
 Must all dese warriors die in vain?
 While we go back to slavery once again?

3

The struggle has only just began
 We've got to carry on
 Uniting dese West Indian lands
 May take us generations
 But independent in this region don't
 mean one damn
 If we can't be independent as one
 The economical policies are
 disheartening
 The people voices are ringing
 We are tired of living a life of total
 subjection
 Told what to spend and what to keep
 God knows sometimes we ain' even
 have enough to eat.

TRUE ANTIGUAN (1987)

1

Donald Halstead flag me down to tell me
 Shorty boy, you acting strange
 You used to be a diehard opposition
 But all of a sudden yuh change
 Did government give you ah deed
 For the piece of land out by Halcyon?
 Tell me, how much Lester pay?
 Man to man, I demand an explanation.

Chorus

Ah born in dis country
 I love dis country
 Don't you think I should care?
 I'll fight for my country
 Die for my country
 Me navel string bury here.
 When I see young people by de roadside
 idling
 Wouldn't knock a stroke, it hurt me
 'Cause I know that if we work earnestly
 What a glorious land this will be!
 Donald, believe me.

2

Talk about improvement, opportunity
 Donald, we have it here
 But if we choose to misuse and abuse it
 Soon it will all disappear
 I must motivate my people
 I must educate my people
 And my job is never easy.
 But I'm a proud citizen- a bred and born
 Antiguan
 only doing my duty.

Chorus

I man born in dis country
 I love dis country
 Don't you think I should care?
 I'll fight for my country.

Die for my country
 Me navel string bury here.
 Too many delinquent children walking
 And their brains stoned out on dope
 It hurt me
 If dey shoulder some responsibility
 What a glorious land this will be!
 Donald, believe me.

3

We are all one people
 Riding in de same donkey cart
 But if we pulling and tugging
 and pulling and tugging
 Every which way
 We will rip Antigua apart
 I must awake my people
 Got to activate my people
 Take this hint from me:
 As long as strength in my body
 Dey don't have to pay me
 I will sing as I see.
 Cause'

Chorus

Ah born in dis country
 I love dis country
 I must do my share
 I'll fight for my country.
 Die for my country
 Ah wouldn't run from here
 When I see lazy people
 On their backside complaining
 Life has no hope
 It hurt me
 If we utilise every opportunity
 What a glorious land this will be!
 Donald, believe me.
 I love me country, ah fight for me
 country, ah die for me country.

APPENDIX D

LENA 'QUEEN IVENA' PHILIP

THE OLD ROAD FIGHT (2001)

1

So wit' disrespect
 He want to go through me land
 To build highway
 And to mash up my production
 Dere is no more land to give
 I have no alternative
 I must preserve my land
 So dat my children could live!
 But dem Uncle Toms
 Dey always very happy
 To appease massa
 Just to sit on his gallery
 So tell Sterling and Doherty
 Tell Southwell and friend Rabbie
 Dat me blade well sharp
 So nah underestimate me!

Chorus

So we ah go fight dem in de dead of
 night
 Fight dem whedda black or white
 Fight dem in de morning
 Fight dem in de evening
 We go fight dem- each and every one
 Fight dem all to save de land
 Fight dem in de morning
 Fight dem in de evening
 Fight dem every day until dey give in
 Fight dem every day we bound to win

2

From de first attack dey retreated from
 deir golf course
 Dey never could stand de farmers united
 force
 And while dey push deir resort
 And the news dey spin and contort
 Dey never said dey wanted our bay
 To make a job force
 De environment

De enemy came to destroy
 To say he's a nature boy might just be a
 ploy
 De mangrove—He is damaging
 And de beach where we love to swim
 So on every front
 Old Road will be fighting him!

3

When de war drums roll
 Dey calling Old Road heroes
 Kublai, Gracey, Shaska- Baggas and
 King Larro
 Young Gantone and Kaubuja
 Ras Waka and John Dyer
 I say you fought that day in the spirit of
 Africa!
 Our ancestors
 We know dey were very proud
 Ma'Clemmie and Olive Humphrey's
 Was in de crowd
 Lilian and daughter Nancy
 Denon, Decade, and friend Nicey
 With Soldiers like Ms. Aggie
 We will take over Wadadli!

4

De call to war has reached up Parham
 Harba'
 It falls on de ears of Rastaman Destah
 Jah
 Where's Namba and Alister?
 Call Lovell and Zakela
 It is a holy war- a rival of Black Power!
 When de conch shell sound, it spread
 right across de land
 King Court calling rebel man and rebel
 woman
 Chaku get your All Saints posse,
 It's time for black unity

For dis time around, we are certain of

victory!

ROBIN HOOD IN REVERSE (2003)

1

Robin Hood, Robin Hood
 Check de scene in my neighbourhood
 Robin Hood, Robin Hood
 Things not looking so good
 In England you does take
 From de rich and give to de poor
 My teacher would give you
 A high percent for your score
 Right there in Sherwood Forest
 Any rich man who cross your path
 When you find he's dishonest
 You drive an arrow straight in he heart
 But now you come to Antigua
 Ah find dat you make a switch
 Man you taking from the poor to give to
 the rich.

Chorus

You robbing and you robbing and you
 robbing
 Robbing de hood
 You robbing and you robbing and you
 robbing
 Dat is not good
 Man you robbing and you robbing and
 you robbing
 Robbing de poor for sure
 Man you robbing, and you robbing and
 you robbing
 No we won't take dis no more. No! No!
 We won't take dis no more.
 Poor people cry!
 No! No! Can't take no more!

2

Robin Hood, Robin Hood
 Watch de schools in my neighbourhood
 Robin Hood, Robin Hood
 Performance not very good
 When England used to rule
 I could see some kind of order
 But nowadays all I find
 Is near absolute disaster

You imposing all kind ah levy
 You say to improve education
 You collecting all of dis money
 Yet we have more failing children
 No books, no toilet paper
 Things getting from bad to worse
 Cause you dipping you sticky hands
 Deep in the public purse.

3

Robin Hood, Robin Hood
 You build schemes in my neighbourhood
 Robin Hood, Robin Hood
 Schemes not working too good
 You make schemes for dem schemes
 To milk money from de workers
 So dat you and your friends
 Could build up your Swiss coffers
 You and your white friend Stanford
 And de one name Asot Michael
 You wheel and deal while constructing
 De state of art hospital
 Poor workers pay their loan money
 Rich white man is de owner
 That's one of the rip off schemes here in
 Antigua

4

Robin Hood, Robin Hood
 Tell me what's your identity
 Robin Hood, Robin Hood
 You really confusing me
 In your speech you does teach
 The poor man's your priority
 But your actions show clearly
 That's not de reality
 You assisting only your rich friends
 Only your Stanford and Safarty
 Farmers need land for producing
 You give Diamonds to Israeli
 When you making decisions
 De rich man interest come first
 Well them I should call you Robin Hood
 in reverse.

IVENA'S AGENDA (2003)

1

I have decided to take a stand
 To speak of things dat of relevance
 To de upliftment of de black man and his
 nation
 As a downtrodden calypsonian
 I must defend de weak from de strong
 So revolution in Antigua is my agenda
 Anytime you hear people suffer
 Call Ivena!

Chorus

Ah go pepper de enemy, dey want to
 muzzle me
 But dey can't touch me; I am de Razor
 Lady
 Dey want me to prostitute
 But I have to sing de trute
 No dey can't buy me
 I am a righteous lady
 Dey sharing gold and diamonds to
 different calypsonians
 But I'm not Smarty, Kaseba, nor Richie
 I am fighting de flesh of your ruler
 And I'm not interested in his dollars
 So dem gangstas who rip off Antigua!
 Dey go feel the pressure from Queen
 Ivena.

2

Yes, dey want me sing fantasy
 Sing for party and dress up sexy
 And ignore more serious issues and local
 values
 So while our schools deteriorate and
 Ministers forget deir mandate
 Child delinquency dey create in our State
 If dey think I'll turn a blind eye
 Well dey damn lie!

Chorus

Ah go battle de enemy with me lyrical
 weaponry
 And dey can't beat me
 I am the Razor Lady
 Dey want me to prostitute
 But I have to sing de trute

No dey can't buy me
 I am a righteous lady
 Dey sharing gold and diamonds to
 different calypsonians
 But I'm not YB, King Onyan nor GB
 I am fighting de flesh of your ruler
 And I'm not interested in his dollars
 So dem gangstas who corrupt Antigua!
 Dey go burn with fire from Queen Ivena.

3

I sing my songs loud and clear
 For de oppressed dat are living here
 I was kicked out de monarchy because I
 am angry
 But am de voice of de people still
 And I will never sing for Dry Hill
 Dey can pay Richie or Kaseba but not
 dis sister
 Calypso prostitutes they're after
 Pass Ivena!

Chorus

Ah go pepper de enemy- dey want to
 muzzle me
 But they can't stop me
 I am the Razor Lady
 Dey want me to prostitute
 But I have to sing de trute
 No dey can't buy me
 I am a righteous lady
 Dey sharing gold and diamonds to
 different calypsonians
 But I'm not Smarty, Kaseba nor Richie
 I am fighting the flesh of your ruler
 And I'm not interested in his dollars
 So dem gangstas who rip off Antigua!
 They go feel the pressure from Queen
 Ivena.

4

And so de evil force done know
 De strong effects of my calypso
 Dere is a binding force dat's between
 You and your Queen
 No kinda dividing wedge

Will ever negate my pledge
 Let our true love for Antigua keep us
 together.
 You can always depend forever on
 Queen Ivena.

Chorus
 Ah go battle de enemy with me lyrical
 weaponry
 And they can't beat me
 I am the Razor Lady
 Dey want me to prostitute

But I have to sing de trute
 No dey can't buy me
 I am a righteous lady
 Dey sharing gold and diamonds to
 different calypsonians
 But I'm not YB, King Onyan nor GB
 I am fighting the flesh of your ruler
 And I'm not interested in his dollars
 So dem gangstas who corrupt Antigua!
 They go burn with fire from Queen
 Ivena.

CRY CRY BABY (2004)

1

Baby Stan
 In a pram
 Sucking on his finger
 Baby Stan
 Has a plan
 To take ova Antigua
 Dey used to spoil him
 Satisfying his greed
 To end up as Kin
 That was Baby Stan's creed.
 Now de people wise up
 And make all this nonsense stop
 He crying and sucking his lollipop.

Chorus
 Cry Cry baby, want everything he see
 He's a cry cry baby, want all we property
 He want airport, he want passport,
 He want free port, he want seaport,
 He want country, he want city
 He want laundry to wash dirty money
 (after second verse- 'all he money')
 Cry cry baby, want everything he see
 Cry cry baby, want all we property
 He's a cry, cry cry baby.

2

To get his way
 Stan does pay
 Politicians big big money
 So he expect
 Nuff respect
 When he call dey must run quickly

He can't get dem islands we Antiguan
 inherited
 So he displaying tantrums
 His face and eyes flaming red
 But dose who did spoil him
 Can no longer help he
 He better wake up and go smell the
 coffee

3

Who invest
 But not infest
 Is what we had on we mind
 And we detest
 Any guest
 Who want to think dat we are blind
 We know Stan's intentions
 Is to rob our heritage
 Dat's an invitation
 To test black Antiguan's rage.
 But de spirit of King Court
 Is forever with us
 To fight on and defend the people's trust.

4

And more tears t'roughout the years
 From dat blue eyed baby
 He'll see much
 But cannot touch
 Things not belonging to he
 Antiguan are fit and ready
 To defend our birthright
 We will not go back to slavery

We shall unite and fight
 So those lands in question
 Tell that greedy baby

We go keep dem to give to we own
 pickney.

AFTER LESTER (2004)

1

All your songs Ivena
 In de past was against Lester
 Now he's missing, oye!
 What would you be singing?
 And we saw you jumping
 When de new P.M. Baldwin win
 So we watching, oye,
 Who you attacking
 We want to see if you taking sides,
 We want to see if de truth you'll hide
 We want to see if you favour Baldwin
 but never Lester
 Ivena! We demand an answer.

Chorus

So leh me tell you Antigua
 I have not'ing against Lester
 But his government was incompetent
 I am glad dat Baldwin win
 But I might have to hit on him. Yea!
 If de establishment remains delinquent
 I still see de need for us to change
 To protect and talk and rearrange
 Some still living from hand to mout'
 Den dere's much to sing about
 So Antigua will hear from Ivena.

2

Your venom use on Lester
 You have none for Baldwin Spencer
 You will be hush-hush, oye!
 Your ruby you won't touch
 Now it seems dat he join your side
 To take Baldwin for a ride
 So would you say so, oye
 In your calypso
 Business he does plan in both party
 And which party win does belong to he
 So if Baldwin should go wrong
 And continue de Syrian mission

Ivena, will you put that in song?

Chorus

So leh me tell you Antigua
 I have not'ing against Lester
 But his government was incompetent
 I am glad dat Baldwin win
 But I might have to pressure him. Yea!
 If de establishment remains delinquent
 I still see de need for us to change
 To protect and talk and rearrange
 'Til the resources of this land
 Firmly held by Antiguans' hand
 Then Antigua, will hear from Ivena.

3

De police dragging their feet
 Dey say dey acting discreet
 De law must prevail, oye!
 But Asot must face jail
 Look how V.C. was quick to act
 Cutting Walters down on de track
 Would you say Baldwin, oye!
 Is too forgiving?
 We don't expect that just overnite
 De new P.M to get all things right.
 Like under your new government
 Bigshot t'ieves get special treatment
 Ivena! We will hope you comment.

Chorus

So leh me tell you Antigua
 I have not'ing against Lester
 But his government was incompetent
 I am glad dat Baldwin win
 But I might have to hit on him. Yea!
 If de establishment remains delinquent
 I still see de need for us to change
 To protect and talk and rearrange
 Government files are still missing

Righteous lady has some'ting to sing
So Antigua, look out for Ivena.

4
You swear de Baldwin regime
Is a positive high team
And we'll find no reason, oye!
To charge dem for treason
Like a peaceful revolution
Sweeping over this land
People are happy, oye!
Their burden is history
And your P.M is well-focused
And de people know their interest come
first
And backtrack on de people's contact
Ivena, you have the right to attack!

LEGGO THE CALYPSO (2006)

1
You stifling you pen
You don't want to let it flow
To address de nation's problem
When you sing yuh calypso
When Lester was in power
Your pen write all over him
Your pen didn't have no friend
But now your pen is friend with Baldwin
So right there on Market Street
Dey accosted me
Ivena, you only see what you want to see
Look at all them things in de news
So much serious issues
So why the hell is dem petty issues you
choose?

Chorus
Leggo de calypso
Tell de people de truth
Let your pen flow
Since you so concerned 'bout de youth
Hadeed was a blight to Baldwin
Right in we cabinet
We waited on you to attack him
But that song you can't sing as yet

Hadeed creed is endless greed

Like Lester if he should get slack

Chorus
So leh me tell you Antigua
I have not'ing against Lester
But his government was incompetent
I am glad dat Baldwin win
But I might have to attack him. Yea!
If de establishment remains delinquent
I still see de need for us to change
To protect and talk and rearrange
Some still living from hand to mout'
Then there's plenty to sing about.
So Antigua, here comes Ivena.

We know you and Baldwin know
So let your pen flow
And leggo de right calypso
We know you sharp so
Razor let go you calypso.

2
Yes we would like to know when
You would sing against dis regime
Will dey feel de weight of your pen
If dey don't come clean?
Dose with ties to Lester,
You attack dem without mercy
But de friends of Baldwin Spencer
Get away scots free
But dem who done ketch de germs
To make dem succeed
They have succumbed
To the vicious cycle of greed
So when de rich bwoy money fall out
All ah dem jump open them mout'
So when you find out
Dem kinda sudden you sing about.

Chorus
Leggo de calypso
You might have to dig up dirt

Let your pen flow
 Don't care if Daniel get hurt
 Don't be afraid to mention
 Hadeed used to 'fraid de Pit Bull
 So he feed de bull couple million
 Bull stop bark cause he belly full
 Dem kind ah t'ing we want you to sing
 Is we de people say so
 So let your pen flow
 And leggo de right calypso.
 Say how de 'tory go
 Razor, let go your calypso.

3

Why would Baldwin repeat
 De mistake P.M. Walters made
 When de late V.C regain his seat
 Wit' a Jail term George Walters gave
 Lester still out dere at large
 But Baldwin keep washing his hands
 Errol Cort is de man in charge
 And dat upsetting UPP's plans
 All dese things you Ivena
 Keep silent about
 If it was in Lester time
 You would gladly run off your mout'
 You would never spread de rumour
 Dat Baldwin did promise Papa
 He would never jail Lester
 Because he and Lester are brother.

Chorus

Leggo de calypso
 You already take the oath
 Let your pen flow
 Yuh got de license to rock de boat
 If dey still locking up dem young men
 When dey find dem with a little spliff
 No, it shouldn't be any problem
 If Lester penalty is real stiff

If de great Panday couldn't get away
 Den Lester too, he must go
 So let your pen flow
 And leggo de right calypso
 To jail he must go
 Razor, leggo de calypso.

4

Is you who pledge Ivena
 You would be de people's voice
 Saving Antigua-Barbuda
 And you will make no odda choice
 De great King Court and Hector
 Raises against dis establishment
 De mantle is yours, Ivena
 To drive a dent in de government
 So you see, you have to be impartial
 Politically, you have to remain neutral
 You've got to call a spade a spade
 And you may have enemies made
 But when you encounter dem
 Gyal, drag out yuh razor blade!

Chorus

Leggo de calypso
 We know you all decked in blue
 Let your pen flow
 You gotta do what you've got to do
 We depending on you Ivena
 To enhance this revolution
 So without any fear or favour
 Raise your voice for de common man
 Gyal, sing your song
 You cyah go wrong
 Ah we de people say so
 So let your pen flow
 And leggo de right calypso.
 We know you sharp so
 Razor let go your calypso.

REPARATIONS FOR AFRICA (2005)

1
 It's time you admit
 Slavery was never legit
 But you in your legal books tried to
 make a case
 White criminals benefit
 From illegal profit
 Made from stolen resource of the
 African race
 Five hundred years we laboured in
 slavery
 And all dat we get was endless brutality
 So now we ask for compensation
 To improve our condition
 You have the gall to stall our quest for
 reparations.

Chorus
 But reparations is only fair
 Black people demand their share
 Of de wealth of Africa
 Dat you stole from me forefather
 Reparations will say to me
 Dat this evil call slavery
 We can put dat behind
 After you pay for your crime
 Reparations
 We want grandfather back pay
 Reparations
 We want it right away
 Reparations
 For the labour you got for free
 Reparations
 Time to compensate de black family!

2
 Yes the slave trade full up
 All de banks in Europe
 Black humanity became a commodity
 For de slaves in Haiti
 Liberty was not free
 For forty years paid de French Man
 All this money
 Is we sweat and we blood
 Mix your foundation
 And all that was mine
 You will to your white children
 All my dreams for me family
 Are de dreams you took wey from me
 And wit' your laws, you cause our
 persistent poverty.

3
 America and Europe
 Now it's time to pay up
 Better schools and tools
 More land and security
 Get your calculator
 Your user-friendly computer
 Tabulate the weight of de gold
 Dat you stole from me
 Forty acres and a mule in America
 Libraries and homes from Brazil to
 Africa
 So now I put it to you
 You have compensated de Jew
 Make our share be fair
 So give to blacks what is due

APPENDIX E

L.A. CREW

BORN IN WADADLI (1998)

1

Ah yah me born
 Ah yah me live
 Ah yah me come from
 Me nah go run
 Me nah go hide
 Me nah go stop jam
 Look how long
 Ah say we build de foundation
 We plant de cane
 Ah say we do it in de hot sun

Chorus

Ah Nobody, Nobody ah, Nobody
 Nobody go run me
 (Repeat x3)
 Me granmama work
 Hard pon de land dey
 Me granpapa work hard
 And nuh get pay.
 Over 400 years down inna slavery
 And now you wah
 Come run me from me country?
 Born in Wadadli
 I was born in Wadadli
 (repeat)
 This is my island
 Nobody go run me
 Ah yah me born.

2

You tek de land
 You tek de sand
 You claim de water
 Me nah go tief
 Me nah go beg
 Me nah go borrah
 We build dis land yah
 Out ah blood, sweat and tears
 We feel de pain when de whip start to
 blaze, now

3

You come wit' lies
 You fool de youths
 You kill me culture
 Me nah go bow
 Me nah go stoop
 Me haffi conquer
 All dat innocent bloodshed down here
 That is the price ah wha me people done
 pay.

Chant:

I will lift up my eyes unto the hills
 For whence cometh my help
 My help cometh from Jah
 To build dis land
 And dis is the land of my birt'.

APPENDIX F

ALTHEA 'QUEEN SINGING ALTHEA' WILLIAMS

WOMAN'S PLIGHT (1994)

1

They come and sweet-talk you off your feet
 They call you angel on the street
 They call you babes and turtledove
 They promise to shower you with love
 They bring you a present every day
 But this is before they get their way
 They tell you it's you they want to wed
 But hear what happen after they get you in bed

Chorus

The places that all yuh use to go
 They don't want to take you there no mo'
 Some of the times they make you shame
 The way how they scandalise your name
 Telling you friends what you does do
 But they never confess they does do it too
 Is these types of things we have to fight
 That's a woman's plight, that's a woman's plight (*repeat*)

2

These men have a way to get to you
 You play that tough, but they still get through
 Any problem you have they promise to solve
 But that is before pregnancy is involved
 They stop treating you like royalty
 And begin to question your loyalty
 They go as far as disown their own baby
 And desert you claiming infidelity.

Chorus

You go to arrange for child support
 You have to establish fraternity in court
 Before the court could authorise a cent
 You have to say how, when and where you want
 \$20 a week the court awards
 For the kids and he still find it hard
 Is these type ah things we have to fight
 That's a woman's plight
 That's a woman's plight (*repeat*)

3

If you unlucky and marry some of them
 That is de start of you problem
 Instead of being their wife and company
 Like dey hire you as house security
 They flirt with every woman that they meet
 They live like Donald trump on the street
 Instead of living a life ah matrimony
 They prefer to pay you alimony

Chorus

So women across the Caribbean
 I am calling on you to take a stand
 Scrutinise the young men that you meet
 To see if they are real or counterfeit
 Put them thru a rigid litmus test
 Take your own time to raise your dress
 Is time we stand up to the men and fight
 For a woman's right, change the woman's plight
 That's a woman's plight.
 (*repeat*)

WOMEN OF TODAY (1996)

1

Everywhere I go
 I hate to hear men say
 That women of today
 Have really come a long way
 But Singing Althea
 Dey can never convince
 Because I know
 We have been leaders from ever since
 Men contrive and connive
 Just to keep us down
 It's about time we turn
 All these things around
 And El Capitán
 Down to its every crew
 Women dey pushing de men,
 Way ahead of you

Chorus

And dat isn't fair
 Dat isn't right
 Women of today
 We are not dumb
 We are bright
 And we getting
 More passes in CXC
 And have much more university degree
 In all spheres of work
 We have ability
 But dey want to hire us
 Only as their secretary
 We must demand
 Our rightful place and space
 Life is dynamic
 So let us all put forth our case
 It's about time
 Dat potential come to the fore
 Women are full of substance
 Plus a whole lot more
 We have plenty,
 Plenty, plenty substance
 Plus
 They cannot stop us

I say!
 We women!
 We women of today.

2

Let us use Rosa Parks
 As a lesson for us
 She beg blacks not to ride
 In de back of de bus
 She convinced us all
 To take de front seat
 She agitated
 And whites
 Felt Rosa Parks' heat
 Strive for your right
 -ful place here in Antigua
 We must not only be seen
 As man's child bearer
 So let's lead from the front
 And make a better life
 Turn a deaf ear to those who brand you
 A commanding wife.

3

They will say a woman's
 Place is in the home
 That phrase is evidence
 Of the macho syndrome
 So many things in life
 Wouldn't constantly go wrong
 If we were in de front
 Because
 Women really strong
 At home we control de finance
 We control legally
 Cleaner and bottle washer
 Minister of all Utility
 P.M.,
 When you have problems you never
 encounter
 Forget those men, turn to us
 To get the real answer

VIOLENCE (1998)

1

You know how many women living a
lie?
How many women wit' cry water in dey
eye?
How many women have been misused?
How many of our young women have
been abused?
But to bring it to the fore
Women are afraid
Dey cover up with pink powder and dark
shade
But if a man raise a finger at me my
friend
I change him from a rooster into a hen.

Chorus

Come on woman
Don't bear your
Suffering in silence
Cry murder
Call for help
Dat's domestic violence
You promised to love til deat' do us part
Not with a battered face
And a swollen heart
Some say if you don't beat me
You don't love me
Nonsense
Dat is downright stupidity
Well I going public with your tail
And let de magistrate los'
Your backside in jail.

2

You know how many women in offices
Have to endure unwanted advances
How many bald head dey have to rub
In order for dem to hold a job
Every minute of de day how dey
fingering
Have you body as if dey kneading
dumpling
Get a lawyer and sue de bloody jerk
Is your brain
Not your body you come to work

Chorus

Come on woman
Don't bear your
Suffering in silence
Cry murder
Call for help
Dat's sexual harassment
Keep your hand in your pants pocket
Or you'll pay for your disrespect
You boss everything in your company
But you have no ranks on my body
Well I going public with your tail
And let de magistrate loss
Your backside in jail.

3

You know how many women get maim
for life
How many men end up killing dey wife?
How many get thrown from hotel roof
De white man in jail here is living proof
We know that in Point and down in
Grays Farm
Men cause women much bodily harm
But statistics from Crosbies and Hodges
Bay
Shows de bulk of the violence takes
place out dey.

Chorus

Come on woman
Don't bear your
Suffering in silence
Cry murder
Call for help
Dat's physical violence
You promise to love til deat' do us part
Wit' non-violence and a loving heart
So I call on every man in de country
To have full respect for femininity
Don't target me for abuse or battery
Or you'll be losing your whole
masculinity.

HYPOCRISY OF DEMOCRACY (2005)

1

Democracy,
Translated from de Greek
Means the rule of the people
Literally as we speak
But it's a grand illusion
An act, an empty role
To give one de impression
That de masses are in control
But if you're observant
In search of de truth
Most leaders are just tyrants
And their rule is absolute.

Chorus

That is the hypocrisy
Of democracy
The very few who rule
Like to use de people as tool
They tell you it's your choice
But once de last vote call
De people's voice
Eh have no say at all.

2

This democracy
Does leave me in shock
They condemn the bullet
And advance de ballot box
But when you check out history
Dem white folks have some nerve
Which natives they didn't bury
They put on Reserve
So this civilised system
Dat dey want we try
Began in blood and mayhem
And continues with lie.

Chorus

This is de hypocrisy
Of democracy
Those who freedom claim
In violence carved out their name
They say your destiny
Is always yours to choose

Cast your vote you see

While they grow fat you lose.

3

From Napoleon
Right down to Uncle Sam
Want to understand the system
Read animal farm
They will use de masses
While they talk about Freedom Road
As mules and jack assess
To carry all their load
When come to practice
Everything they preach
One by one their promise
Gets further out of reach.

Chorus

This is de hypocrisy
Of democracy
De very few who rule
Does take de people for fools
De things that they cried down
De very things they curse
As you turn around
De situation reverse.

4

Check America
De Vanguard of Liberty
Say they oppose terror
But exporting oversea
Will plot against Castro
Communism eh dey friend
While their trade embargo
Around Cuba extend
Against lil' Antigua
With our online casino
They flex their might and power
Thank god for the WTO

Chorus

This is de hypocrisy
Of democracy
Those who preach Free Trade
Themselves out to wield de blade
They tell you 'Slavery done'
But as Malcolm X explain

When you try to run

Everywhere is another chain.

RIGHTEOUS (2005)

1
 When something is wrong
 I does cry it down
 Can't stand no charade
 I does call a spade a spade
 Local politicians I hate to admit
 Some move like magicians
 Most is hypocrite
 When dey not in power
 Look dey laying blame
 Soon as dey take over
 Dey do much the same

Chorus
 Man in dis here scapegoat season
 Dey'll cut your t'roat for no reason
 Dey feel you is Opposition
 Dey sending you on vacation
 Dey now come in office
 Yet deir pockets fat
 But dem who claim dey righteous
 Ain' go sing bout dat
 ALP in power
 Dey had plenty chat
 But Robin Hood didn't retire
 Who go sing bout dat?
 Not she!
 She righteous she righteous
 She too righteous

2
 In de land of the blind, the one man eye
 is king
 All ah dem go find something else to
 sing
 You'll find corruption suddenly
 disappear
 Local politician now upright and fair
 Dem who wear their bias all below their
 sleeves
 Dey done see their Christmas
 Long before Christmas Eve

Chorus
 So in dis witch-hunting season

They'll target you for no reason
 If with dem your boat ain' rowing
 Brother man is home yuh going
 Yes this ruling party
 Playing for tit for tat
 But the righteous lady
 Ain' go sing bout that
 Vindictiveness they carry long like Lara
 bat
 Yet the righteous lady ain' go sing bout
 dat.
 Not she!
 She righteous she righteous
 She too righteous

3
 All the t'ing dey trying
 Dey average so far
 But I see dey buying plenty fancy car
 And every day in-fighting
 Dey ain' making sport
 Don't talk 'bout back biting
 Between Spencer and Cort
 And while all dis happening
 What about my land?
 Progress dey stagnating
 Nuttin' going on

Chorus
 Man in this here scapegoat season
 They'll cut your throat for no reason
 They feel you is Opposition
 They sending you on vacation
 They now come in office
 Yet their pockets fat
 And all who claim they righteous
 Ain' singing bout that
 When we were in power- they had plenty
 chat
 But Robin Hood didn't retire
 Who go sing 'bout that? Not she!
 She righteous she righteous
 She too righteous

4

De true opposition
 Is always calypso
 You want to know de position
 We go let you know
 Some of dem done raiding
 De local treasury
 But dey masquerading
 Behind honesty
 If de last party
 Did steal so much dough
 Where dey finding money
 To be spending so?

Chorus
 Boy, in dis witch-hunting season

SUN STROKE (2005)

1
 I went to the doctor
 I had to complain
 De sun shining, sun is shining
 Doc I getting nausea and endless
 migraine
 Sun is shining – de sun is shining
 Ah taking me tablets – but cyan get relief
 More dey drain me pocket –more I
 seeing grief
 What is this condition, doc can you
 explain?
 What did I do to deserve this pain?

Chorus
 He tell me this epidemic now out ah
 hand
 Cause people dey getting sicking all
 across the land
 And he bound to expose it – for he just
 diagnose it
 Antiguan today – Lord they getting too
 much sun
 Since UPP take over Labour spot
 People going under cause the sun too hot
 When I ask the doctor – he say is no joke
 Oh gosh – they have we suffering from
 sunstroke
 If on all this vomit- you feel you could
 choke

They might just charge you with treason
 If dey feel yuh not supporting
 To de boss some scrooge reporting
 You no longer needed
 They go tell you flat
 And dem who say de righteous
 Wouldn't sing bout that
 They put you on the pavement to pass
 yuh beggar hat
 Now they in government, who go sing
 bout dat?
 Not she!
 She righteous she righteous
 She too righteous.

Oh Lord they have we suffering from
 sunstroke.

2
 Ah check dey manifesto and read it again
 Sun is shining – de sun is shining
 Is promise for so – promises like rain
 Sun is shining – de sun is shining
 Like de dollar barrel
 So it came and went
 In trivial petty quarrel
 All their time is spent
 And from down in Ottos right down out
 Old Road
 Antiguan ticking waiting to explode.

Chorus
 You see why I does keep my
 expectations low?
 Because I don't like to get disappointed
 so
 All who did stain their finger
 Now putting their hand through the
 ringer
 Wondering how much lower those boys
 will go
 The same billionaire
 Who deyself condemn
 In less than one year
 He and dem is friend

If from some nightmare
 You feel you just awoke
 Oh Lord, dey have you suffering from
 sunstroke
 They use to criticize now they fraternise
 With the same bloke
 Oh lord, they have we suffering from
 sunstroke.

3

By all indicators – dey performing bad
 Sun is shining – de sun is shining
 According to dem doctors is the moon
 Dat does drive you mad
 Sun is shining – de sun is shining
 Dey criticise Labour – dey talk about
 craft
 Almost one year later – they perfect the
 craft
 New cricket stadium – like that project
 stall
 Ah hope dey eh blame de Chinese
 stadium.

Chorus

Yuh see why I don't get my expectations
 high?
 'Cause I could tell reality from lie
 Now folks who did support them – can't
 wait to abort them
 As they see dey taxes multiply
 They had a proverb that they would say
 in jest
 How hurry bird could build good nest
 They promise freedom – but still the
 people in a yoke (entrapped)
 Good God – they have we suffering from
 sunstroke.

In our diarrhoea – they make we belly
 soak
 Oh Lord they have we suffering from
 sunstroke.

4

You trusted in Spencer
 You end up with lie
 The sun is shining – de sun is shining
 You can't see the future
 The sun in your eye
 Sun is shining – de sun is shining
 Every day they flying
 On their foreign trips
 Treasury disappearing like solar eclipse
 Remember their budget
 Over half a billion strong
 They'll have to explain where de money
 gone.

Chorus

You see why I keep my expectations
 small
 Cause I have no faith in them at all
 While my country losing profit
 People, check out dey pockets
 They doing well while my country fall
 Now even their strong supporters must
 admit
 Since they come to power who benefit
 They fancy manifesto now reading like a
 joke
 Oh Lord – they have we suffering from
 sunstroke
 To support these fellows – you have to
 be high on coke
 Yes Lord – they have we suffering from
 sunstroke.

APPENDIX G

PAUL 'KING OBSTINATE' RICHARDS

COMING DOWN TO TALK TO YOU (1982)

1
 Quite in Washington, dey bringing me
 de news
 Mr. Bird, it got me so confuse
 Dey say of all your pickney
 You love Ivor de most
 Because the others just waiting to take
 your post
 Leh we talk before t'ings get worse.

Chorus
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 Backbiters in Washington
 Dey mout' sleep ah dew
 So ah coming down to talk to you.

2
 Down at English Harbour, I overheard
 Ganja coming in by the boatload
 Dey say VC nah do nothing for Rural
 West
 No jobs, more pigs, de whole place in a
 mess
 Leh we talk, Mr. Bird, I suggest.

Chorus
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 Because if you only know half de t'ings
 dat Lester does do
 Ah coming down to talk to you.

3
 Pardon Donald Halstead even though he
 is a money glut
 Because Point people can't stand Piggott
 Ah hear last election, the Rastas say you
 plan
 To gi' all ah dem land but instead dey
 get bang
 And police gi' dem brain concussion.

Chorus
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 VC!
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 If wah de girl tell me 'bout Ramsey is
 really true
 Ah coming down to talk to you.

4
 De last pickney you have resemble you
 from head to toe
 So de rumour I hear nутten tarl go so
 De security head at Deep Water Harbour
 Oh loss
 Does run his own business in the
 Volkswagen bus
 And Mr. Bird, ah Bill you does trus'.

Chorus
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 De rumours making me shame
 So leh we clear Antigua's good name
 Ah coming down to talk to you.

5
 Poor economic condition make Quinland
 tun in he hand
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 (repeat x3)
 Dey say Humphreys is on de run
 With all ah Diamond funds
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 (repeat x3)
 The bank money from Antigua
 Is spent in Canada
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 (repeat x3)
 Dem Koreans want Antigua
 So dey gi' we ten motorcar
 Ah coming down to talk to you.
 (repeat x3)

Dey say Independence is good
 But the people should plant more food
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 (repeat x3)
 The arch you build up East Street
 It's high time it complete
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 (repeat x3)
 That big gutter in Green Bay,
 The water nah go no wey.

Ah coming down to talk to you
 (repeat x3)
 A man say he take a peep and _____ is
 fast asleep
 Ah coming down to talk to you
 (repeat x3)
 De rumours making me shame
 So leh clear Antigua's good name
 Ah coming down to talk to you.

THE MESSAGE (1983)

1
 Great Britain, I respect your sovereignty
 But I have a score to settle with thee
 For the 400 years my rights you denied
 And turn a deaf ear when my people
 cried
 Great Britain, in disputes you spoke for
 me
 You controlled my thoughts and my
 destiny
 You made me work without pay
 In hot sun and rain
 While my battered body cried out in
 pain.

Chorus
 Now that liberty has blessed my land
 In friendship, I extend thee my hand
 Without malice and hate
 Love from King Obstinate
 But don't ever do them things again
 Because it's wrath and anger
 You will get from Antigua
 So don't ever do them things again.
 Great Britain.

2
 Uncle Sam, at one time you disowned
 me
 In your hate, you trampled my economy
 You prostitute my beautiful women folk
 And drove the young men to ganja and
 coke
 Then you forced me to use the goods you
 produced
 Our morals became corrupt and loose

Then to gain your dollar, dear Sam
 Many Antiguan was forced to abandon
 this native land.
 Like Me.

Chorus:
 Now that liberty has entered our doors
 We welcome you to Antigua shores
 Without malice and hate
 Love from King Obstinate
 But don't trample my people again
 Because Antigua will declare war
 If you come back like before
 So don't trample my people again.
 Uncle Sam.

3
 Europeans, you used us as your footstool
 Your lifestyle for years had my people
 fooled
 You made us believe it was only the
 whites
 Should enjoy fundamental human rights
 As tourists, you made my people become
 Common slaves to serve you in your
 kingdom
 Many a disease and vice, you spread like
 lice
 And turn Antiguan men into mice

Chorus:
 Now that we hear the bells of freedom
 ring
 Tidings of friendship to you I bring
 Without malice and hate

Love from King Obstinate
 But don't impose your values again
 Because Barbuda is prepared to fight
 To preserve their birthrights
 So don't impose them values again.
 Europeans.

4
 Investors and capitalists beware
 In Antigua's resources all must share
 There is no room in our land for
 exploitation
 No room in our land for discrimination
 In the past, you became rich off our
 sweat
 We got crumbs while the juicy steaks
 you ate.

THE TRUTH (1984)

1
 A lot of folks I know
 They don't like to hear de truth
 Dey would prefer if I don't sing
 And remain mute
 But whether you're communist
 Capitalist or a socialist
 You got to face facts, and to the world of
 critical attacks
 Whether you are Moslem or Christian
 You got to face facts as an Antiguan
 But dis year we join in celebration
 Freedom from bondage and oppression
 Ah hundred and fifty years of
 emancipation
 To celebrate is to be misled
 Because my people are still underfed
 Night soil men still carrying the filth
 instead
 And Antiguans still carting water on dey
 head.

Chorus
 Ah go sing de truth
 Ah go sing de truth
 I know a lotta men get shoot

You shipped away our money to oversea
 While we fought to overcome poverty.

Chorus:
 Now we control our assets and funds
 We forgive you the wrongs you have
 done
 Without malice and hate
 Love from King Obstinate
 But don't exploit my people again
 Because Antiguans will demand
 That you leave our land
 So don't exploit my people again.
 My friends.

Just because of de truth
 But ah go sing de truth
 Sing de truth
 Ah can't fool de youths
 Ah have to tell dem de truth.

2
 Ah hundred and fifty years since Britain
 say we free
 Yet so much English names still remain
 in my country
 And well ah tell me people so
 A lot of dem get vex you know
 And say that Swallow
 Who sang about space beat me calypso
 While both of us contribute
 He singing fiction I singing de truth
 Look the roads in such bad condition
 They start fixing dem for the election
 Now dat they win it look like they stop
 Road construction
 De government have no opposition
 So I taking up that position
 And now and then permit to ask a few
 question
 Like how much money we owe foreign
 institution

Chorus
 Tell de truth
 Tell de truth
 Don't substitute a lie for de gospel truth
 Tell de truth
 Tell de truth
 Is you who borrowed de loot
 So tell de people de truth.

3
 Is Valentino who say dat the calypsonian
 Has got to be a force and a true
 Opposition
 And dat is why I issue the call
 For them to fix up the hospital
 The hospital, lord forbid
 The building is too dilapidated
 The poor house does have me spellboun'
 To see old people lying on the groun'
 Ernest Williams, he serve our nation
 An outstanding parliamentarian
 Is time we honour him for his
 contribution
 Instead of praising de local man
 And give status to the Antiguan
 We giving top jobs to men from de US
 and Great Britain
 And ah white man is our ambassador in
 Iran.

Chorus
 That's de truth
 That's de truth
 Could this happen in Iraq or Beirut?
 That's de truth
 That's de truth

I'm not afraid of the *government boots*
 Is high time we face de truth.

4
 A lot of folks does say dat de truth does
 offend
 But de truth does not offend de truthful
 men
 It can't offend you to hear me say
 There's no housing project in Green Bay
 What a crime is public transport
 When dey go finish de road to de
 airport?
 And take Fibrey in de Harbour mouth
 It look like a city that is blown-out
 Dey used to breed slaves in Barbuda
 Today dey have a new oppressor
 Because people still walking barefoot
 Like dey ancestor
 In Barbuda, t'ings are terrible
 Public transport abominable
 The terminal building
 Tt look like a horse stable
 And the government selling de sand
 To white people.

Chorus
 Ah go sing de truth
 Ah go sing de truth
 Ah can't substitute a lie for de gospel
 truth
 Ah go sing de truth
 Ah go sing de truth
 Ah go rally round me roots and tell dem
 de gospel truth.

I ALREADY TALK TO YOU (1993)

1

In 1982, ah come down and talk to you
 Ah see what was going wrong
 But you wouldn't take me on
 Instead all you do, you tell them to
 Ban me song.

Chorus

Ah done see where Antigua was heading
 I already talk to you
 From de things your colleagues were
 doing
 I already talk to you
 But if you don't mind your house, you
 go lose it
 I already talk to you
 Look you see dem boys already divide it
 I already talk to you
 I tell you about Sarfati and Vere trips to
 Italy
 I already talk to you
 But you defend him because he is your
 son
 But you must admit de damage is done
 I already talk to you
 I done talk to you.

2

In 1984, ah come back, ah talk some
 more
 They geeing way all the land
 And 'craping up all Barbuda sand
 Ah lost me birthright
 Now eating out the white man hand.

Chorus

Ah tell you *proclaim* your own
 I already talk to you
 But my advice didn't quite reach home
 I already talk to you
 Ah see you name some de school and
 streets
 I already talk to you
 But de repairs are still incomplete
 Foreign investors you treat dem like
 King
 And Curtly Ambrose like nothing
 I already talk to you.

They hug and kiss Donald Trump at the
 gate
 And poop in de face of Obstinate
 I already talk to you.

3

This is 1992
 And I still want to talk to you
 This time about Rappaport
 He using Lester like a scapegoat
 Anytime he want he get
 Like he control cabinet.

Chorus

Now I hear he moving the oil refinery
 I already talk to you
 To build his own village in my country
 I already talk to you
 And moving all dem old rotten stuff
 I already talk to you
 To make a hazard of Curtain Bluff
 I already talk to you
 You were betrayed by your own son
 Yuh lucky is not de one with de gun
 I already talk to you
 Dey can't wait until you in your tomb
 Before dey move in your bedroom
 I already talk to you
 Too much unsolved murders in this
 country
 I already talk to you
 ---walking free in Germany
 I already talk to you
 De murder in Fibrey and de gyal
 Maynard
 I already talk to you
 How you didn't send for Scotland Yard?
 I already talk to you
 Poor Byers doing hang-man time
 Are you sure he commit the crime?
 I already talk to you
 The Indian doctor and Father Browne
 And me sissa head still can't be found
 I already talk to you
 And plenty ah dem bex wid you
 Because ah de TV interview
 I already talk to you.

APPENDIX H

KEITHROY 'KING DE BEAR' MORSON

FREEDOM FOR MANDELA AGAIN (2012)

(As transcribed from his 2012 Calypso Monarch Competition performance)

Aside: Zachari! You mean fu tell me so much tings ah happen inna Antigua
And you come here go talk 'bout 'freedom for Mandela'?
Antigua want freedom too! Mandela done free long time ago.
Ah wah yah tarl?

1

King Zachari, King Zachari!
Ah listen to you giving praise to
Mandela
King Zachari, King Zachari!
I am black conscious and I love Africa
But Mandela done get he freedom
So many years ago. Why you blowing
his trumpet
I really don't know
So much t'ings happening in Antigua
While you praising Mandela
Black Antiguan here ah suffer
You say you ah poor people's messenger
King Zachari, you don't love Antigua.

Unemployment so high in dis country
Some people can't feed their family
And you singing 'Freedom for
Mandela'!
I hear you singing 'Freedom for
Mandela'!
The way de gas price rising
Ah donkey cart we'll soon be driving
Freedom for Mandela!
And I hear you singing 'Freedom for
Mandela'
The education system has failed
Too much youngsters up dey in jail
Our young girls are being abused
Too much gunmen on the loose
All dem stagnant gutter water
You have done in Point and Villa
And you singing- 'Freedom for
Mandela'

I hear you singing- 'Freedom for
Mandela'
Oh Lord, Zachari, do Antigua ah big
favour
Ask Mandela to come help free Antigua.

Aside to crowd: Yes man! Wha yah tarl!
Tell aryuh me ah go fix he nuh, ah he
trouble me. Oh!

2

King Zachari, King Zachari!
How much longer will you turn a blind
eye?
King Zachari, King Zachari!
Stick bruk inna yuh ear, you cannot hear
poor people's cry
Look how much innocent people get gun
down
Not one word come from your tongue
You too busy telling Mandela- 'March
on'.
So much problem inna de police force
We have an incompetent boss
Police officers robbing people
The whole country going to rubble
While you marching Mandela into
heaven.

Chorus

Look the Port nuh have no money
Dey can't pay weekly salary
And you singing- 'Freedom for
Mandela'

I hear you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 While the local businesses are closing
 The Chinese are moving in
 And you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 I hear you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 Listen, de prison so overcrowded
 Over five man sleep in one bed
 You getting pay to represent them
 You go one time and never again
 But every month you get salary
 You don't give a damn about HMP!
 -'Freedom for Mandela'-
 But I hear you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 Oh God, Zachari, do Antigua a big favour
 Ask Mandela to come help your partner Spencer.

Aside to crowd while pointing to image of Mandela on prop: 'Ah wan free man dat'

3
 King Zachari, King Zachari!
 You blaring out like when goat ah heng
 Maaa! Maaaa!
 King Zachari, King Zachari!
 You have no love for the Antiguan and dem
 Look how much we pay for electricity
 ABST killing we
 And you telling us about Mandela history
 Our nurses and teachers are moving to greener pastures
 You pretending like you don't know
 With you outdated calypso
 Getting fooly, crying out like Cuban crappo!

Chorus
 Antiguan passport going on sale
 Child molesters getting bail
 And you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'

I hear you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 So much millions we give China for inferior generator
 And you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 I hear you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 Every year you go to Barbuda
 Look much dem people ah suffer
 Dem sell off Barbuda sand
 Can you tell us where de money gone?
 What about that fella Clarvis
 Who have APUA in a crisis?
 -'Freedom for Mandela'-
 I hear you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 Oh God, Zachari, do Antigua a big favour
 Ask Mandela to come help run Antigua
 Yes man!

Aside to image of Mandela while bowing: 'My respect to you sir'

4
 King Zachari, King Zachari!
 Me put down me pen
 You make me tek it up again
 King Zachari, King Zachari!
 Let me mek it clear
 Me and all politicians ah friend
 But it's my duty as a messenger
 To fight for the downtrodden
 And for that, I will never beg pardon
 I have nutten against Mandela
 I think he deserve all his flower
 But the state of affairs in this country
 should be given first priority
 King Zachari, it's not about you and me!

Chorus
 Our teens can buy and drink rum
 Youngsters walking around with gun
 And you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 I hear you singing- 'Freedom for Mandela'
 Government schools are no longer free
 Two hundred plus for registration fees

- 'Freedom for Mandela' -
 And I hear you singing- 'Freedom for
 Mandela'
 Our youths are running away
 People fighting here to be gay
 Destroyer fighting with Tian because he
 win two Monarch crown
 We get so much money from CDC
 While the judges pocket remain empty
 - 'Freedom for Mandela'
 But I hear you singing- 'Freedom for
 Mandela'
 Oh God, Zachari, do Antigua ah big
 favour.

Ask Mandela to come help run Antigua
 And den we could sing- 'Freedom for
 Antigua!'
 What we singing? 'Freedom for
 Antigua!'
 Freedom for Antigua (repeat *2)
 That's what we want!
 Freedom for Antigua.

APPENDIX I

VALERIE 'CALYPSO VAL' SMITHE LEE

OUR OWN DESTINY (2000)

1

America of thee I sing
 I see you've spread your eagle's wing
 And we who sit here in its shade
 Wonder if we'll fit in with the plans
 you've made
 We can't control our destiny
 While you wrecking our economy
 It seems to me that the eagle's spread
 Is just another chain that must be shed!

Chorus

They don't want us to grow no
 marijuana
 They don't want us to market our
 bananas
 They don't want us to have no off-shore
 banking
 Or they promise us a real top-ranking
 spanking
 But they are growing lots of marijuana
 In many states, to name one California
 They must know our bananas are much
 sweeter
 Than anything from Chiquita or Bonita
 Don't let me start to talk about the
 amounts
 Of money they have locked away in
 Swiss bank accounts
 It's time for the people of the Caribbean
 It's time for every man and every woman
 To cast away their fear and make a stand
 About what is happening here in these
 islands.

Yes its time for the people to see
 We've got to control our own destiny.

2

A fallacy we have been told
 Is the world's economy is based on gold
 But I will tell the truth neighbour
 World economy is built on cheap labour

We work below minimum wage
 At any legal 'alien' stage
 And finally we get our green card
 To work real hard to send the money a
 yard.

3

Maurice Bishop of Grenada
 Was killed for dealing with Cuba
 But he was the only man
 To ever lead a bloodless revolution
 After they killed Allende
 They put Pinochet to rule Chile
 And now they prosecute Pinochet
 While dealing with Castro is not okay.

4

There's nothing wrong with the free
 world sticking together
 Still we're not a bunch of cattle that must
 be tethered
 And if we ever expect to really be free
 We've got to have a self-sufficient
 economy
 America is all for democracy
 But only in the confines of its own
 country
 And if we're sitting around with our
 hand
 out
 They can democratically push us about.

5

They say how two ton elephant
 Can sit in any place he want
 But a little mouse with lots of spunk
 Can scare him by running up his trunk
 We cannot base our decisions
 On US presidential wins
 It's time to preserve the sovereignty
 Of every island in the Caribbean Sea.

APPENDIX J

RICHIE FRANCIS

(As transcribed from an MP3 of his 2012 Calypso Monarch Competition performance)

SACRED DUTY (2012)

1

They say it was born in the heart ah
slavery
Our freedom song on the plantation
And though it was banned
We persist with bravery
It was our tool against oppression
The black man didn't have no choice
It was our only voice
Our forefather's legacy
To ensure a democracy.

Chorus

So what does bring politicians to dey
knees?
(Calypso)
Expose all dey lies and hypocrisies?
(Calypso)
Show much Baldwin and Wilmoth does
fight
(Calypso)
Although the U in UPP, it stands for
Unite
(Calypso)
So with this art form, I do not joke
Ah punch me card, I report to work
To bring you de truth
I know is a must: it's a sacred duty- a
solemn trust
Is why I sing it, got to bring it
Put on the table items to discuss
It's a sacred duty, a solemn trust!

2

In the early days with rhetoric and wit
Skilful bards attack the higher class
With verbal missile, leaders were hit
Once you move in vain, you must get
harass
To no dictator, they bowed.
They couldn't be bought nor cowed

The sell-out were very few.
You couldn't tell who was red or blue.
Chorus:
But what was fearless in the days of old?
(Calypso)
What every politician wished to control
(Calypso)
We never need no license for we mout'
(Calypso)
Now, for thirty piece of silvers, they
selling out
(Calypso)
We know that the stakes are very high
But this art form, no, they just can't buy
To remain independent is a must
It's a sacred duty; a solemn trust
Though they ruin it
Is we have to save it
For all dem manipulative ignoramus
It's a sacred duty; a solemn trust.

3

I remember well Short Shirt's Ghetto
Vibes
'Nobody Go Run Me' - his plaintive cry
As he exposed their ways and petty
bribes
Richie vow to his dying day to defy
Well this is the warrior's will
We hope to show today until
All dem feisty dread baldhead
Crawl back in their cave and dead.

Chorus

What could make Lovell and the AG
hush?
Calypso.
What could make Jacqui Quinn-Leandro
blush?
Calypso.

What could make a lying Minister
 squirm
 Calypso.
 Reduce him to cockroach or just worm
 But to expose all their foolish game
 Even when they show no shame
 To bring de truth in the ----
 Is a sacred duty; a solemn trust
 Though they crave it
 Is we have to save it
 Though me brothers love de back ah de
 bus
 It's a sacred duty; a solemn trust.

4
 So with this public duty, I don't take
 light
 To let a little flattery go to me head
 For this freedom many ancestors fight
 For this freedom many were prepared to
 dead
 So I cannot go on stage

To wine away me heritage
 Is only four chorus and verse; four
 hundred years of tears to reverse.

Chorus
 So this opportunity ah cyah waste
 Calypso.
 To stay pounding people and just
 Calypso.
 But to help my country to get ahead
 Calypso.
 To see way beyond the blue and the red
 Calypso.
 God give us this little land
 To bring us close not to tear apart
 To help us ----
 Is our sacred duty and solemn trust.
 We must respect it. Have to protect it
 Though all around is a set of smiling
 Judas
 It's a sacred duty; a solemn trust.

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