

Studies since it complicates the connections between immigrant populations and their homelands, contextualizes Martí and his writing in the light of recent cultural theory and revisits the works of important writers and critics (DuBois, Whitman, Anzaldúa), offering an acute perspective of immigration that links the past and present of immigrant subjects in the Americas.

**Neil Lazarus. 2011. *The Postcolonial Unconscious*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 310 pp. ISBN-1107006562.**

*Ian Anthony Bethell Bennett*  
 School of English Studies  
 College of the Bahamas  
 bethellbennett@yahoo.co.uk

The postcolonial condition seems to be a tragedy in the wings of colonialism. The post-colonies are unravelling at a rapid pace as human rights abuses, gender-based discrimination and regressive development policies, undemocratic governments and tyrannical dictators continue to eclipse the promise of true independence and moving beyond colonialism. Haiti, the country that fought for independence from France and is now framed as the poorest country in the hemisphere, stars in Michel-Rolph Trouillot's *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (1995). What Trouillot offers is the way the French Revolution summarily silences the existence of the Haitian Revolution, a marker of true post-colonialism where the colonised has thrown off the coloniser's yoke. However, as the reality in Haiti today shows, as much of the developing or post-colonial world would attest, the post-colonies are in as precarious a situation, perhaps even worse than when they were under direct colonialism. Neil Lazarus masterfully takes this reality to another level with *The Postcolonial Unconscious*. The master of Post-colonial/Marxist criticism gives a sweeping sojourn through post-colonial thought and thinkers.

Lazarus brings out the heavy artillery in postcolonial studies to illustrate how much the area has gotten stuck in its own theorising strictures. Lazarus calls on the major theorists from the inception of the struggle to free colonial states to those who are writing now. Fanon and Said feature prominently in the texts as foundational political movers and shakers in resistance to colonialism and exploitation. He also brings Brennen and Parry into debate with his own ideas and concerns about the development

of the field of study. It is a fast-paced theory book that contextualises the arguments and theorists as well as the advocates and political dissidents who have worked and others who continue to work in the field. He seems to underscore the need to recreate the bridge between theory and praxis, as in not relying on the theory to liberate the colonised from their exploitative position, and shows how the post-colonial project has actually been abandoned or sent off course by early political leaders in the geopolitical south.

As much as the Caribbean and the former colonials worldwide have moved beyond colonialism's constricts, the reality of our subservience is sharp. Patricia Ginton-Miecholas argues that there is no vacancy in Paradise and we are allowed our bad hair days, despite all pressures and opinions to the contrary. We have been driven from plantation to resort, without ever having passed go or collecting two hundred monopoly dollars. Those, in fact, went to the politicians who go into golf-course meetings with foreign heads of agencies that control the purse strings of resort in efforts to woo them to consider their destination for their brand. The corruption and subjugation these cocktail and golf deals impose on the local populations is alarming. Lazarus, however, critiques the postcolonial condition very differently from that. He examines each heavy-hitting contributor to the postcolonial debate and their detractors. His analysis is hard-hitting and direct. He writes with scalpel-like precision as if to debunk without drawing a drop of blood, from the proverbial pound of flesh. Yet, his discussion and analysis are a blood bath of disappointment, disillusion and disenfranchisement.

Land deals seal the fate of the poor to walk through boutique cities before returning to their misery. Tourism and globalisation appear to be the new consolidation of the world's power in the hands of the few. As Lazarus quotes from *Postcolonial Studies and Beyond*, "The Shadow the 2003 US invasion of Iraq casts on the twenty-first century makes it more absurd than ever to speak of ours as a postcolonial world" (16). What, he argues, is urgent that postcolonial scholars do more than simply sit up and take note of the tragedy of the usurping of political sovereignty, "... is to take central cognisance of the unremitting actuality and indeed the intensification of imperialist social relations in the times and spaces of the postcolonial world" (17).

For me, Lazarus underscores the importance and the murderousness of the meeting over the golfing-handshake that seals the fate of 400,000 citizens to become serfs to colonialism's new disguise under gated communities and high-end all-inclusive resort properties. He talks about the fact that post colonialism has not challenged capitalism and its bedfellow, globalisation. Obviously then, post-colonialism needs an overhaul that would render it less controlled by the 'deadweight' of the past.

Lazarus demonstrates complete mastery of postcolonial studies and its importance to the current world system. He argues that in Bhabha's Foreword "there is not only a yawning chasm, but active opposition between the position staked out by Bhabha ... and that articulated by Fanon" (181). He goes on to underscore that Immanuel Wallerstein specifies three 'themes' in Fanon's work that continue to bear decisively on today's world: "the use of violence, the assertion of identity and the class struggle" ('Reading Fanon', p. 119). The salience and on-point nature of Lazarus's critique is almost painful as it uncovers the incredible problems and insurmountable inequalities that have increased since the call for a new world order.

Perhaps from these few sections we can see the extreme import and breadth the text delivers. It not only underscores the fact that violence remains a serious problem in the 'third world' but that it and extreme inequalities continue to dog the entire world. In fact, the same worsen. In a post racism America, Blacks are as poor as they were prior to the 1960s civil rights advances. They also feel equally disenfranchised, but they are in fact less able to point at it as racism no longer exists. Such is the tragedy of colonialism; it no longer exists in fact but it operates in de facto fashion with complete unchecked bigotry, (according to bell hooks). Women, and especially minority women, are more problematically limited by what Susan J. Douglas refers to as Enlightened Sexism than they were in the wake of the early feminist movement. That basically allows patriarchy, white supremacy and misogyny to flourish as women claim they are better off because they can dress sexily. Moreover, bell hooks refers to this in the African American, and we can extend that to be true for the Caribbean as well, imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, which has certainly not been undermined. While Lazarus would not sue such terms in tandem, he (re)avows these mechanisms and praxis of social exclusion, disenfranchisement, disempowerment and capitalist exploitation. When he discusses Said and his work he offers at the end about speaking truth to power as not being limited to speaking to the powerful, but, "on the contrary, 'speaking truth to power', as he understands it, presumably means speaking truth *in the face of power*—not quite regardless of, but despite the dangers involved in so doing" (202).

Lazarus provides a mapping of postcolonial studies as well as a description of what its role is and was. He also examines minutely the details and nuances of each aspect of the movement and where the pitfalls and misinterpretations, as he sees them, have led to absolute misunderstandings and sadly to dismissals of significant works. His focus on the Jameson and Ahmad dispute is enlightening:

In reviewing the debate between these two Marxist theorists, I demonstrate the untenability of Ahmad's reading, draw out the implications of this for subsequent treatments of Jameson by postcolonial critics, and show that it is quite possible to defend Jameson from the charge of 'Third-Worldism', at least as Ahmad lays that charge. (20)

Lazarus shows the intersections between poverty and geopolitics, between the failure of the postcolonial state, the continued timeliness of Said and Fanon, though in markedly distinct ways, but in work that leads to a similar end, the debunking of the old world order, that they had thought they had managed to destabilise and dismantle. Conversely, perhaps it is the postmodernity, the lack of fixity of the so-called dominant West, except as Lazarus underscores eloquently in the introduction when we examine what has occurred in Afghanistan and Iraq, for example. The power structure inherent in the old world and supposedly deconstructed by the insurgences and resistance movements in the postcolonial, independence struggle of the 1930-1960s remains un-toppled "all the millennial post-cold war talk of a 'new world order', was premature" (181). As Immanuel Wallerstein puts it, "We find ourselves, as Fanon expected, in the long transition from our existing capitalist world-system to something else." He underlines that "It is a struggle whose outcome is totally uncertain" (181). In many ways, as large swaths of public land are removed from the commons by zealous politicians who talk the talk of liberation but then offer the country to FDI on a self-aggrandising silver platter once they have their pound of flesh, notwithstanding what blood spills, the post-colony is as precarious or even more so now that it was in the early days of the struggle. The increasing regional economic instability and heightened violence are only two indicators that something has gone amiss in the fight and the new world order has not been delivered after the struggle. This is an excellent though turgid text. It is deeply nuanced, and extremely wide in its understanding of and grappling with the post-colonial unconscious.

### References

- Achebe, Chinua. 1958. *Things Fall Apart*. London: Penguin.
- Armah, Ayi Kwei. 1968. *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born*. London: Heinemann.
- Fanon, Frantz. 1967. *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Press.
- Glinton-Meicholas, Patricia. 2001. *No Vacancy in Paradise and Other Poems*. Nassau: Guanima.
- Hooks, Bell. 2012. *Writing Beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Manoo-Rahming, Lelawattee. 2011. *Immortelle and Bhandaaraa Poems*. Hong

Kong: Proverse.

Said, Edward. 2004. *Humanism and Democratic Criticism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Truillot, Michel-Rolph. 1995. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. New York: Beacon.

**V. Eudine Barriteau, ed. 2012. *Love and Power: Caribbean Discourses on Gender*. Barbados: The University of West Indies Press. 516 pp. ISBN: 978-976-640-265-5.**

*Margarita Mergal*

Escuela de Comunicación Pública  
Universidad de Puerto Rico  
Recinto de Río Piedras  
mmergal@prw.net

La escritora feminista V. Eudine Barriteau, del recinto de la *West Indies University* en Barbados, ha editado una colección de 18 ensayos de análisis feminista de la situación social de las mujeres y los hombres del Caribe oficialmente anglohablante con atención especial a las mujeres negras y la relación entre género, raza y colonización. Los ensayos examinan una multiplicidad de objetos de estudio: epistemologías, el poder de lo erótico en matrimonios heterosexuales, la homosexualidad, la seguridad, el intercambio y los mercados internacionales, el empresariado, la maternidad, la masculinidad. Como es de esperarse en un texto de tema tan amplio, surgen muchas interrogantes, dudas e interesantes puntos para la discusión. El primer ensayo, de Barriteau, titulado *Disruptions and Dangers: Destabilizing Caribbean Discourses on Gender, Love and Power*, sirve también a modo de prefacio y lo inicia con un epígrafe de Kiran Desai, de su novela *The Inheritance of Loss* sobre la historia, el juego entre pasado y presente y cómo nuestras posturas y conocimiento en el presente pueden cambiar nuestra perspectiva del pasado. Tema crucial para los estudios del género.

El título de la obra resulta interesante pues vincula dos vocablos, amor y poder, que nuestras tradicionales conceptualizaciones suponen muy desvinculados. Hasta que Michel Foucault historió la sexualidad y ofreció sus posturas sobre el poder y muchos teóricos posestructuralistas y posmodernos indagaron en el tema de la construcción del sujeto suponíamos comúnmente que el amor siempre era una ofrenda que se