Jonathan Curry-Machado. 2011. *Cuban Sugar Industry. Transnational Networks and Engineering in Mid-Nineteenth Century Cuba*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 264 pp. ISBN: 978-0-230-11139-4.

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La caña de azúcar, junto al banano y algún otro cultivo, constituyen excepciones en la conocida tesis de Sir Arthur Lewis acerca de la superioridad de la agricultura de zona templada sobre la de clima tropical. El alto rendimiento potencial de la caña en materia sacarosa, unido a su rápida caducidad, han hecho de la producción azucarera un capítulo peculiar en la historia de la tecnología. Como el azúcar poseía un alto valor comercial pero su materia prima no puede exportarse, los recursos técnicos para la elaboración del dulce comenzaron a transferirse muy pronto hacia las regiones donde se cultivaba la caña. Muchos de esos medios tenían su origen en otras ramas de la economía —el molino en la manufactura harinera, la centrífuga en la industria textil, p.e.—, pero al aplicarse a la fabricación del azúcar experimentaron un proceso de ajuste y adaptación *in situ*, en los ingenios azucareros de los trópicos, que de tal suerte no fueron simples receptores pasivos de la tecnología transferida sino focos de relativa creatividad, escenario de significativas innovaciones. Fue así que desde épocas tempranas se propicia lo que en nuestro lenguaje actual calificaríamos como un diálogo tecnológico norte/sur —y también sur/sur—, pues información y descubrimientos, tanto en la industria como en la agricultura, han circulado en distintas direcciones.

La difusión de variedades cañeras, la invención e introducción de maquinaria, el perfeccionamiento de los procesos químicos, ocupan un lugar de tanta importancia en la historia azucarera que difícilmente un estudio dedicado a esa materia —incluso aquéllos centrados en aspectos comerciales o sociales— puede prescindir enteramente de referencias a detalles técnicos. En la historiografía cubana los asuntos de la tecnología azucarera han ocupado por lo regular un lugar prominente —ejemplo clásico *El ingenio*, de Manuel Moreno Fraginals—, pero los estudios dedicados específicamente a ese tema son raros y por lo general se deben al aporte de ingenieros o químicos más que de historiadores. Si la literatura sobre la historia de la tecnología azucarera en Cuba resulta escasa, la de sus agentes, los protagonistas del progreso tecnológico, es casi inexistente. Los técnicos, claro está, tampoco figuran entre la "gente sin historia", aunque su presencia ha sido más bien episódica, casuística, considerados en el marco de indagaciones de un carácter más general

o traídos a colación por algún acontecimiento sobresaliente. En las páginas de los libros aparecen casi siempre a título individual, aludidos con una referencia pasajera o cuando más, si se trata de personalidades relevantes —como Alfred Cruger, el ingeniero constructor del primer ferrocarril—, acompañados con una breve presentación de indispensables datos biográficos, usualmente colocados en nota al pie.

Cuban Sugar Industry constituye una significativa contribución a solventar esa ausencia. Resultado de la enjundiosa investigación que diera fundamento a una tesis doctoral, para la cual se consultaron —además de una extensa bibliografía— numerosas fuentes documentales en archivos cubanos, británicos y españoles, el libro de Jonathan Curry-Machado hace objeto de estudio como grupo profesional y social, por primera vez en el caso cubano, a los técnicos azucareros, ferroviarios y hasta mineros que trabajaron en la isla. Enmarcado principalmente en el segundo tercio del XIX, este trabajo se corresponde con los años de la aplicación de la máquina de vapor a la producción del dulce, proceso que se había iniciado en Cuba a finales del siglo anterior, pero que en esas décadas intermedias alcanza verdadera difusión, tanto por su empleo en la manufactura como en distintos medios de transporte. Los técnicos de aquella época eran, ante todo, "hombres del vapor", maquinistas, mecánicos y, en muy contados casos, alguien que por sus mayores conocimientos y un más extenso ámbito de actividad era calificado como ingeniero. Estudiados en esta obra bajo la denominación genérica de "maquinistas" —la usual en las fuentes de la época—, esos técnicos, como cabría esperar, eran en su inmensa mayoría extranjeros, particularmente británicos y norteamericanos.

La presencia y actividad de los "maquinistas" en Cuba no puede comprenderse al margen del azúcar; de ahí que acertadamente el autor comience por explicar la importancia de su producción en la isla, así como el peso alcanzado por ésta —y por su comercio— en la economía mundial. Con igual esmero examina la envergadura del negocio azucarero, las ganancias que este reportaba, las redes comerciales y de comunicación que se anudaron en su entorno, las peculiares condiciones que suponía la esclavitud como régimen laboral, los albures de la competencia, componentes todos de la compleja realidad de la plantación cubana, que son premisa indispensable para comprender los factores que determinaron la temprana entrada de la moderna maquinaria en la mayor de las Antillas y de los hombres encargados de instalarla y operarla.

A las condiciones de introducción y difusión de la tecnología del vapor se dedica precisamente el capítulo inicial de *Cuban Sugar Industry*. Con respecto a lo primero cabe destacar la perspicaz observación de que la escasez de fuentes alternativas de energía —hidráulica y

eólica— y ciertas condiciones naturales de Cuba, favorecieron que la isla se adelantase en la asimilación del vapor, cuya difusión, por otra parte, Curry examina tanto en el plano geográfico como en el propio ciclo de elaboración del azúcar; desde la inicial aplicación al molino, hasta sus posteriores empleos en la cocción —evaporadores y tachos al vacío—, así como para la purga de las mieles mediante el centrifugado; sin perder de vista el importante complemento que representó el ferrocarril. Las fuentes de esa tecnología —básicamente Gran Bretaña, Estados Unidos y Francia— son consideradas en sus particularidades con apropiada perspectiva comparativa, pero lo fundamental en este capítulo es el análisis del proceso de adquisición y asimilación de las tecnologías. El autor destaca la receptividad de la élite criolla hacia las innovaciones, así como el rol decisivo de su iniciativa para la creación de las redes de transferencia tecnológica y la posterior adaptación de las máquinas a las exigencias locales. En esas redes se precisa, desde luego, el papel desempeñado por las firmas comerciales para la adquisición de la maquinaria y el posterior suministro de partes y piezas destinadas a su mantenimiento y reposición. La articulación de dichas relaciones fue de crucial importancia, pues gracias a ellas se establecerían simultáneamente los canales para la contratación de los maquinistas. Al tratarse este asunto, sin embargo, se echa de menos un análisis particular del papel de la banca, institución cuya importancia se reconoce más adelante —capítulo 6— como factor de dependencia. Es cierto que en la época estudiada las funciones de banqueros y comerciantes no estaban claramente diferenciadas, pero ya en esos años había figuras de la banca con un rol específico en el suministro de técnica y técnicos. Este comentarista, que investigó hace tiempo la historia del ferrocarril en Cuba a partir de fuentes locales, debe confesar su desilusión por encontrar apenas un par de menciones a Alexander Robertson, el banquero británico que actuó como agente financiero del primer ferrocarril cubano, para el cual contrató también el equipamiento y los "maquinistas", una función que él mismo desempeñó en proyectos posteriores y fue cumplida también por otras casas bancarias como las de Moses Taylor o Schröder.

Siguiendo la secuencia lógica del proceso, Curry examina primero —capítulo 2— a los maquinistas como un singular grupo de inmigrantes, para lo cual tiene en cuenta tanto los factores que los impulsaron hacia Cuba, como su viaje y lugares de destino, sin pasar por alto los problemas de la "aclimatación" —higiene, enfermedades, etc.—, tan importantes entonces para el asentamiento de los europeos en zonas tropicales. Tanto la frecuencia temporal de este flujo migratorio, como sus zonas de ubicación, así como el carácter de la migración misma —con un importante componente estacional—, se establecen de manera apropiada a partir de la consideración de un buen número de casos. El capítulo 3, dedicado

al trabajo y las condiciones de vida de los maquinistas en la isla, estudia sus condiciones de empleo en el ingenio, sus actividades a lo largo del ciclo productivo azucarero, los salarios, la movilidad laboral, las posibilidades de promoción a posiciones de mayor jerarquía —profesional o administrativa—, así como la naturaleza creativa de su quehacer, que podía conducirles a la realización de innovaciones o hasta patentar nuevos aparatos, aunque paradójicamente la relación entre el maquinista y su máquina, lo que constituiría su experiencia profesional inmediata, aparezca menos trabajada. En este contexto el autor adelanta ciertos aspectos de las relaciones sociales del maquinista, incluyendo la constitución de familias, algo que parece haber sido más bien excepcional dado la condición esencialmente trashumante de este tipo de trabajador.

La inserción del maquinista en la sociedad cubana es objeto de un examen más amplio y completo en el siguiente capítulo. Para que el asunto pueda comprenderse a cabalidad, se comienza por explicar la especial complejidad de una sociedad sustentada en la esclavitud, situación que en Cuba se complicaba además por la diversidad de origen, culturas y religiones de sus habitantes. El maquinista se inserta en esa realidad con ventaja, es libre y blanco, lo cual, sin embargo, no lo eximía por entero de tratos discriminatorios en su condición de extranjero; sobre todo si —como sucedía en muchos casos— practicaba alguno de los ritos protestantes. Además, aunque técnico, se trataba de un trabajador manual en un contexto social en el cual la esclavitud había degradado el trabajo físico. La relación directa del maquinista con los esclavos en el ámbito de la plantación reviste un particular interés, más que todo por las evidencias del adiestramiento de esclavos como ayudantes —y hasta suplentes— en el trabajo con la maquinaria, las cuales contribuyen a deshacer el mito de la incapacidad del esclavo para los empleos calificados. Este capítulo 4 explora también otras relaciones: las del maquinista con el hacendado —propietario de la plantación—, así como con administradores, mayorales y otro personal libre y, por supuesto, las relaciones intersexuales, ya fuese en concubinato o con la —menos frecuente— constitución formal de familias, conformando así un rico panorama del cual puede concluirse que la integración del maquinista a aquella sociedad pocas veces resultó del todo exitosa.

Esa condición de extraño de la cual la mayoría de los maquinistas no pudo despojarse, constituye el interés principal del capítulo 5, en el cual se la explora desde distintas perspectivas. Primeramente se examinan las circunstancias de "recepción", las actitudes prevalecientes en Cuba respecto a los extranjeros, en las cuales Curry percibe ciertas expresiones de xenofobia que a su juicio propiciaron la alienación social del maquinista y también su relativa vulnerabilidad. En la complicada situación política de la colonia, el maquinista era frecuentemente objeto

de sospecha, fuese por supuestas inclinaciones abolicionistas o por considerársele posible agente del anexionismo. Las consecuencias de ello son oportunamente examinadas en el caso de la llamada conspiración de la Escalera —en la cual varios maquinistas se vieron involucrados y apresados—, así como en las intentonas anexionistas de Narciso López. Ante tales acontecimientos se revisa la efectividad de la protección consular a los extranjeros, así como las reacciones de estos —alcoholismo, deserciones y suicidios— ante el extrañamiento y la adversidad, por más que en algunos maquinistas pudiera advertirse también la asimilación de ciertas conductas típicas del momento, como la discriminación racial.

El capítulo 6 está dedicado al análisis de los efectos estructurales que tuvo para Cuba el sistema de relaciones económicas del cual formaban parte los maquinistas. Se trata, sobre todo, de las vías mediante las cuales la isla se vio reducida a una situación de creciente dependencia, un fenómeno que tiene sus dimensiones comerciales, financieras y también tecnológicas. En este último aspecto los maquinistas desempeñaron un rol ambiguo, que los hizo a la vez agentes del progreso y de la dependencia. Curry presta especial atención al destino de las iniciativas criollas por dotar a la isla de su propio cuerpo técnico, tanto con el envío de jóvenes a adiestrarse en el extranjero —principalmente a EE. UU.—, como mediante la creación de una escuela de maquinistas en la isla, iniciativa de la Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País que enfrentó un virtual boicot por parte de los técnicos extranjeros. Los esfuerzos aún más ambiciosos para desarrollar una industria mecánica concluyeron igualmente en el fracaso —salvo la creación de pequeños talleres y fundiciones para la fabricación de piezas—, condenando al país a una posición receptiva en el plano tecnológico. Sin duda es esa una conclusión válida, pero como el propio autor apunta más adelante, que al terminar el siglo XIX la gran mayoría de los individuos vinculados a ocupaciones técnicas o mecánicas eran cubanos, resulta inexplicable que en esta cuestión —así como en otras ya tratadas— *Cuban Sugar Industry* tienda a pasar por alto la actividad de los técnicos locales, excepcional si se quiere en estos años, pero sin duda relevante, pues varios de los ferrocarriles de entonces fueron construidos bajo la dirección de ingenieros de la isla, entre ellos el de Santiago de Cuba —la más compleja obra vial de aquella época—, resultado de la pericia constructiva de Rafael de Carrera.

Por último, el capítulo titulado *Catalyst and Scapegoats* —"Catalizadores y chivos expiatorios"— retorna al tema de la actuación de los maquinistas en la sociedad cubana, examinando con mayor detalle el trato del que algunos de éstos fueron objeto durante la conspiración de la Escalera. Dicho asunto se retoma casi como un pretexto para dar pie a una reflexión más profunda sobre la relación entre aquellos técnicos y la esclavitud, en la cual el autor argumenta con fuerza contra la tesis de

un límite tecnológico al trabajo esclavo. La inserción de la tecnología mecanizada y de los mecánicos en la plantación fue un proceso complejo, que tuvo consecuencias diversas y hasta contrapuestas, pues si bien intensificó la explotación de la mano de obra servil, también alentó las expectativas de libertad entre los esclavos al ponerlos a laborar junto a trabajadores libres, factores éstos cuya interacción contribuyó sin dudas a crear el clima en que ocurrieron los sucesos de La Escalera.

Para poder trazar tan ilustrativo cuadro de la presencia y significación histórica de aquellos primeros "maquinistas" en Cuba, Curry-Machado ha tenido que hurgar en fuentes tan numerosas como disímiles y, sobre todo, construir sus imágenes a partir de la consideración individual de una pluralidad de casos. Este método, sin duda el único posible dada la naturaleza de las fuentes, imprime al texto la peculiar vivacidad del testimonio pero presenta sus dificultades a la hora de caracterizar o generalizar. Como las evidencias en ocasiones apuntan en sentidos divergentes, en algunos momentos se presentan situaciones contradictorias, unas veces más bien aparentes, como ocurre con la disposición de los maquinistas a adiestrar esclavos y su negativa a formar técnicos criollos —pues no es lo mismo preparar ayudantes que sustitutos—, pero en otras resultan más difíciles de conciliar, cual ocurre con las apreciaciones sobre las actitudes xenofóbicas que dificultaban la integración social del maquinista, situación que contrasta con la exitosa asimilación de comerciantes, plantadores, artistas y otros profesionales extranjeros en la sociedad cubana de aquella época. El autor, sin embargo, sortea con habilidad estos escollos, cuidándose de las afirmaciones categóricas y colocando el énfasis más en los tintes que en el dibujo, lo cual da a ciertos pasajes de su obra un atractivo trazado impresionista.

Curry-Machado ha conseguido con todo éxito recuperar para la historia a un grupo de trabajadores inmigrantes que realizó un decisivo aporte al progreso de Cuba en el siglo XIX. Tan destacada contribución historiográfica ha quedado plasmada además en un texto ameno, de prosa elegante, cuya lectura se facilita dado el apropiado formato de un libro enriquecido por añadidura con muy bien escogidas ilustraciones.

Frank Andre Guridy. 2010. *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 270 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8078-7103-4

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In *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow*, Frank Andre Guridy looks at the complexities of the relationships between Afro-Cuban organizations and their counterparts in the United States in the period from the Spanish-Cuban-American War in 1898 through the first half of the twentieth century, just before the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. Central to those relationships were the imperial project developed by the United States throughout the Caribbean, and the racial constructions in what the author calls the "U.S.-Caribbean world." Guridy conceives this space, encompassing the U.S., the Caribbean and Central America, as the product of not only centuries of commercial trade and imperialism, but also of what he calls an "African diaspora." The connections and contacts inside this region became much more intense and integrated during the first half of the twentieth century, not only as a result of the U.S. imperial project and both world wars, but also by the actions of the African diaspora.

The conceptualization of this African diaspora is perhaps one of the most important contributions that the author makes throughout the book. Guridy moves away from traditional understandings of the relationships between different black communities in the Americas as based on racial solidarity or black internationalism, which the author claims essentialized the concept of race among Afro-descendants. The concept of diaspora becomes most useful to understand how cross and transnational relationships among Afro-descendants developed a few decades after the end of slavery. Although projects such as Garveyism were important in the construction of the notion of African diaspora, the conceptualizations that the book aims to construct fall outside of the idea of reconstructing or reconnecting with a mythical homeland in the African continent.

The notion of diaspora appears here as a series of connections and linkages that Afro-descendant communities created to navigate both national and international situations that affected them politically, economically and culturally. One important factor is that although the

connections were many times international, the processes studied in the book were also part of notions of national integration and affirmation developed by both African Americans and Afro-Cubans. That is important because across the book we can see how Afro-Cubans and African Americans many times had confronting ideas about shared political and cultural projects, and even categories such as race, gender and nation. Many of those disconnections were based on how Afro-Cubans and African Americans were not only looking to create community among Afro-descendants in the Americas, but also fighting to integrate themselves as citizens of their respective nations.

In the first chapter, Guridy studies the impact of Booker T. Washington's Tuskegee Institute in the development of an Afro-Cuban elite at the beginning of the twentieth century. During that time, the construction of the U.S. empire helped people such as Washington, who was able to make stronger and more direct connections with other peoples of African descent in places such as Cuba and Puerto Rico, now much more integrated to American political, economic and cultural circuits. Booker T. Washington wanted to seamlessly integrate Afro-Cubans to his educational project, which sought to not only educate people of African descent in vocational and agricultural trades, but also was criticized for agreeing to conform to Jim Crow Laws in the South.

Many Afro-Cubans had very different ideas about how to integrate themselves to the Tuskegee Institute's educational project. It is interesting that Cuban students at Tuskegee many times created stronger connections with other students from outside the United States, especially with Puerto Rican students. This is relevant because as the author explains, we can see Afro-descendants connected to the new American empire utilizing new opportunities that were part of the experience of imperialism.

Here Guridy makes an important contribution, by looking at how Afro-Cubans, and even Afro-Puerto Ricans, traversed and appropriated their own agency inside the U.S. imperial/colonial institutions. Many of the cases studied throughout the book, including the entrance of Afro-Cubans to the Tuskegee Institute, and as shown in the second chapter their participation in Marcus Garvey's movement, have been understood previously as the coaptation of Afro-Cubans efforts in the development of ideals created in and by the metropolis solely. Throughout the book, the author moves from imperial conceptions of these processes only imposed on Afro-Cubans, and shows how they actually became agents of change. In both Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey's projects, Afro-Cubans became protagonists in reshaping and rethinking the linkages with Afro-descendant communities through the hemisphere.

One important concept throughout the book is how race and that

African diaspora were performed, both in Cuba and the United States. Garveyism, according to the author, gained track in Cuba in large part as a result of how UNIA performed and embodied an African diaspora in their public activities. But perhaps the best example of the performance of that African diaspora is found in the third chapter, through the relationship between Langston Hughes and Nicolás Guillén. The relationship between both writers symbolized the larger cultural and intellectual relation between the Harlem Renaissance and *Afrocubanismo*. African American artists and intellectuals, such as Hughes, were very influential amongst their Cuban counterparts. But, on the other hand, Cubans were integral to the development of the Harlem Renaissance into a larger Afro-diasporic movement.

Afro-Cuban writers, artists and musicians presented their works through Harlem at places such as the 135th Street Library, the Apollo Theater and the Savoy Ballroom. Here, Guridy analyses how gender, sexuality and fetishization were central to constructing that pan-Afro culture between *Afrocubanismo* and the Harlem Renaissance. Gender is an interesting category in the book, as the author shows how competing notions of gender many times became contradictory between Afro-Cubans and African Americans' cultural and political projects. Different notions of gender affected the different modes women were included in the development of the African diaspora.

Historians have studied the influence of Harlem in Havana: here we see more than influence, a continuous conversation between Havana and Harlem. Historians have also understood for decades the Caribbean as historically constituted by the constant movement of peoples and cultures since the start of European colonization. In Guridy's notion of an "U.S.-Caribbean world" we can see the same idea about constant movement between peoples and cultures of the African diaspora. One of the more clever ideas presented in the book is the notion that African diaspora was made by "routes", not by "roots" that connected different Afro-descendant communities in the Americas. Those "routes" were what actually made possible the creation of a shared black cultural aesthetic, regardless of artistic and historical differences.

In the fourth chapter we see the development of an entire network of tourism among peoples and spaces of the African diaspora, especially within the United States and Cuba. During the 1930s and onward, tourism became less exclusive for Afro-Cubans and African Americans, who sought to experience other Afro cultures. Although many were interested in encountering more opened societies, African American tourists confronted Cuban racial discrimination, and Afro-Cubans had to deal with Jim Crow Laws. In Cuba, the new tourism sector was largely controlled by American owners, who many times practice the same forms

of racial discrimination they knew in the United States. The experiences of discrimination suffered in Cuba by such people as African American congressman Arthur Mitchell became important not only to American tourists, but also to Afro-Cubans fighting against authoritarism and racial discrimination in the island.

Forging Diaspora shows how intimate those linkages between Afro-Cubans and African Americans became during the first half of the twentieth century. It also shows the initiatives and mobility of Afro-Cubans elites and African Americans elites as they sought to navigate not only racial politics and discrimination, but also their place inside the developing American empire. Through the concept of diaspora developed in the book, we can understand how Afro-descendants created an identity that both inserted them into larger cultural and political networks, and at the same time helped them in their fights for national political rights.

Samuel Silva Gotay. 2012. *Soldado católico en guerra de religión: Religión y política en España y Puerto Rico durante el siglo XIX*. San Juan, Puerto Rico: Publicaciones Gaviota. 195 pp. ISBN: 9781615050895.

Samuel Silva Gotay. 2012. *La Iglesia Católica de Puerto Rico en el proceso político de americanización, 1898-1930*. San Juan, Puerto Rico: Publicaciones Gaviota. 195 pp. ISBN: 9781615050888.

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Estos dos nuevos libros de Samuel Silva Gotay provienen de los afanes de un académico que desde hace años ocupa un lugar de honor en los estudios latinoamericanos sobre religión y sociedad. En 1981 Silva Gotay publicó *El pensamiento cristiano revolucionario en América Latina y el Caribe: Implicaciones de la teología de la liberación para la sociología de la religión*, que tiene la distinción de haberse traducido al portugués y al alemán, y que muchos consideran el estudio matriz de los orígenes de la teología latinoamericana de liberación. En 1997 publicó *Protestantismo y política en Puerto Rico, 1898-1930: Hacia una historia del protestantismo evangélico en Puerto Rico*, texto clave para el

análisis de los complejos enlaces entre la política diseñada en Washington de americanizar a los puertorriqueños y el avance de las misiones protestantes en la isla. Y en 2005 nos brindó *Catolicismo y política en Puerto Rico bajo España y Estados Unidos, siglos XIX y XX*. Esta trilogía literaria es lectura fundamental para la conversación académica sobre las complejas relaciones laberínticas entre política y religión en América Latina, el Caribe y Puerto Rico.

Debo indicar, de inicio, que estos dos libros son, en realidad, una nueva edición de *Catolicismo y política en Puerto Rico bajo España y Estados Unidos*, revisada y dividida en dos volúmenes. El primero analiza las relaciones entre la Iglesia Católica y el turbulento siglo diecinueve con sus reclamos, heredados de la Ilustración, de modernidad, liberalismo y secularización, tanto en España como en Puerto Rico; el segundo estudia la espinosa relación entre el catolicismo y las políticas imperiales estadounidenses de americanizar a la isla, cedida como botín de guerra territorial a los Estados Unidos en el Tratado de París de diciembre de 1898.

Silva Gotay asume en sus libros un riesgo considerable. Pocos escritores tienen la audacia de intervenir en un tema tan complejo y delicado como el de la religión y la política, asunto en el que las pasiones eclipsan con excesiva frecuencia la serenidad del pensamiento, especialmente en tiempos donde los fundamentalismos e integrismos confligen con intenso vigor. El riesgo es mayor en el caso de los textos que me atañe reseñar, ya que el autor en cuestión es de linaje protestante, de subjetividad religiosa cultivada en un ambiente anabautista que se ha caracterizado históricamente por sus escasas simpatías hacia Roma, lo que por lo visto no le impide adentrarse en corral ajeno para husmear tendencias, complicidades y aspiraciones.

Estos libros se ubican en el contexto más amplio de los esfuerzos de Silva Gotay de promover investigaciones sobre religiosidad y sociedad en América Latina, el Caribe y Puerto Rico. Fue miembro destacado del grupo directivo de la Comisión de Estudios de Historia de la Iglesia en América Latina (CEHILA), con la cual colaboró en proyectos relativos al protestantismo y al Caribe. En tales funciones organizó un número considerable de simposios sobre la religiosidad en Puerto Rico. Recuerdo, por ejemplo, que Fernando Picó y este servidor compartimos un panel en el "Segundo Encuentro sobre Historia y Sociología de la Religión en Puerto Rico", el 11 de marzo de 1988, en el Recinto de Río Piedras de la Universidad de Puerto Rico.

Promovió, además, Silva Gotay la organización del Equipo de Historia y Sociología de la Religión en Puerto Rico, el cual auspició el "Encuentro Nacional de Historia y Sociología del Protestantismo en Puerto Rico", en abril de 1995, también en el Recinto de Río Piedras

de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. La reacción a la convocatoria del Encuentro demostró la existencia de una cantidad considerable de investigaciones en proceso. Se registraron ponencias sobre asuntos claves, las cuales se ligaron en cinco ejes temáticos: (1) un coloquio inicial sobre pistas y sugerencias en el estudio de los protestantismos boricuas, (2) ideologías y teologías protestantes, (3) archivos para la investigación histórica del protestantismo en Puerto Rico, (4) protestantismo y política y (5) la amplia diversidad de los protestantismos puertorriqueños.

Silva Gotay enfrenta, en estos dos nuevos libros, una tarea muy delicada y compleja. Se trata de analizar con seriedad académica los siguientes temas:

1) Las tensiones internas al catolicismo español en el siglo diecinueve y sus repercusiones en la política colonial ibérica. La iglesia católica española se vio inmersa en los conflictos que provenían de una Ilustración europea vista con recelo desde Madrid y Toledo y en las turbulencias sociales, propias de las clases trabajadoras europeas en el siglo de Marx y Engels, que al retar una hegemonía económica y política se vieron obligadas a enfrentar también los poderes espirituales que la legitimaban. Es siglo angustioso para España que se inicia con la ocupación napoleónica, prosigue con la disolución de casi todo el imperio iberoamericano y culmina con la decisiva derrota en la Guerra hispanoamericana que relega a España a la periferia de la geopolítica internacional.
2) Las dificultades en ese siglo diecinueve de la jerarquía de la Iglesia Católica, la romana y la española, para asimilar y aceptar el auge creciente del liberalismo político, la secularización del estado, el modernismo intelectual y el relativismo ético. Silva Gotay discute sobre todo las discusiones teológicas y jurídicas, en el interior de las autoridades eclesiásticas católicas en España, Roma y Puerto Rico, sobre dos temas cruciales: la esclavitud y el liberalismo ideológico y político. La disolución de la famosa Inquisición Española es símbolo de tales dificultades. Para apreciar el cambio que eso representa, recomiendo la lectura de una excelente novela de Miguel Delibes, *El hereje* (1998). Esta novela de Delibes concluye con un aterrador auto de fe que en la sexta década del siglo xvi desvanece en el fuego de la hoguera los cenáculos protestantes de Sevilla, mientras el insigne teólogo Melchor Cano predicaba sobre el eterno juicio de Dios y el rey Felipe II se sentía satisfecho por mantener intacta la ortodoxia de su nación.
3) Los dilemas de la Iglesia Católica estadounidense ante la

inminente guerra de los Estados Unidos contra España, nación católica por antonomasia. Era una guerra que, por un lado, Roma percibía como nociva para sus intereses en el Caribe y América Latina y que, por el otro, despertaba pasiones ardientes en el ánimo nacionalista estadounidense, como se refleja en editoriales, artículos y caricaturas publicados en 1898 en periódicos por todos los Estados Unidos. Representaba, por lo tanto, esa guerra un serio desafío a la Iglesia Católica estadounidense, pero también una dorada oportunidad para mostrar su lealtad patriótica. La Iglesia Católica estadounidense, fruto ante todo de grandes migraciones de naciones católicas, culmina ese momento amargo reafirmando su lealtad a la nueva nación imperial y a su peculiar conciencia mesiánica de "destino manifiesto".

4) Las enormes contrariedades que enfrenta la Iglesia Católica en Puerto Rico al perder en 1898 el apoyo que, gracias al famoso patronato real, hasta entonces recibía del gobierno metropolitano. El éxodo de muchos clérigos españoles, la disputa por las propiedades eclesiásticas, la pérdida del subsidio estatal, la educación laica sin instrucción religiosa eclesial, la legalización del matrimonio civil, los proyectos de control demográfico y la secularización de los cementerios, componen un complejo tejido de factores que debilitan la estructura institucional de la Iglesia Católica boricua en un momento en que las sociedades misioneras protestantes norteamericanas pretenden hacer del futuro siglo americano también la culminación de sus aspiraciones misioneras globales.

5) Los conflictos agudos que atraviesa la nueva jerarquía católica en Puerto Rico, la cual es, hasta la década de los sesenta, de origen estadounidense, al adoptar una doble estrategia: mantener la hegemonía de la cultura religiosa católica a la vez que propicia la asimilación de los puertorriqueños al lenguaje y los hábitos sociales de los Estados Unidos. Es tarea doblemente difícil ya que, por un lado, un sector de la burocracia imperial va a medir el éxito de su administración colonial por los logros en la asimilación de la población puertorriqueña no sólo al idioma inglés sino también al conjunto mítico de valores estadounidenses, aquello que en días recientes el profesor de Harvard y principal ideólogo contra la inmigración latinoamericana Samuel P. Huntington ha catalogado como el núcleo anglo-protestante de los Estados Unidos. Por otro lado, a la Iglesia le interesa demostrar que la asimilación cultural no conlleva necesariamente la

conversión protestante ni el abandono de las tradiciones cúlticas católicas. Se trata, por ende, de inaugurar un sendero inédito para el pueblo puertorriqueño: americanización, en inglés, pero cobijada en el seno de la ancestral madre Iglesia Católica.

6) Los retos que las vigorosas incursiones proselitistas protestantes, con el aparente visto bueno de las autoridades coloniales estadounidenses, presentan a la Iglesia Católica en Puerto Rico, por centurias acostumbrada a disfrutar del monopolio de legitimidad eclesiástica. La transición del patronato real, con su ambigua ligazón al estado colonial y su fusión mítica con la cultura nacional, a la competencia del mercado libre religioso que se rige por normas muy distintas a las que el clero católico estaba habituado, no fue fácil ni agradable y requirió de las autoridades eclesiásticas una delicada habilidad estratégica de negociación diplomática con el gobierno colonial y, simultáneamente, un repudio agresivo al protestantismo. Se inauguró así una batalla de los espíritus que aún no cesa del todo.

7) La decisión del Vaticano de conferir a la Iglesia Católica puertorriqueña un estatuto autónomo de la estadounidense al mismo tiempo que intenta evitar fricciones con Washington. Tal decisión ha tenido repercusiones de largo plazo, como puede deducirse, por ejemplo, de la controvertida carta pastoral de agosto de 2003 del actual arzobispo de San Juan, Monseñor Roberto Octavio González Nieves, provocadoramente titulada *Patria, nación e identidad: don indivisible del amor de Dios*, una firme defensa de la identidad cultural nacional de Puerto Rico, la cual reitera en su más reciente carta pastoral, en ocasión de la pascua de 2011, *Prediquemos al Cordero de Dios, sacrificado y victorioso: la nueva evangelización de Puerto Rico*.

8) El surgimiento de una fuerte corriente nacionalista católica que pretendió retar la autoridad del imperio y la colaboración de la jerarquía católica con éste. Aquí Silva Gotay se adentra en un tema que suscita debates intensos: las referencias de Pedro Albizu Campos a símbolos religiosos católicos como parte de la nacionalidad puertorriqueña insurgente, a la vez que sus críticas a la jerarquía católica por sus hábitos y actitudes coloniales. Es asunto que desde diversas perspectivas ha sido tratado por César Andréu Iglesias y Arcadio Díaz-Quiñones en sugestivos ensayos sobre los símbolos y las imágenes religiosas en los discursos y escritos de Albizu, al igual que por Anthony Stevens-Arroyo, quien lleva años tratando infructuosamente de convencernos de la alegada decisiva influencia del filósofo catalán Jaime Balmes

en el pensamiento albizuista. Es un campo minado y sospecho que serán varias las banderillas que los colegas universitarios y políticos que se atrevan a lanzarse al ruedo tratarán de clavar en la cerviz de este toro bravo.

9) El desarrollo de una impresionante red de escuelas católicas que asume la encomienda de educar una élite social y política puertorriqueña que permita conciliar americanización y catolicismo. Es, nuevamente, cuestión muy debatida. Convergen aquí aspiraciones diversas: el deseo de unas capas sociales puertorriqueñas de que sus hijos aprendan a dominar las reglas del juego político y económico del imperio, lo cual requiere la maestría del inglés, la importación de maestros estadounidenses, muchos de ellos clérigos y religiosas, capaces de enseñar sólo en inglés, la aspiración de la Iglesia Católica de mantener su dominio religioso de la isla mediante la educación de los líderes laicos de la sociedad, el aparente acuerdo de esa Iglesia Católica con el credo de la americanización de la juventud privilegiada del país.

10) Los conflictos entre aquellos sectores populares de la Iglesia Católica puertorriqueña, atentos a la vocación solidaria con los pobres y oprimidos que tan vigorosamente resuena en los textos proféticos y evangélicos de las escrituras sagradas judeocristianas, y la jerarquía eclesiástica abocada generalmente a una política de prudente conformidad con el modernismo capitalista. Es un tema que obviamente apasiona a Silva Gotay, como académico y como sujeto histórico. Nos damos aquí con un autor a quien no le es posible ni deseable ocultar su simpatía con la recuperación que las teologías de liberación efectúan de las dimensiones proféticas e insurgentes de la religiosidad bíblica y evangélica.

Como puede verse por esta apretada sinopsis, estos libros de Silva Gotay constituyen una exploración abarcadora de asuntos de primordial importancia en las relaciones entre las instituciones religiosas católicas y la política de control colonial de Puerto Rico, en las postrimerías del imperio español y en los albores del estadounidense. Es encomiable la erudición que adornan estos libros al lidiar con asuntos que inspiran intenso debate entre ópticas distintas y lecturas, en ocasiones, opuestas. Es, además, admirable la audacia intelectual de Samuel Silva Gotay de poner sobre la mesa de diálogo sus interpretaciones y someterse así al intercambio crítico que ineludiblemente sucede a la primera ola de elogios y encomios.

Son temas que suscitan diálogos, debates y disputas, algo habitual en el mundo académico, pero que en ocasiones tocan fibras sensitivas de identidad

religiosa y afiliación eclesiástica, como, por ejemplo, puede verse en la enérgica crítica que a *Catolicismo y política en Puerto Rico bajo España y Estados Unidos* hizo el historiador Gerardo Alberto Hernández Aponte, en mayo de 2006, en las páginas del principal periódico católico del país, *El visitante*.[1] Aunque Silva Gotay no parece haber aceptado las críticas principales que hizo Hernández Aponte a sus evaluaciones y perspectivas historiográficas, no me cabe duda que al menos prestó atención a varias de sus correcciones factuales.[2]

Permítaseme contribuir al debate con un cuestionamiento sobre un asunto significativo para los historiadores de la esclavitud afroamericana. Silva Gotay se admira ante la defensa que de la esclavitud hacen algunos jerarcas católicos en la segunda mitad del siglo diecinueve a pesar de que el papa Gregorio XVI la había condenado, según él, "de forma absoluta y definitiva" en su carta apostólica *In Supremo Apostolatus*, emitida en 1839. Pero, ¿es cierto que Gregorio XVI condenó "de forma absoluta y definitiva" la esclavitud o era su objetivo inmediato más bien reprobar el tráfico transatlántico de africanos esclavizados? En mi opinión, tanto el contenido de la carta apostólica como el contexto histórico específico en que se emitió la sitúan más bien como un episodio clave en la lucha por erradicar el comercio transatlántico de esclavos africanos, objetivo que se había cristalizado en acuerdos internacionales por varios países involucrados en esa trágica empresa pero que a su vez se violaba continuamente por contrabandistas de africanos violentamente cautivados. Por ello un jerarca católico podía, posterior a *In Supremo Apostolatus*, defender la esclavitud e incluso poseer esclavos sin percibir contradicción alguna con la postura papal. Lo que censura Gregorio XVI, por tanto, es la trata transatlántica de esclavos, no la esclavitud misma.

No es ésta, dicho sea de paso, mi exclusiva apreciación. Así entiende también su limitado pero importante propósito el historiador de las posturas teológicas y canónicas que sobre la esclavitud postulase la Iglesia Católica a lo largo de su historia, el erudito John Francis Maxwell, en una obra, *Slavery and the Catholic Church: The History of Catholic Teaching Concerning the Moral Legitimacy of the Institution of Slavery,*[3] que Silva Gotay, por cierto, cita repetidas veces en el primero de sus dos nuevos libros.

El lenguaje, sin embargo, que emplea Gregorio XVI al censurar el comercio de esclavos y reclamar el reconocimiento por las naciones cristianas de la plena humanidad de los africanos tiende, a la postre, a subvertir la restricción contextual del decreto papal y propicia las aspiraciones abolicionistas de la esclavitud. Acotemos también, como nota de interés para los estudiosos del siglo dieciséis, el que Gregorio XVI señale, como precedente importante, la carta apostólica de Pablo III, emitida en 1537, dirigida al Cardenal Arzobispo de Toledo primado de España, en la cual el Supremo Pontífice condena la esclavitud de los nativos americanos e insiste en que

la corona española reconozca la plena humanidad y libertad de sus nuevos vasallos transatlánticos. Aunque muchos eruditos entienden que esa carta fue abrogada por Pablo III a causa de presiones de la corte del rey Carlos V, Gregorio XVI reconoce como válida y vigente este decreto que tanto elogió Bartolomé de las Casas en su lucha por la emancipación de los indígenas americanos.

Igual que sus otros libros anteriores, estas nuevas aportaciones académicas de Silva Gotay hacen a su autor merecedor de nuestro pleno reconocimiento como un intelectual de excepcional valía en el estudio de las complejidades sociales que afrontan las instituciones religiosas latinoamericanas y caribeñas. Afortunados somos de que estos libros no serán su última palabra sobre estas cuestiones. Es el nombre de Samuel Silva Gotay quien primero viene a mi mente cuando leo la admirable descripción que del historiador solidario ha escrito el teólogo brasileño Rubem Alves:

> El historiador así, es alguien que recupera memorias perdidas y las distribuye, como si fuera un sacramento, a aquellos que perdieron la memoria. En verdad, ¿qué mejor sacramento comunitario existe que las memorias de un pasado común, marcadas por la existencia del dolor, del sacrificio y la esperanza? Recoger para distribuir. Él no es sólo un arqueólogo de memorias. Es un sembrador de visiones y de esperanzas.[4]

Los dos libros que reseño, repito, constituyen una valiosa reedición de su libro anterior *Catolicismo y política en Puerto Rico bajo España y Estados Unidos, siglos XIX y XX*. Su publicación, por consiguiente, debió haber estado a cargo nuevamente de la Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Pero ya todos conocemos los niveles tan lamentables a los que ha descendido esa otrora prestigiosa institución. La que en otros tiempos fuese la editorial puertorriqueña de mayor renombre internacional se dedica últimamente a publicar manualillos mediocres sobre política insular cuyo único dudoso mérito parece ser el linaje anexionista de su autor.

Notas

[1] Gerardo Alberto Hernández Aponte, "El nuevo libro de Samuel Silva Gotay", *El visitante*, Año XXXII, Núm. 19, 7 al 13 de mayo de 2006, 4-6.

[2] Véase la réplica de Silva Gotay a Hernández Aponte, "Catolicismo y política en Puerto Rico, bajo España y Estados Unidos: siglos xix y xx. Otra visión del libro", *El visitante*, Año XXXII, Núm. 22, 28 de mayo al 3 de junio de 2006, 12s.

[3] Chichester and London: Barry Rose Publishers, 1975, 73s.

[4] Rubem Alves, "Las ideas teológicas y sus caminos por los surcos institucionales del protestantismo brasileño", en Pablo Richard (ed.), *Historia de la teología en América Latina* (San José, Costa Rica: CEHILA/DEI, 1981), 364-65.

Humberto García Muñiz. 2010. *Sugar and Power in the Caribbean. The South Porto Rico Sugar Company in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, 1900-1921*. San Juan, PR: La Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico/Kingston-Miami:Ian Randle Publishers. 540 pp. ISBN: 978-0-8477-1129-1.

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This is an excellent business history of the South Puerto Rico Sugar Company (SPRSCO), a New York-based multinational corporation that established two of the largest and most successful sugar-producing complexes of the Americas, Guánica Centrale in Puerto Rico and Central La Romana in the Dominican Republic. With the exception of Oscar Zanetti's book on the United Fruit Company in Cuba[1], this is the only in-depth study of a U.S.-owned sugar company in the twentieth-century Caribbean. Based on Puerto Rican historian Humberto García Muñiz's doctoral dissertation, this is a transnational study that draws on an impressive variety of archives in the United States, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. It is also comparative in that it analyzes the operations of a single company in two different settings: the protected market of colonial Puerto Rico and the ostensibly sovereign Dominican Republic that, during the period under consideration, experienced a US customs receivership and then US military occupation. Puerto Rico's inclusion within the US tariff system created favorable conditions for the establishment of SPRSCO there and the expansion of Puerto Rican sugar production for the US internal market. In contrast, excluded from US protective tariffs and, for the most part, from US markets, the Dominican Republic sold to the world market. Yet the US played an important role in shaping the context within which both sugar economies evolved.

Sugar and Power provides useful understanding of actors and

conditions in the Puerto Rican and Dominican sugar industries in the late nineteenth century, before SPRSCO appeared on the scene. It then analyzes the factors of capital, management, technology, land and labor that permitted SPRSCO's expansion in the Caribbean. The book is impressive for its meticulous piecing together of information on the firm's funding and the biographies of the Board of Directors and managers. The author deciphers the financial, organizational and management networks that led to the incorporation of the Company in 1900 and its operations in Puerto Rico, beginning in 1901, and the Dominican Republic from 1910 on. García Muñiz stresses the importance of German capital in New York (and German sugar brokers in Puerto Rico) in financing SPRCO, and he explores the Company's relation to the Sugar Trust of US refiners. He insists on the importance of a new class of professionals—chemical engineers, sugar chemists, fabrication superintendents, etc., trained at Louisiana State University—who, known as Louisiana "sugar tramps," circulated throughout the Caribbean and whose technical know-how was essential to the US multinational and most other sugar companies. Finally he shows how white Barbadans, skilled in biological technology, developed genetically improved cane varieties that boosted the productivity of the centralizing, modernizing sugar cane operations of the early twentieth century. García Muñiz also traces why and how corporate and productive structures evolved over time in response to changes in sugar regulations, the technology of sugar production, world market conditions, and the First World War.

After explaining conditions in the US that led to the formation of SPRSCO, the author traces the history of the Company in first Puerto Rico and then the DR. Established by SPRSCO in an area of plantations consolidated by Puerto Ricans in the nineteenth century, Guánica Centrale relied on the provision of sugar from *colonos* and a labor force of Puerto Rican migrants from the interior. Within a few years, Guánica—the largest sugar factory in Puerto Rico—outstripped its supply, so in 1910 SPRSCO determined to establish a new plantation in the DR, in the eastern province of Seibo, that would ship sugar to Puerto Rico for processing. Seibo was a frontier region of recent commercial agriculture (cacao, tobacco) into which new sugar interests from San Pedro de Macorís were expanding. The advent of the US company from Puerto Rico and its influence on the land policy of the US occupation government precipitated the rapid surveying and privatization of communal lands and peasant displacement. García Muñiz notes that the timing of plantation consolidation (earlier in Puerto Rico, later in the Dominican Republic) had specific social consequences. From 1913 to 1917, SPRCO's Dominican plantation in Romana was a *colonia*, with two ships a day ferrying raw sugar to Guánica Centrale, and many Puerto Rican technical

employees and laborers working on the Dominican estate. Then in 1918, SPRSCO built the Dominican Republic's largest sugar mill, Central Romana, to service the plantation which, by the mid-1920s, had accumulated 144,000 acres of land (in comparison to the 53,000 in Puerto Rico) and depended on a work force comprised no longer of Puerto Ricans but rather of British Caribbean (*cocolo*) and Haitian migrants.

The rigorous comparison *Sugar and Power* makes between SPRSCO's operations in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic sheds new light on the structure of the two sugar industries. The Puerto Rican sugar economy supported a small, politically influential local business class made up of Puerto Rican owners of sugar *centrales* and large *colono* landholders. In the Dominican Republic no *colonato* system of cane supply and no local sugar bourgeoisie developed; instead ambitious Dominicans filled intermediary roles as land speculators and labor contractors who facilitated the SPRSCO's land consolidation and acquisition of foreign workers. García Muñiz emphasizes that Puerto Rico experienced a labor surplus and the DR a labor scarcity, which resulted in a divided workforce of immigrants in the DR. The different composition of the labor force influenced labor protest in each country, which was quite well organized and vocal in Puerto Rico and weak in the Dominican Republic.

Sugar and Power illuminates not only the structure of the sugar industries in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, but also how the enormous US company SPRSCO relates to the wider history of sugar. The author makes clear what the main sugar policies were and whose lobbying influenced them in all three countries. The book also attributes agency to the locals who interacted with the multinational corporation in various ways and sheds light on economic relations and flows of capital, employees and laborers between the US, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

One of the main contributions of this stimulating study is its deep research in five countries (US, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Barbados, and Great Britain) and the range of the sources, which include government documents, company records, many local and family archives, and interviews. Informative tables with essential statistical information, maps, and photographs ground the study. In plumbing his diverse sources, the author engages in a rich, multi-faceted exploration of various issues that emerge, such as conflict over land among sugar corporations and the *gavillero* war (1917-1922) of bandits-guerrillas in the eastern DR that came out of it. García Muñiz also explores the impact of the World War I on Caribbean sugar companies, and particularly how the US government's attack on German capital in the US, its colonies, and occupied and intervened states (Puerto Rico, Cuba, the DR and Haiti) compelled SPRSCO to sideline its German investors, "Americanize" its

Board of Directors, and implement corporate restructuring.

This book stays very close to the Columbia University doctoral dissertation from which it originates. At times this reader wished for a little more analytical distance. Given that the title is "Sugar and Power," I would have liked the author in his conclusion to explicitly address the various dimensions of power in relation to SPRSCO and its activities in the Caribbean. In methodological terms, *Sugar and Power* deserves to be read alongside Jason M. Colby's study of the United Fruit Company in Costa Rica and Guatemala, which also takes a transnational and comparative approach to business history.[2] Colby labels the UFCO "corporate colonialism"; one wonders if García Muñiz would agree with this optic. My sense is that the complexity of his findings might lead him to somewhat different conclusions concerning SPRSCO. Finally, since Cuba also experienced major sugar expansion through US investment and played a preponderant role in the Caribbean sugar economy, I would have welcomed the author's observations on Cuba compared to the DR and Puerto Rico, based on a reading of the secondary sources. But given the magnitude of the author's undertaking, perhaps this is too much to ask.

To conclude, *Sugar and Power* is a magisterial investigation of one of the most important multinational companies in the Caribbean and *the* major player in the twentieth-century sugar economies of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. It makes a significant contribution to US business history and the history of the Puerto Rican and Dominican sugar industries writ large. The book is obligatory reading for anyone wanting to understand the Caribbean sugar industry in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the role played by US interests and managers. There is a richness and rigor to the empirical material, and chapter conclusions do a fine job signaling major points. Based on extraordinary research and admirably clear in its presentation of the multiple aspects of its subject, this book sets a needed foundation for research on Caribbean sugar economies and societies and the influence of US multinational companies.

Notes

[1] Oscar Zanetti *et al*., *United Fruit Company: Un caso del dominio imperialista en Cuba* (La Habana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1976).

[2] Jason M. Colby, *The Business of Empire: United Fruit, Race, and U.S. Expansion in Central America* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011).

Robert A. Hill *et al*. 2011. *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume XI, The Caribbean Diaspora, 1910-1920*. Durham: Duke University Press. 845 pp. ISBN: 0822346907.

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The most recent edition of the fifteen-volume *Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers* is the first in the prestigious collection's five-part "Caribbean Series." Volume Eleven begins in 1910, well before Garvey launched in Jamaica his movement for black uplift and race pride in 1914, and ends on the eve of the UNIA's First International Convention of Negro Peoples of the World in August of 1920, the organization's peak. Over two hundred pages of introductory material and almost eight hundred pages of primary sources, including photos, cover the British West Indian territories, Haiti, Brazil, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Panama Canal Zone, the Spanish speaking countries of Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, and the Central American republics of Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Panama; the sole exception is Jamaica, which will be the subject of the final two volumes in the "Caribbean Series." The volume includes contributions from forty-four scholars working under the guidance of Robert Hill, preeminent authority on Garveyism, and his editorial team. The documents include British colonial correspondences, diplomatic cables, letters from private collections, contributions to local newspapers, articles in the UNIA's own New York-published *Negro World*, informant reports, and some of the few available records of the United Fruit Company, which operated the Central American banana plantations to which thousands of West Indians migrated in search of employment during this period. By making such archival material widely available, the much-anticipated "Caribbean Series," which is to be the final subsection of the *UNIA Papers*, is sure to expand the study of what Emory Tolbert has called "outpost Garveyism" in the Caribbean.

This review describes the historiographical contributions made by Hill and his team of scholars before moving on to underscore the broader conclusions one might draw from exploring this volume. Though researchers will approach the mammoth text selectively and with unique questions in mind, several reoccurring themes emerge from the medley of primary sources, including the significant West Indian mobility shaping the Garvey movement, the appeal of Garvey's call for transnational racial unity among a widely scattered people, and the *Negro World*'s

importance among the West Indian diaspora. The text is also useful beyond a strict study of Garveyism, as the Great War's impact on the Caribbean, for example, and the wave of unrest that shook the region in the postwar period are also widely documented. The review ends by pointing to directions for further research raised by the collection.

Hill's "General Introduction" places West Indians, both at home and abroad, front and center in the Garvey historiography, countering a scholarly tendency to regard the movement as mainly an African American phenomenon. The Caribbean focus of the final series in the *UNIA Papers*, he explains, "restores the important cultural and political aspects of the Garvey narrative that have been eclipsed" (p. lxxxviii). This corrective may be somewhat unnecessary for scholars of the Caribbean (including many of the contributors to this volume), who have long recognized the movement's tremendous significance in the region during the late 1910s and 1920s. Readers may recall the 2003 special edition of this journal titled, "Garveyism in the Hispanic Caribbean." After a substantial section specifying the enthnonational identity of the American arm of the UNIA, Hill moves on to write a comprehensive statement on the organization's development in and impact on the Caribbean. He argues that the movement became a form of "cultural and political ethnogenesis" for West Indians abroad in that it helped crystallize a powerful "long-range Caribbean nationalism" among supporters (pp. lxxxvi, lxvii). He explains, "The Garvey movement served as a marker of West Indian group identity and became, in turn, an important means of maintaining and reaffirming a strong collective West Indian identity" (p. lxxxvi). Ultimately, Hill maintains that, of all the places where the UNIA thrived, it was the British Caribbean that experienced the movement's greatest political impact, suggesting that West Indian nationalism had a founding father in Garvey. The documents bear out this claim, as the insularity exhibited in the early 1910s gives way, along with a growing embrace of the UNIA, to articulations of West Indian brotherhood and expressions of anti-imperialism by the latter half of the decade.

Following Hill's introduction, historical commentaries on individual islands and nations place the Garvey movement in local context. These essays vary in coverage; some offer a general historical overview (as with Grenada, for example), others provide an analysis of the UNIA's local character (Bermuda, Costa Rica), and a few address topics particular to a given country (labor relations in the Leeward Islands and Honduran historiography of West Indian immigration). There are some fascinating surprises here, such as Kim Butler's commentary on Garveyism in Brazil, a relatively unexplored topic. She outlines three avenues of limited but nevertheless significant contact between the UNIA and Brazil: a short-lived attempt by the Springfield, Massachusetts chapter to launch

a colonization movement of African Americans to Brazil; *Negro World* circulation, particularly among port and ship workers, and occasional translation of its articles in the black Brazilian press; and among West Indians who had settled in the hinterland town of Porto Velho during the construction of the Madeira-Marmoré railroad. Butler's essay, along with numerous documents, demonstrates that the movement's impact was felt well beyond its network of formal chapters.

Throughout the text, meticulously detailed footnotes give readers useful background on subjects far afield from Garvey's movement, particulars such as Greek mythological gods or William Randolph Hearst's anti-British publications as they appear in the documents. Other notes offer short, useful biographies of early twentieth-century Pan-African leaders, such as Dusé Mohamed Ali, who printed Garvey's early writings in his London-based *African Times and Orient Review,* and Cyril Briggs with whom Garvey had a famously contentious relationship. Perhaps most importantly, however, several notes together detail the lives of local UNIA leaders whose stories have been overshadowed by prominent international organizers, lesser known figures such as R.E.M. Jack, a black schoolteacher from St. Vincent who attended the organization's 1920 international convention in New York. While in Harlem, he was ordained in the UNIA-affiliated African Orthodox Church. He then moved to Cuba where he ministered to Vincentians, Barbadians, and other West Indians at work in the island's American-run sugar industry before traveling between Barbados, St. Vincent, and the U.S. as a religious organizer. From primary sources, we also know that Jack headed a sizable UNIA branch in St. Vincent, advised others on the construction of UNIA chapters, advocated for compulsory education and wage increases, called himself a "New Negro," and railed "against the British government" (p. 613). Jack's story is emblematic of the trajectories of many local leaders who expanded the UNIA's vision and on-the-ground presence in the Caribbean. In helping piece together the lives of such important but hitherto unknown figures, this edition of the *UNIA Papers* opens new avenues for the study of grassroots Garveyism.

Researchers interested in a variety of questions about the daily experiences of West Indians at home and abroad will benefit from *The UNIA Papers*' latest edition. For instance, the volume gives a few small but evocative windows into the daily lives of women in the Garvey movement, such as a report revealing that the Ladies Division in Colón made shirts, ties, and pillowslips as part of their fundraising endeavors. Women's leadership in the UNIA is also documented, as in a fascinating letter written by Bocas Del Toro Lady President, Marie Duchatellier, who describes her extensive travels as an active UNIA organizer, United Fruit Company attempts to block her movement, and multiple friendly

visits with the Panamanian President. Additionally, scholars of labor relations will appreciate the volume's occasional documentation of wage policies, such as the Barbados Governor's request that planters fend off unrest by raising wages, and several sources addressing the 1920 strike on the Panama Canal, led by both the UNIA and the United Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way and Railway Shop Employees.

The most prominent theme that emerges from this volume is that of the Garvey movement's portability and symbiotic relationship with West Indian immigration. The push of economic decline in the British colonies, along with the pull of work opportunities in zones of U.S. expansion, led hundreds of thousands of West Indians abroad in the early twentieth century. These men and women, Hill explains, "served as the key vector in spreading the message of Garveyism, introducing it into whatever communities they resided in" (p. lxxi). Indeed, like R.E.M. Jack, almost every UNIA leader whose work is documented here, at the very least, had sojourned away from home. The sources reveal that most Bahamian Garveyites, for instance, actually lived in Miami; Veterans from the British West Indies Regiment (BWIR) founded Barbados' first UNIA branch; and Bermuda's most prominent organizer was Antiguan. Long before professional historians became interested in transnationalism and even before black intellectuals began using the language of diaspora, early twentieth-century West Indians articulated a strong sense of connection to one another and to what Garvey called "Africa abroad" (p. 175). The notion of dispersion is taken for granted in the many documents collected here, as writers addressed "friends at home and abroad" and their racial brothers "scattered all over the Western Hemisphere" in contributions to local and international newspapers (pp. 625, 420). But diaspora and migration are also the *subjects* of Garveyite writing. A contributor to Grenada's *West Indian*, for instance, wrote of travel's radicalizing effect: "Every young man or woman of colour who has returned to these islands… returns bigger and broader in mind, with a better knowledge of the good of unity and teamwork, and with the beautiful idea that the first of all loyalties is loyalty to his or her suffering race. The New West Indian is in the making" (p. 392). This collection illustrates that "New West Indian" was also made "broader in mind" through migration to the Hispanic Caribbean and Central America, as well as other forms of mobility, including military service.

Nothing exemplifies the importance of travel to the Garvey movement more than the UNIA shipping venture, the Black Star Line (BSL), and the widespread support the line garnered throughout the Caribbean. Countless documents in the collection demonstrate that West Indians embraced the BSL, not simply as a business opportunity, though it was that, but also as a transformative moment in black history after

centuries of forced migration and decades of economic emigration. For example, because he believed launching the BSL's *S.S. Frederick Douglass* "mark[ed] a great epoch in the history of the Negro Race," one proud investor wrote a poem in honor of the ship, "Manned by Afric's sons, no more in bond" (p. 403). Enthusiasm for the BSL also grew out of a very practical need for improvements in travel and shipping. A supporter from Dominica urged his countrymen to buy BSL shares and "help the Corporation to float as many ships as possible" because the island suffered from infrequent and irregular steamship mail and passenger service (p. 624). With its potential to transform the terms of travel in the region, the BSL appealed widely among West Indian migrants.

Although the volume includes numerous useful sources written "from above" such as diplomatic cables and government reports, as well as articles, speeches, and letters written my Marcus Garvey (whose writing has been published abundantly elsewhere), the real value of the text lies in the many documents written by his supporters, allowing readers to explore the UNIA's appeal and role through the words of everyday Garveyites. The text illustrates that Garvey's consistent call for cross-class, cross-color, transnational racial unity had a tremendous resonance on the ground in the Caribbean. As Garvey condemned "shade prejudice" and called for transnational black unity, UNIA members across the region often stressed the practical need for black racial solidarity (p. 72). A contributor to the local English-language paper in Panama City explained that he supported the Black Star Line because it united the commercial power of West Indians of different islands, African Americans, and Africans. In another example, Panamanian UNIA leader, Eduardo Morales "exhorted his hearers to drop all insular selfishness and get together, … bury all 'Jamaicanism,' Barbadianism,' 'Panamanianism,' and all foolish names hurled at each other which were only keeping the race apart and giving its opponents the opportunity of further [oppression]" before launching a massive strike in the Canal Zone (p. 502).

The volume also documents West Indian enthusiasm for the *Negro World*, which circulated internationally by early 1919, as well official attempts to suppress the paper. In dozens of sources, colonial authorities claimed the paper, with its "distinctly inflammatory nature," had a pernicious influence on British subjects and proposed its suppression as a "seditious" publication (pp. 296-297). Authorities accused the paper of promoting "racial animosity" or "direct and open incitement to interracial war" (pp. 329, 288). British Honduras and British Guiana moved to suppress the paper, and Trinidad, the Windward Islands, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Kitts-Nevis, Antigua, and St. Lucia all passed ordinances directed at the *Negro World*. Such moves only furthered West Indian

frustration, as participants in British Honduras' 1919 riots cited the suppression of the *Negro World* as one of their grievances and Grenadians launched protests against the Seditious Publications Act.

Because the editors have included sources giving the movement wider context, several themes not exclusively related to Garveyism emerge here. Of these, World War I figures most prominently. The war radicalized black British subjects, as West Indian attitudes evolved from crown loyalty to anti-imperialism. Sources from Port Limón, Costa Rica in 1911, for instance, reveal that a number of West Indian societies vied with one another to host celebrations honoring King George V's coronation. Yet, by 1918 and 1919, vehement denunciations of imperial rule were much more common, as in one writer's claim, "The Negro is tired of being ruled by the pale-faced oppressors" (p. 621). Much of this change in attitude was due to outrage over treatment soldiers in the British West Indies Regiment received during and after their service, including lower pay, shorter leave periods, and slower demobilization than their white counterparts. The December 1918 mutiny of BWIR soldiers in Taranto, Italy is amply covered in the *UNIA Papers*, as is the Caribbean League, a short-lived organization formed by noncommissioned officers. The league alarmed imperial authorities when a member claimed, "the black man should have freedom and govern himself in the West Indies and that force must be used, and if necessary bloodshed," exhibiting a nascent anti-imperialist nationalism that appears increasingly throughout the text (p. 136).

Volume Eleven also covers the general state of unrest that permeated the postwar Caribbean, as work stoppages, riots, and confrontations with white soldiers broke out in the summer and fall of 1919. The significant paper trail generated by West Indian unrest illustrates both the extent of colonial fear (many authorities suggested landing warships manned by white troops) as well as the fact that the Caribbean was hardly removed from the global upheavals of the time. Imperial authorities and British subjects alike made frequent reference to overseas events, such as coal miner strikes in England, race riots in the U.K. and the U.S., and the Russian Revolution, as having influenced local resistance.

This most recent edition of the *UNIA Papers* raises several interesting questions for further scholarship on the Caribbean arm of Garvey's movement. First, of the many calls for racial unity included here, some were articulated in relation to other nationalist projects. A contributor to Grenada's *West Indian* quoted Garvey as saying, "Whether it is the Irish people, the Polish people, the Jews, or the Hindoos, everybody is looking out to protect himself and in this case wherein men are fighting for freedom, we of the Negro race cannot afford to linger behind" (p. 174). Similarly, Eliezer Cadet, appointed to represent the UNIA at the Paris

Peace Conference, claimed, "We have resolved to imitate the yellow race" (p. 150). Documents such as these should challenge researchers to explore the extent to which UNIA members identified with or even attempted to forge links with contemporaneous solidarity movements. Robin Kelley and Tiffany Patterson once called for an investigation into linkages between black radicalism and other revolutionary struggles, and some scholars such as Vijay Prashad, have taken up the charge. With respect to the Garvey movement, Hill has detailed previously Garvey's inspiration from the Irish independence struggle and Michael G. Malouf has addressed Garvey's Irish connections from a literary perspective.[1] Yet, as Volume Eleven's documents suggest, much work remains, particularly with respect to what rank-and-file Garveyites thought of other international struggles.

Another question that challenges researchers is the nature of the UNIA's relationship with the United Fruit Company and other major employers of West Indian labor. In his essay on Costa Rica, Harpelle writes that the UNIA has "a history of both radicalism and accommodation" (p. clxxxv). His best example of UNIA accommodation is Garvey's 1921 visit to Limón, during which he agreed to postpone his speech until a shipment of bananas could be loaded, time which Garvey spent on an all-expense-paid trip to the capital arranged by the company. Volume Eleven's documents from an earlier period, however, demonstrate that on other occasions the situation was reversed, as powerful employers were forced to accommodate the overwhelmingly popular UNIA. A 1919 exchange between Canal Zone authorities and local UNIA leaders reveals that considerable effort went into finding a place to dock the Black Star Line's *S.S. Frederick Douglass* so that a request for "permission for several thousand of these West Indians to inspect the vessel" could be granted (pp. 438-439). Another fascinating set of documents, which Harpelle has quoted before but which are now published in their entirety, includes letters between United Fruit officials in Panama and Costa Rica regarding the arrival to Limón of international UNIA organizer Henrietta Vinton Davis.[2] While the officials were concerned that "she has only to lift a finger… to start trouble," they also acknowledged, "it is useless for us to oppose them" (pp. 476-479). Instead, the company optimistically chose to regard the UNIA's stock-raising venture as unthreatening to company interests, as Davis could only sell BSL shares to the gainfully employed. The Cuban state also found that cooperation with the UNIA was more fruitful than suppression during the organization's early years. In 1920 the *Frederick Douglass'* representative, captain, and crew were invited to meet Cuban President Mario García Menocal, who requested a photo with the group. (The photo is included in the volume.) Although one can imagine that the Cuban President was

attempting to render himself friendly to black causes in light of Cuba's significant black population, his gesture demonstrates that, at least for a time, the UNIA was regarded as a formidable organization, worthy of recognition by powerful state and company authorities.

In his introduction, Hill notes that it would be "difficult to overemphasize" the centrality of "the movements of West Indians" to the history of the Americas and the world (p. lxxviii). Building on the groundbreaking work of Eric Williams and Sidney Mintz, recent scholarship has indeed centered the Caribbean and its people in world-historical processes, such as the rise of multinational corporations at the turn of the "American Century." Now, the *UNIA Papers'* latest volume expands our view beyond the role of West Indian labor in such processes, allowing researchers to access first-hand accounts of the world's largest black organization to date, as well as the beliefs and traditions, struggles and victories, migrations and movements of a people who shaped the course of empires.

Notes

[1] Keiko Araki addresses the Garvey movement's relationship with Japanese nationalism in her contribution to the forthcoming *Black Intellectuals: The Atlantic World and Beyond.*

[2] Harpelle, Ronald N. 2001. *The West Indians of Costa Rica: Race, Class, and the Integration of an Ethnic Minority*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, p. 55.

Frank Moya Pons. 2007. *History of the Caribbean: Plantations, Trade, and War in the Atlantic World*. Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers. 402 pp. ISBN: 978-1-55876-414-9.

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An alternative title of this book might be 'A Concise History of Caribbean Plantation Economy.' Frank Moya Pons, the most widely read historian of the Dominican Republic, set out to write a book that reveals the structural similarities of Caribbean economies of diverse colonial affiliation and the continuities of their experience through historical time. His purpose is to restore balance to an historiography

that feeds the perception of the Caribbean as a region of "kaleidoscopic fragmentation"; which is, in his opinion

> misleading, because when one looks closely at the structural continuities of the plantation system, one can understand the Caribbean only as an organic economic system, as a throbbing heart continuously pumping sugar and other commodities to the world market via the Atlantic, while at the same time consuming millions of lives forcefully extracted from Africa and other parts of the world. (pp. x-xi)

The author's intellectual debt to plantation theorists is evident, as is the influence of world systems theory. He returns to these themes in the Epilogue where he asserts

> the plantation system (is) the underlying structure that made the Caribbean economies very similar to each other, despite ecological and political variations….The connections that linked the plantations in the Caribbean with Africa, Europe and North America, both before and after the Industrial Revolution, are crucial to understanding the emergence of capitalism as a world economic system.
>
> *No other institution played the role that the plantation did in integrating the Caribbean into the world economy*. (p. 309, my emphasis)

Moya Pons's approach is that of the historian, but it is a history that is anchored on analysis of the economic motive for colonisation, war and forced migration; the structures that were created; the demographic shifts that came about and the social forces to which these gave rise. Behind the sometimes bewildering succession of changes in colonial ownership, revolutions and restorations and ethnic interactions characteristic of the region's history; he seeks to show an underlying logic that constitutes the glue of the Caribbean experience. However, this is not a book of simple economic determinism. The particularities and variations that occur from size, topography, metropolitan idiosyncrasy, natural events and subaltern resistance are amply treated. Political developments in the Caribbean colonies form the backdrop—sometimes conditioned, at other times conditioning—to the evolution of Caribbean plantation economy; while social formations assume diverse forms.

The book is organised into twenty chapters whose subjects combine temporal sequence with thematic focus. This facilitates exposition of the underlying message. Each chapter is subdivided into sections which elaborate or nuance the chosen theme; the carefully titled section headings alert the reader to the flow of the narrative. Some chapters treat with the rise and fall of the Caribbean sugar economies as they evolved from the 16th to the early 20th centuries; highlighting the role played by colonial monopolies, free trade and slave trading; trends in production, exports and prices; and technological change leading to *centrales* and

colonos. Others feature the role of privateers and contraband, trade and wars; the American, French and Haitian Revolutions; abolitionism and crisis; new peasantries; migration and proletarians; and the emergence of sugar corporations. The author does not overlook the role played by other commodities: gold, indigo, ginger, cattle, salt, tobacco, and coffee all appear on stage, even if eventually they become only side shows to sugar. The clarity of the exposition and the ability to maintain a connecting thread to the narrative is a remarkable accomplishment, given the vastness and complexity of the subjects covered. It could only be possible by an author who has total command over his material, as Moya Pons obviously does.

Wisely, in a book of this kind, Moya Pons has chosen not to clutter his text with footnotes or endnotes or with bibliographic references in the body of the text. Instead, he has furnished the reader with an appendix containing a bibliographic guide to each chapter. This guide itself is a resource worth having. The list runs to twenty six printed pages, or at least 400 entries, mostly of books, in three regional languages. He tells us, perhaps ambitiously, that this is "essential reading"! Another pleasing result of this is that data on production, prices and labour flows are woven into the narrative, rather than placed in separate statistical tables. The emphasis is on telling the story, not on proving a case. The drawback is that it is difficult to easily compare data, say, on sugar production from country to country or from time period to time period. In that sense, while this is a book of great scholarship, it is not, strictly speaking, a scholarly book. The researcher can use it as an introduction to the subject and as a guide to further reading on the particular subjects of interest. The student of plantation economy will use it as a concise overview of its evolution through time.

Historians will, undoubtedly, find specific statements of fact or historical interpretation to take issue with in Moya Pons's text. My own interest is that of a development economist with a long standing interest in the theory of plantation economy. From this standpoint it would have been useful to see more discussion of the economic consequences of the plantation system on the local economy in the different permutations highlighted in the book. The subject is discussed in a chapter on Caribbean Sugar Economies in the Eighteenth Century (Ch. 8). The author stresses that at each stage of the cycle in the sugar business, the benefit accrued to the entrepreneur; and that the financing of the sugar colonies, initially coming from European capital, "ended up reversing itself." The profits helped to finance the development of commercial and industrial capitalism in Europe, and very little was invested in local infrastructure (p. 106). The chapter on Caribbean Trade Circuits in the Eighteenth Century (Ch. 9) also shows how the sugar economies were

enmeshed in the evolving world system of capitalist trade and production. Throughout the book, we also see how the collapse of commodity-based export economies leads to prolonged depression and crisis in the local economy. In some cases, especially in the nineteenth century, the rise of 'new peasantries' is directly attributable to this. However, the author does not return to the issue of development consequences in the context of the decline of the 'old' sugar economies in the British and French West Indies, and the rise of the 'new' sugar economies in the Spanish and U.S. Caribbean, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Here, as elsewhere, the focus is on the associated demographic and social changes.

One is cautious in suggesting this subject should have been treated, however, for to do so would have imposed an additional burden of content and length on a book whose breadth and depth are already quite considerable. The author is well aware of this book's limitations, as he tells us that he had to omit important social and cultural subjects including how the slaves lived their lives, the role of families and women, many political events, health and education, and cultural and religious phenomena (p. xi). As he rightly says, to have dealt with all this would have necessitated a multi-volume work: in order to show the structural uniformity of Caribbean economies, he had to restrict himself to some basic variables.

The story ends with the impact of the Great Depression of the 1930s. The author sees this as great turning point: after this, Caribbean sugar goes into secular decline and the structural uniformity of the regional economies fades away. Theorists of Plantation Economy will argue that the structural uniformities continued, in the form of the new industries established by multinational corporations in the Caribbean in the twentieth century. That is the thesis of the recently published book co-authored by Lloyd Best and Kari Polanyi Levitt.[1] Moya Pons's book serves as an excellent companion to Best and Levitt, in providing the actual historical contours of the ebb and flow of Caribbean plantation economies over four and a half centuries. Other scholars will see the divergence in Caribbean economic trajectories as starting much earlier in historical time. Diversity of experience is one of the central features of Bulmer-Thomas's recent book on Caribbean economic development since the Napoleonic Wars[2]; which deals in detail with the evolution of production and trade in individual Caribbean economies. For a book of this kind, Moya Pons's text acts as both introduction and provider of the 'Big Picture.' To this reviewer, therefore, Moya Pons's book succeeds both as a complement to historically-based economic theorising; and as an introduction to detailed history.

Notes

[1] Lloyd Best and Kari Polanyi Levitt, *Essays in the Theory of Plantation Economy*. Mona: UWI Press, 2009.

[2] Victor Bulmer-Thomas, *The Economic History of the Caribbean since the Napoleonic Wars*. Cambridge, 2012.

Tomás Diez Acosta. 2012 (First published 2002). *October 1962: The Missile Crisis As Seen From Cuba*. New York; London: Pathfinder. 333 pp. ISBN: 978-0-87348-956-0.

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The Cuban Missile Crisis is one of the most debated historical problems of our recent past. Developments in the last two decades, particularly the collapse of the Soviet Union and the substantial declassification of relevant documents by the US government, have furnished scholars with ample new material to expand and revise the rich historiography. Memoirs, especially those of former Soviet officials, have also proliferated, animating the debate. The new century has opened the way to a fresh approach that eschews ideological wrangling in favor of dialogue and collaboration among scholars of the former rivals. Nevertheless, the leading role of the superpowers remains a defining feature of this history's narrative, with the Cuban experience playing a subsidiary role in the momentous clash of titans.[1]

Tomás Diez Acosta's *October 1962: The Missile Crisis As Seen From Cuba* stands out as a determined effort to incorporate the Cuban perspective on events prior to, during, and after the actual incident. The book's balanced selection of sources integrates data from official records of the three main protagonists in a step-by-step account that also features vignettes of each side's apparent take on the event and its aftermath. This encompassing approach yields a panoramic outlook, allowing the reader a glance at the sort of interaction that defined the crisis. Nonetheless, unlike other exemplars of the historiography, Diez Acosta's volume accentuates Cuba's participation in events, while underscoring the pathos of an island caught in the middle of an imperialist tug-of-war

between the two superpowers.

Two very significant and original features stand out in the book: its incorporation of Cuban archival material to the analysis, and its evaluation of the crisis's impact for Cuba in real context. The work's access to documentation from Cuban military archives contributes a unique vantage point, especially when assessing Cuba's response in concrete terms (Chapters 2, 7 and 8). The study emphasizes, for example, the country's administrative and military structural reorganization in the course of the Bay of Pigs assault, including the transformation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) into a regular, multi-leveled fighting force (Chapter 2). In addition, as the author points out, "government management advanced in close interconnection with military actions (p. 72)," establishing social organizations, efficient support networks, and policies that became paramount to the regime's survival in the long run. In general, Diez Acosta seems to suggest that the Bay of Pigs assault and the missile standoff signified an ultimately beneficial, rite of passage for the Cuban revolution, contributing to the system's consolidation and endurance.

The book's approach to the events seems to aim at defining the standoff as yet another, albeit potentially disastrous, imperialist clash of wills. For Diez Acosta, the United States "was trying to use any means to justify its future intervention in Cuba..." and "starve the Cuban Revolution into submission" (p. 55). In turn—at least according to the former Soviet high officials interviewed—plans and implementation of "Operation Anadyr," Khrushchev's pet project for Cuba, were organized and coordinated in Moscow without consulting the Cuban leadership (Chapters 4 and 5). According to the author's interpretation, these two sets of isolated circumstances finally merged into a perfect formula for imperialist confrontation: prior to the October 1962, the US government had already decided on a "total blockade" as the first stage of an invasion scenario (Chapters 1 and 3), and the Soviets' insistence in keeping the missile operations a secret provided the perfect pretext to activate the plan (Chapters 5 and 6).

The subliminal "we say/ you say" play on developments, is another of the work's inventive features. While recent Soviet sources stress the "emotional" character of the Cuban leadership,[2] Diez Acosta in turn underscores the Soviets' mishandling of the situation, and Khrushchev's conniving manipulation of the Cuban missile project (Chapter 4). However, although some of the evidence seems valid and to the point, it is difficult not to feel somewhat overwhelmed by the *novela*-like quality of the exposé on the Soviet "betrayal," mostly corroborated by little else than Castro's bombast (Chapter 8).

A few other instances further suggest vestiges of the Cold War approach to this historiography. For example, several chapters rely

heavily on interviews and the anecdotal commentaries of former Soviet officials (Chapters 4, 5 and 7). While these sources undoubtedly contribute telling details, without archival corroboration we must depend on the interviewees' ability to recall events from five decades ago, and their willingness to offer accurate reports rather than mythic constructions of their participation in events. Similarly, Diez Acosta's meticulous account of the Soviets' military buildup in Cuba, including his assertion that the US intelligence services had dangerously miscalculated the Soviet nuclear capability in the island (pp. 123-124), lacks citation of precise sources. Thus, the reader is left to speculate whether his assertions are based on testimony or genuine archival material.

Although the author strives to remain objective throughout his discussion, the ideological underpinnings in his discourse seem also unavoidable at times. His recurrent reference to "the people of Cuba" seems troubling (i.e.: pp. 25, 27, 61, 74, 75), considering that the only Cuban voices we hear throughout the account are those of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. In some instances, the insertion of elements with specific metaphoric content to construct a subliminal, ideological vision becomes quite evident. For example, the narrative on CIA plots in the island incorporates the "coward/courageous" binary to identify the right sort of Cuban, a stereotype reminiscent of the macho-oriented, homophobic formula that also colored Cuban political discourse at the time.[3] According to the author, the plan to storm a naval base had failed because the head of the Cuban mercenary group "did not dare to land" (p. 41). Another assault foundered when one of the leaders, "frightened" by the arrest of another conspirator, "fled the country abandoning to their fate the men...[who also] lost their nerve when they learned their chief had fled..." (p. 47).

As is the case with most of the details regarding the CIA's "secret war" in the island prior to the crisis (Chapter 1), Diez Acosta's evidence on the Cuban mercenaries mainly reproduces the allegations published in other Cuban sources. The author is not able to provide solid archival documentation corroborating direct US involvement in the incidents, nor concrete details that could identify those accused in Cuba, as confirmed CIA operatives. This is not meant to invalidate Diez Acosta's credible representation of the tense atmosphere on the island at the time—CIA involvement in sabotage and plots in Cuba has been substantiated by other sources—[4] but, considering the volumes of declassified records currently available, archival validation of longstanding Cuban claims would have perhaps enhanced the innovative quality of the book, as well as the unquestionable legitimacy of the allegations.

All in all, the book represents a commendable endeavor to articulate Cuba's side of the story within an academically reliable framework,

contributing new data from US and Cuban sources and details extracted from the author's personal interviews of former Soviet officials. Despite uneven sourcing, the work still accomplishes its aim of contributing a novel approach to the episode. In addition, by incorporating Cuba's experience into the picture, Diez Acosta's book may have set into motion another sort of blockade, one that could finally interrupt the former superpowers' intellectual monopoly over the history **and** story of the Missile Crisis. But in order to accomplish this successfully, Cuba and its historiography may also have to evolve into a new era, beyond the Cold War juxtaposition of victims and villains; heroes and rogues.

Notes

[1] The list of sources on the subject is too voluminous to include here. Some of the most recent works are: James G. Blight and David A. Welch, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1989); James G. Blight, *The Shattered Crystal Ball: Fear and Learning in the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Savage, MD.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1990); Bruce J. Allyn, James G. Blight, and David A. Welch (eds.), *Back to the Brink: The Moscow Conference on the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Lanham, MD.: University Press of America, 1991), and *Cuba On the Brink: Fidel Castro, the Missile Crisis and the Collapse of Communism* (New York: Pantheon; 1993); Bruce J. Allyn, James G. Blight, and David A.Welch (eds.), "Essence of Revision: Moscow, Havana and the Cuban Missile Crisis," *International Security* 14, no. 3 (1989-1990), pp. 136-172; Michael Dobbs, *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War* (New York: Knoff, 2008); Svetlana Savranskaya (ed.), *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis: Castro, Mikoyan, Kennedy, Khrushchev, and the Missiles of November* (Stanford University Press/Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012); Alice George, *The Cuban Missile Crisis: The Threshold of Nuclear War* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

[2] Savranskaya (ed.), *The Soviet Cuban Missile Crisis.*

[3] Ian Lumsden, *Machos, Maricones y Gays: Cuba and Homosexuality* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996); Llovio-Menéndez, José Luis, *Insider: My Life as a Revolutionary in Cuba* (New York: Battam Books, 1986); Lourdes Arguelles and B. Ruby Rich, "Homosexuality, Homophobia, and Revolution: Notes Toward an Understanding of the Cuban Lesbian and Gay Male Experience, Part I," *Signs,* The University of Chicago Press, Vol. 9, No. 4 (Summer, 1984), pp. 683-699.

[4] Laurence Chang and Peter Kornbluh (eds.), *The Cuban Missile Crisis 1962: A National Security Archive Documents Reader* (New York: The New Press, 1999).

Kate Ramsey. 2011. *The Spirits and the Law: Vodou and Power in Haiti*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. xix + 425 pp. ISBN: 0226703797.

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Scholarly interest in the history of Haiti has resurged in recent years, largely focused on the Haitian Revolution. There is, of course, also a plethora of scholarship on Vodou in Haiti. Kate Ramsey's *The Spirits and the Law* should not be overlooked as a run-of-the-mill addition to either body of work. Ramsey's award-winning[1] first book offers a valuable perspective on both the broader history of Haiti and the sociopolitical role of Vodou as she examines the creation and enforcement of laws that restricted ritual practices between the colonial period and the fall of the Duvalier regime. She proposes that these laws were not implemented consistently or successfully for two reasons: first, the government repeatedly failed to differentiate between *le vaudoux*, a form of spiritual practice, and malevolent magic—two distinct concepts in the minds of practitioners. Second, attempts to enforce these laws were subverted and manipulated insofar as it served local populations.

The Spirits and the Law examines the Haitian government's approach to vaudoux as a potential threat to order and civil society, and the international community's view of it as evidence against Haiti's modernity. The government's concerns about spiritual gatherings and practices were amplified by outside forces, namely the Catholic Church and the US military. The greater the attempts to exert control over ritual practice, the more distorted and perverse became their perceptions of vaudoux, and vice versa.

Ramsey addresses the debated etymology of the term *le vaudoux*, clarifying that it refers to a specific type of performance in service to the

spirits (*loi*). *Ginen* refers to the larger spiritual and moral belief system incorporating African, Catholic, and Haitian elements. In the law, prohibited practices were termed *les sortilèges*, which indicates sorcery or spell-casting. Ramsey goes on to demonstrate why such confusion of terminology left the meaning of the law open to citizens' interpretation and manipulation.

In chapter 1, Ramsey begins with the role of 'magic' and ritual during the colonial era and the revolution. From the inception of the Code Noir in 1685 to the revolution in 1791, slaves and people of color were forbidden to gather in large groups or to possess certain symbolic "magical" objects. However, Dessalines' perpetuation of laws against magic and vaudoux during his leadership indicate this was an issue, not just of race or culture, but of political control; a connection had been formed between vaudoux and rebellion.

Chapter 2 looks at Haiti's growth as a nation and its attempts to be accepted internationally as a sovereign state. To promote an image of 'civilization' in keeping with 19th-century ideals, the government continued attempts to suppress "superstition" and *sortilèges* in the *Code Pénal.* By law, citizens had to obtain permits for gatherings, which could be denied if the local official suspected a spiritual purpose. However, in practice, a police officer or local official may well have been a priest or practitioner of vaudoux himself. In the complex web of Catholic, African and indigenous belief and practice that had developed in Haiti over two centuries, few symbols, words, or acts had one meaning only. Adherents of Ginen and vaudoux interpreted the state's laws in a way that benefited them, e.g. as injunctions against those who were suspected to have poisoned, murdered, cannibalized, or cursed others. Thus, ironically, the belief in the supernatural or spiritual was perpetuated by the laws against it; why would the government bother to outlaw 'sorcery' practices if they could not harm anyone? Thus the law and the spirits (both expressed by the word *loi)* influenced each other multilaterally.

In Chapters 3 and 4, Ramsey thoroughly investigates the creation of the sensationalized concept of "voodoo"—and concurrent efforts to suppress it—during the US occupation of Haiti from 1915 to 1934. The US sought to control Haiti through oppressive measures that included forced labor, martial law, and selective enforcement of the Haitian laws against certain spiritual gatherings and practices. US administrators disregarded much of Haitian law, but retained those statutes which banned *les sortilèges*, taking up and expanding the rhetoric that said "superstitious" practices prevented Haiti from modernizing, contributing to civil and moral degradation. Vaudoux became a potent, lurking threat in the military imagination, creating a mythos of murder and cannibalism which soldiers used to justify violence against Haitians. However, practitioners

resisted and subverted US rule by concealing vaudoux ceremonies and interpreting the law to their own use. Marines complained they were obliged to enforce the law in a way that encouraged vaudoux, or at least contradicted the US purpose for persecuting it. Citizens continued to utilize the law in a manner which seemed to confirm the legitimacy of vaudoux.

After the occupation, the Haitian government created new laws banning 'superstitious practices'. However, they also adopted Haitian folk culture and performance as part of a cultural revival, constructing a sanitized exotic past that could be paraded in contrast to modern Haiti. Staged ritual dance performances became popular and were sponsored by governments, so that stylized vaudoux dances surreptitiously acquired an international audience. However, performances of any ritual or vaudoux dances were outlawed in 1943, and the ban on 'superstition' continued. Vaudoux had been driven further underground over the first half of the 20th century, and would not be legalized until 1987.

Ramsey constructs her narrative deftly, combining government records, private documents, and media sources with pertinent theoretical considerations. She utilizes the classic works of Jean Price-Mars and Laënnec Hurbon for substantive information on vaudoux and its historic role in Haitian culture, and the theories of Taussig and Foucault in her social and political analysis. She also acknowledges the influence of Michel-Rolph Trouillot's exploration of the silences in Haitian history. Ramsey's discussion opens up potential for discourse on power relations in popular spirituality, and for closer examination of Haiti's 19th and 20th century history. With renewed attention on Haiti following the 2010 earthquake, scholars of Haiti's history, society and politics have an opportunity to uncover and analyze the triumphs and injustices that have led to Haiti's current state, and to promote continued engagement in Haiti's future.

Note

[1] Berkshire Conference of Women Historians - First Book award.

Beverley Bryan. 2010. *Between Two Grammars, Research and Practice for Language Learning and Teaching in a Creole-speaking Environment.* Kingston: Ian Randle. 194 pp. ISBN: 978-976-637-352-8.

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This book—which consists of an introduction, eight chapters, and a detailed index—offers a multidisciplinary perspective on language learning and teaching, in particular the teaching of English in Jamaica. Its author, Beverley Bryan, indicates that the work has five main aims: (i) to present an enriched view of the multiple meanings of language and English in teaching in the Caribbean; (ii) to provide tools necessary to navigate the language arena, allowing teachers to interrogate their responses to language; (iii) to generate a set of principles appropriate for teaching English in Creole-speaking environments; (iv) to review specific language teaching methodologies; and (v) to empower teachers to develop a critical perspective on their practice. The author makes a direct appeal to those who work in education, but the volume will certainly be appreciated a variety of readers, including those with interests in sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, and pedagogy.

Chapter 1, 'Characterising the Language Situation in Jamaica,' engages literature from Caribbean linguistics, citing the work of influential researchers in the field, including Mervyn Alleyne, Derek Bickerton, and Hubert Devonish. It includes an informative overview of the grammatical features of the island's Creole (hereafter referred to as Jamaican) and discusses shifts in public discourse about the status of the language. Exploring the latter, Bryan examines discourse about Jamaican that have appeared in letters to the editor and notes a diachronic shift in these newspaper debates. She points out that while language issues remain contentious, today such letters tend to assume that the Creole is a full-fledged language. While the chapter does provide details about Jamaican, it does not squarely address questions how to define and distinguish the languages spoken on the island. Of course some readers are likely to already be knowledgeable of Jamaica's linguistic history and sociolinguistic dynamics.

The second chapter, which begins with an interesting section on the emergence of formal education in Jamaica, deals with the school environment. The author indicates that language teaching on the island

began with the establishment of a system of elementary education "under the aegis of the abolition arm of the church" and with the aid of the Negro Education Grant 1835-1845 (p. 24). Tensions exist between Bryan's account of the establishment of an educational system and assertions made by Dunkley (2012). Dunkley views the Negro Educational Grant as an "additional enhancement" to a venture already in place; furthermore, he charges that to conclude that no real system was in place prior to abolition undermines the agency of the enslaved and forfeits the opportunity to "analyze one of the most important ways in which enslaved people demonstrated slave freedom" (p. 70). Readers unfamiliar with the history of the system may be surprised to learn that "payment by results," an arrangement by which student achievement translated into money for schools, dates back to the first half of the nineteenth century. Keeping this in mind, Bryan describes competency in English during this period as a commodity, reminding us, "each mark gained was a pound for the school" (pp. 24-25).

Chapter 2's discussion extends into the twentieth century, addressing curriculum development, access to education, and patterns of classroom interaction. In a section highlighting recent research, Bryan underscores the existence of varying degrees of bilingualism, analyzes several examples of classroom discourse, and emphasizes the importance of the teacher as a bridge between languages.

The next chapter considers how English is taught in secondary schools. It begins with an overview of relevant theories of English as an international language and a survey of scholarship on "the New Englishes." Bryan also addresses the debate about the use of Jamaican as a language of classroom instruction. She makes a distinction between efforts to promote Jamaican as an official language and language of instruction (research by H. Devonish and projects at UWI's Jamaican Language Unit) and opposition to such efforts (the examples provided are from Craig 1999 and 2002).

Something that stood out at this juncture is the description of Jamaican as a language that requires intellectual transformation, "with no natural pathway to modernity" (p. 56). This statement is meant to draw attention to concerns about an orthography and the fact that Jamaican does not have a long history of scientific publications, but the choice of words comes across as problematic. Shifting attitudes toward Creoles and their effective use in classrooms attest to their viability, intellectual value, and the contributions that their speakers have made to the emergence of modern societies. In addition, with the statement that I have singled out readers are encouraged to contemplate excessive economic cost as a reason for rejecting the implementation of JC as an official language, an initiative that has been pursued in conjunction with efforts

to make Jamaican a language of instruction. It seems necessary to touch on a possible flip-side of the argument: leaving things as they are, *not* taking steps to implement Jamaican as a national language or a language of instruction, can also be seen as having excessive costs—economic, social, and human.

The third chapter also addresses the needs of young learners, highlighting research that documents their generally positive attitudes towards English. Shaw (2000), one of the studies cited, finds that students do not report problems with English per se, but do take issue with how it is taught. In response, Bryan includes useful recommendations for teachers, in the areas of reading, writing, and testing. These are contextualized in terms of language goals for the region, established by CARICOM in 1993, and the 2001 Jamaican Language Education Policy.

The fourth chapter maps out a "context-sensitive post-method pedagogy" (Kumaravadivelu 2006) for Jamaica. One of its most interesting sections, the one titled 'Secondary Teachers' Talking,' presents anecdotal information that Bryan collected through interviews with Jamaican teachers. Among these educators Bryan found substantial awareness of the bilingual environment and a strong inclination towards Caribbean content that included use of the vernacular. She reports that their preferred teaching methods were role-playing, skits, panel discussions, and debates. Here and elsewhere in the book 'Caribbean' refers to those societies that were colonized by Britain. Readers with experience teaching English in other parts of the region (e.g., US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico) will easily draw parallels to the contexts in which they have worked.

Central to chapters 5 and 6 are the concepts of language awareness and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), respectively. Bryan defines the former as "the linguistic knowledge that teachers should possess" (p. 87), explaining that it is the educator's ability to identify what students unconsciously or intuitively know with the goal of guiding them through the process of articulating and expanding their knowledge. The chapter endorses two "twin goals" for language teaching: confidence in the vernacular and proficiency in Standard Jamaican English.

The next chapter describes CLT, an approach to teaching that the author contrasts with "the decontextualized, grammar-focused regimes of previous decades." Bryan presents CLT "not as the perfect method but as an approach to teaching that is possible to use as some time with students, depending on the context and learner needs" (p. 103). The chapter covers positive aspects of the approach as well as critics' concerns. The author points out that the development of competency in writing and grammar is compatible with certain communication-centered activities.

Chapter 7 deals with the use of literature in the classroom. It identifies numerous reasons for using literature in the English classroom;

these include enrichment, the promotion of intercultural awareness, the development of critical thinking, and exposure to diverse literary genres. Recommended texts include stories by Lorna Goodison, V.S. Naipul, and Olive Senior. The chapter also offers a table of reading technologies ('technology' refers to any resource that leads to a more efficient or productive outcome) consisting of 22 activities related to pre-reading, reading, post-reading, and group tasks.

The final chapter, 'The Teacher Education Perspective,' examines how teacher education can be made more socially relevant and more effective in terms of its personal impact. As Bryan puts it, here the focus is "not only on the teacher's long established role in the development of the country, but also on the importance of teachers' mental lives and the projection of a professional and personal identity" (p. 153). Elaborating on these ideas, the author offers three arguments in defense of using the critical pedagogy associated with the Brazilian educator and philosopher Paulo Freire in language classrooms. First, she holds that the platform his legacy provides is valuable given that teaching of the second language comes out of a violent political history that places English teachers "in a position where debates about ownership and identity are an inevitable influence on practice" (p. 154). Second, Bryan points out that teachers have often experienced the same linguistic struggles as their students, establishing a strong foundation for the dialogic foundation crucial to critical pedagogy. Third, she argues for the relevance of Freire's principles given teachers' roles in the formation of post-Emancipation societies and their contributions to national development and social change. Links among critical pedagogy, personal development, and the preparation and work of Jamaican teachers become more concrete with Bryan's description of three core courses offered at UWI Mona's School of Education, fleshing out another aspect of her description of teaching as a "potentially powerful and transformative enterprise" (p. xiii).

As I hope the overview provided above has already made clear, this is an informative, scholarly, and successful book. Bryan suggests that if the aims listed in the first paragraph of this review are met, then teachers will be better prepared to "interrogate their responses to language," "make theoretically sound pedagogical decisions," and "see their practice in a wider context of meaning-making" (pp. xiii-xiv). She should be commended not only for accomplishing these goals, but also for effectively contextualizing language teaching in Jamaica in terms of relevant theoretical material and her personal experiences as an educator.

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Peter Hulme. 2011. *Cuba's Wild East: A Literary Geography of Oriente*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. 455 pp. ISBN: 978-1-84631-748-4.

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Cuba's Wild East: A Literary Geography of Oriente, de Peter Hulme, es parte de la serie *American Tropics*: *Towards a Literary Geography,* publicado por la editorial de la Universidad de Liverpool (2011). En la introducción de este texto, Hulme formula una original e interesante aproximación al estudio y escritura de la historia literaria contemporánea, independiente de los conceptos tradicionales de nación e identidad nacional. Esta nueva visión promueve un espacio de discusión transdisciplinario en el que las ciencias sociales se conectan con la literatura y la tradición cultural. En esencia, establece una correlación entre historia, geografía y cultura como punto de partida para el análisis de la producción literaria de regiones, que no necesariamente están enmarcadas dentro de una sola nación, pero que sí comparten una lógica cultural e histórica coherente. Así, sobre la base de esta relación, el autor plantea lo que a mi juicio constituye el aporte fundamental de este texto: la existencia de una geografía literaria enmarcada dentro de una cultural. Esta tesis inevitablemente incita a un replanteamiento del concepto de literatura nacional, a partir de su relación y compromiso con estas regiones. Especialmente, cuando en la mayoría de los casos, los territorios a los que se refiere Hulme son desdeñados dentro de su misma nación; y su producción literaria es prácticamente ignorada por la crítica convencional.

El texto de Hulme centra su atención en el Caribe y dentro de este, en la región oriental cubana. Obviamente, si articula su discurso a partir de la sobrentendida "geografía cultural", el autor intentará distanciarse de las nociones habituales de ideología, frontera y condiciones socioeconómicas, que permearon los estudios caribeños de gran parte del siglo XX. Hasta cierto punto, resulta lógico que abandone la concepción geográfica del Caribe que todos conocemos; y prefiera repensarlo desde un criterio socioeconómico, que no es tan novedoso como pudiera suponerse, pero que reclama para la región una mayor extensión territorial. Me refiero a *Plantation America*, término con el que se conoce las partes del continente, cuyas sociedades se estructuraron, en una u otra medida, por la economía de plantación. Según Hulme, el nuevo Caribe (aunque viejo) debería comprender: al sureste de los Estados Unidos, el litoral atlántico de América Central, las islas caribeñas y el noreste de América del Sur. Y digo "según Hulme" porque siendo consecuente con la perspectiva socioeconómica que emplea, habría que completar esta lista con los territorios de Brasil y las franjas occidentales de Ecuador y Perú.

En realidad, no creo que esta pequeña discrepancia tenga una repercusión posterior en su texto. Soy consciente de que cualquiera que sea el método escogido para estudiar el área, siempre enfrentará la misma problemática: la de delinear con exactitud sus nuevos límites. Sin embargo, no puedo decir lo mismo acerca de algunas de las conclusiones a las que llega sobre el oriente cubano. Aun si estas consideraciones fueran descartadas, el problema persistiría, por cuanto Oriente constituye el área de interés y eje central de este escrito. Esto no quiere decir que deseche todas las opiniones de Hulme, y que me oponga completamente a la relectura que hace de la región.

Empecemos con el hecho de que no hay un acuerdo unánime para definir a Oriente, más allá de un criterio geográfico. Hulme lo reconoce. En su opinión, es un territorio singular, difícil de determinar y con una connotación ambigua, aun dentro de su misma nación. En cierto sentido y dejando a un lado el discurso geográfico, yo no diría que la connotación es ambigua, más bien, me atrevo a decir que es peyorativa. Bastaría con mencionar que en la época colonial era tildada como una tierra de herejes, viciosos y vagos, mientras que en la actualidad, los sectores populares la comparan despectivamente con Palestina y la emigración de su pueblo, en este caso, por supuesto, hacia La Habana. Paradójicamente, a pesar de la marginalidad de ayer y hoy, Oriente es, sobre todas las cosas, el símbolo de las luchas de independencia cubana y protagonista de todas ellas.

Debe quedar claro que Cuba es una nación con dos historias, lo advierten los investigadores (Juan Pérez de la Rivas, Antonio Benítez Rojo, Manuel Moreno Fraginals, sólo por citar algunos); y el mismo

Hulme parte de esta premisa para establecer un contrapunteo entre los dos extremos de la Isla. Ciertamente, su balanza se inclina hacia Oriente. Lo considera la verdadera nación cubana, traicionada por los intereses europeizantes y neocoloniales de la burguesía habanera. Y, en última instancia, lo distingue como lo propiamente criollo y caribeño dentro de Cuba. Yo difiero. Esta visión de Oriente puede resultar demasiado esquemática.

En primer lugar, las asimetrías entre ambas regiones son producto de la Plantación y del grado de compromiso que tuvieron los criollos con la Metrópolis. Indiscutiblemente, Oriente no necesitaba de España y de la trata para subsistir. No era una sociedad negrera y sí autosuficiente. Su nivel de independencia del poder colonial contrasta con el de la sacarocracia habanera, dominada por las exigencias de la economía de plantación y la necesidad de exportar su producto. Es lógico, entonces, que el conflicto racial, clasista y nacionalista, que caracteriza a la sociedad cubana hasta el siglo XIX, se resuelva en Oriente y sólo aquí se exprese con fuerza independentista. Por otro lado, el hecho de haber experimentado un gran poder económico y haber sido víctima de las contradicciones y los conflictos internos que el mismo poder genera, no excluye a la oligarquía habanera de ser criolla, como tampoco implica que La Habana estuviera exenta de un pensamiento nacionalista, a la manera de Saco, Varela o José de la Luz.

Ahora bien, no hay dudas que las provincias orientales participan activamente en la formación de la cultura criolla. De hecho, se genera aquí y en la banda norte de la isla. Posteriormente, se extiende a otras regiones y se enriquece con los componentes típicos que adopta de cada una de estas localidades, principalmente, con los de la capital. Inclusive, hay evidencias que sustentan que en el siglo XVIII en La Habana y en otras ciudades importantes del país ya había una cultura criolla, aunque con diferencias tangibles entre sí. Estas variaciones, unidas a otros factores, son las que más tarde engendrarán la riqueza cultural cubana. Consecuentemente, no puede hablarse de la existencia de una cultura criolla única, común y homogénea para toda la isla; y, mucho menos, de que Oriente sea más auténtico que Occidente o viceversa. Las diferencias entres ambas regiones son la manifestación de que precisamente hay más de una modalidad de ser criollo. Lo mismo sucede con respecto al aspecto caribeño: dos modos diferentes de serlo. Oriente comparte la cultura criolla del Paso de los Vientos. La Habana tiene más interacción con las zonas costeras de Colombia, México y Nueva Orleáns, territorios que el mismo Hulme considera caribeños en su definición extendida del área. De modo, que al concluir que Oriente es "lo propiamente caribeño dentro de Cuba" y, por ende, que La Habana no, el autor se contradice a sí mismo, a menos, que opine que estar en el Caribe, no necesariamente

implica ser caribeño.

Volviendo al texto, Hulme advierte que no quiere "narrar" a Oriente como una región dentro de Cuba, sino como un "punto de coincidencia y encuentros". Sin embargo, pienso que lo traicionan numerosos factores: los textos que selecciona, cada capítulo de este libro, en los que crea, quizás inconscientemente, su propio mito de la zona, incluso, la propia introducción, en la que lo compara con La Habana y lo exalta frente a ella. Pero más que todo lo traiciona, el reconocer su marginalidad, su carácter residual, con respecto a la capital; y, como resultado, su relación particular, y a la vez complicada, con los ya cuestionados conceptos de nación, identidad y literatura nacional, conceptos que, salvo raras excepciones (la Casa del Caribe, una de ellas), se materializan alrededor de La Habana, y de lo que política, social y culturalmente, allí acontece.

Por otro lado, la combinación de los textos que componen este libro es muy acertada. Reúne una variada producción literaria que comprende alrededor de veinticinco escritos, entre los que se destacan "**fragmentos**" de novelas históricas, discursos políticos, poesía, canciones, reportajes periodísticos, testimonios de viajes, etc. Y subrayo la palabra "fragmentos", porque de ellos sólo tenemos las citas que Hulme intercala a su discurso y las reescrituras que de ellos hace. Casi todos se refieren a encuentros circunstanciales entre cubanos o foráneos con figuras prominentes de la Isla: Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Calixto García, José Martí, sólo por citar algunos. Por lo general, son textos espontáneos que dan constancia de la vivencia de su autor en la zona. El resultado de su combinación: un libro polifónico que poco a poco comienza a armar un rompecabezas de la región. Pero no cualquier rompecabezas: naturalmente, el de Hulme. En el caso de las citas, por ejemplo, el lector recibe el fragmento seleccionado con una significación ya atribuida; y en el de las reescrituras, la transgresión de un discurso ajeno, que pone una vez más al descubierto la estrategia selectiva de Hulme, y el carácter arbitrario, por no decir personal, de dicha selección. Sin embargo, también es cierto que a través de este doble juego de selección/significación el autor comienza a elaborar lo que terminaría siendo su propia reescritura de Oriente.

El libro comienza con una introducción en la que se ofrecen explicaciones generales sobre el texto, se enmarca teóricamente y, a partir de la tesis que formula, propone su método de análisis. Por lo demás, se divide en ocho capítulos asociados a una fecha y un lugar específico. Los capítulos se organizan cronológicamente, desde 1868 hasta el presente, aunque, en repetidas ocasiones, el regreso al pasado es inevitable, ya sea para explicar la repercusión de un hecho histórico, el origen de un pensamiento político, el fundamento de una ideología, la trascendencia de una corriente literaria, etc. Geográficamente, recorre de Bayamo a Manzanillo, de la Sierra Maestra hasta los puertos de Santiago de Cuba y

Baracoa y, finalmente, se detiene en Guantánamo y su base militar estadounidense. Por lo general, cada capítulo abarca más allá de la historia aludida en su título. Así, por ejemplo, se narra la historia en cuestión, se discute el contexto histórico-social en que se desarrolla, se recoge la opinión de otros críticos sobre el tema o algún aspecto específico asociado a la narración, se citan fragmentos de los textos seleccionados, se rescriben parte de ellos, etc. Estilísticamente, no hay mucha diferencia entre uno y otro; y todos fluyen según el ritmo de lo narrado y el propio discurso del autor.

En conclusión, *Cuba's Wild East: a Literary Geography of Oriente* es sin duda un libro original e informativo. Enmarcado en la tradición de los estudios culturales, cuestiona la visión tradicional de historia, literatura e historia literaria. Uno de sus aspectos más significativos es que reconoce la trascendencia cultural de una región de Cuba, que a pesar de ser protagonista de sus luchas independentistas, ha sido y sigue siendo un territorio marginado, incluso, por los propios cubanos. Sin embargo, el aporte fundamental de este texto yace en la introducción del concepto de geografía literaria en su relación con otra geografía: la cultural. Dicha relación permite una redefinición de lo nacional y de lo que puede o no realmente constituir una metonimia de la nación.

En su intento de descifrar a Oriente, de leerlo en su propio contexto, Hulme lo rescribe; y aunque no creo que esta reescritura escape de su propia textualidad, constituye un paso necesario para comprender, sobre todo un lector no especialista en el tema, la riqueza y complejidad cultural, el discurso de resistencia, el legado de sus migraciones; en fin, el desarraigo y marginalidad de esta región. La geografía literaria de Oriente que Hulme propone, ya no como el resultado que logra, sino como el método de estudio que sugiere, ofrece una alternativa a la historia literaria cubana, historia tradicional que se escribe en torno al discurso canónico y a partir de las premisas de la cultura hegemónica.

Recomiendo la lectura de este libro; y pienso que abre el espacio no sólo para el debate, sino también para la creación de otras geografías literarias de Oriente (como también de otras regiones marginales), en donde las ciencias sociales se conecten con la historia, la literatura y la tradición cultural, pero en las que Oriente deje de ser una construcción del autor y revele su propia significación. Definitivamente, el tema no está agotado.

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Serwan M.J. Baban, ed. 2009. *Enduring Geohazards in the Caribbean: Moving from the Reactive to the Proactive*. Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press. 300 pp. ISBN: 978-976-640-204-4.

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The book *Enduring Geohazards in the Caribbean: Moving from the Reactive to the Proactive* is a very useful work for academics, geohazards specialists, and policy and decision makers. The book is an excellent source for those seeking to understand the nature and extent of geohazards-associated problems and the range of possible solutions to manage floods and landslides in a sustainable fashion. The book is a compilation of contributions made by scholars brought together to the regional workshop Enduring Geohazards (landslides and floods) in the Caribbean region. The book is a review of current management practices for floods and landslides, and a call for improving and providing a conceptual framework for transforming geohazards management from something that is predominately reactive to more proactive strategies. The book is broadly divided into two parts. The first two sections deal with the presentation and identification of geohazards events, especially, landslides and floods and the last section explores the management of geohazards events using supposed best possible approaches and technologies.

Chapters in the book are presented as a compendium of case studies and summaries of geohazards events (landslides and floods), and clearly indicate the incorporation of reputable technologies, such as, geoinformatics to facilitate mitigation and decision making over space and time. The content of the book is well supported with appropriate references and with an abundance of maps and charts. The fundamental premise of the book is that is will be impossible to minimize geohazards losses and facilitate mitigation, particularly at the national level until we are able to develop and demonstrate the use of national-level geohazards inventories and databases, build resilient communities, all with the support of cutting edge technologies, such as geoinformatics. The book follows logical sequences of subsequent discussions to support its premise.

Chapter 1 presents an overview of the potential reasons for geohazards in the Caribbean region and some of the best possible solutions to lessening the impacts of these hazards. The chapter explains the vulnerability of the Caribbean region to geohazards with vulnerability analyzed

in terms of exposure and sensitivity of the region to specific geohazards. This chapter suggests that the region could better manage its vulnerability to the traditional geohazards that influence the region by building its resilience, preparedness and adaptation to these events. The chapter further reinforces that the most basic approach to mitigate geohazards would be to build a robust conceptual and planning framework for understanding and assessing risk, for linking these to human well-being and then identifying points of resilience that might be enhanced.

In section 1, Chapters 2 to 5 deal with the identification of landslides and possible proactive approaches to managing landslide hazards in the Caribbean region. Chapter 2 outlines methods for assessing landslides from three possible perspectives: an engineering method, a GIS method, and a landslide warning system method. Chapters 2 through 5 also suggest the integration of all the three methods along with the incorporation of geotechnical information into the GIS method to enhance proactive landslide management possibilities. Chapter 3 reviews the initiatives taken by Town and Country Planning Division of Trinidad and Tobago to monitor unplanned rapid expansion of development into hillsides. The chapter presents a developed geoinformatics based approach for managing hillside development in this region. Chapter 4 reviews the problems associated with mapping susceptibility to landslide for tropical mountains environment. The chapter addresses the challenges of producing a reliable and robust database in most developing countries, in this case Trinidad and Tobago. Chapter 5 addresses challenges associated with mapping and identification of potential landslides for risk and hazard assessment. Similar to Chapter 4, major obstacles include lack of data and an understanding of factors controlling the landslide processes. This chapter suggests the use of remote sensing technology to bridge the gap in data and required information.

In section 2, Chapters 6 to 9 discuss problems associated with flood management and mitigation in the Caribbean region. Chapter 6 outlines a GIS based method for flood management and mitigation. The chapter emphasizes the use of GIS based analysis to expedite the development of mitigation strategies in the watershed region. Chapter 7 explores GIS based mapping of flood risk assessment and flood sensitivity maps for a watershed in the Trinidad and Tobago. Chapter 8 identifies the different types of flooding, such as, water floods, debris floods, and debris flows all of which have serious implications for planning and flood mitigation measures in the region. This chapter emphasizes some of the challenges associated with flood mitigation measures. Chapter 9 discusses the development of a methodology to identify flood-prone areas in Trinidad using a variety of sources including available flood maps, topological maps, and aerial photos, digital elevation models (DEM), newspaper articles,

and other historical data.

In section 3, Chapters 10 to 14 are concerned with issues associated with the management of geohazards in the Caribbean region. Chapter 10 reviews current management of floods and landslides, which predominately are reactive approaches since currently major efforts are focused on post-disaster events. This chapter advances the call for a more proactive approach in Trinidad and Tobago through the development of a holistic approach, which utilizes available and reliable innovative technologies such as geoinformatics. Chapter 11 explores some of the challenges to flood management and draws lessons from international research and experience with the aim of proposing strategies that could aid the development of more resilient and robust management systems in Caribbean region. Chapter 12 explains a broad field-based method used to recognize unstable slopes, and to provide simplified options for mitigating this instability. Chapter 13 reinforces the development of geoinformatics based early warning systems for landslides and floods in the Caribbean region that are previously mentioned in other book chapter discussions. Chapter 14 suggests changes in planning practice and hazard management and offers a framework for generating national readiness as a critical plank for promoting resilient development.

The book explains and analyzes some of the geohazards in the Caribbean region but with only references to floods and landslides, thus giving a useful but incomplete and limited understanding of problems associated with the other types of geohazards events in the region. The book is a bit ambiguous and unclear about defining proactive approaches for disaster management. Furthermore, the editor and other scholars have mainly suggested the incorporation of innovative technologies, such as geoinformatics, as a means to transform from reactive to proactive approaches, while neglecting the role of other possible non-structural measures. The editor and other scholars obviously understand the importance of proactive management to facilitate mitigation due to the many times it is suggested in the book, however, none of them specifically mention ways that it may be possible and in fact necessary to incorporate community knowledge and community participation into the process of building resilient communities. Nonetheless, the book does support the need for proactive hazard mitigation planning.

Julia Álvarez. 2012. *A Wedding in Haiti: The Story of a Friendship*. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill. 287 pp. ISBN 978-1616201302 (hardcover).

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A Wedding in Haiti, a travelogue/"US-moire"[1] is as much about Julia Álvarez, the Dominican American writer and her family as it is about her young Haitian friend, Piti, and his family in pre- and post-earthquake Haiti. As she says in the opening pages about the narrative that follows, the opportunity to travel to Haiti allowed her to discover her "neighbor country who was and still is 'the sister [she] hardly knew'" (n.p.). The ensuing pages take the reader through the sometimes difficult and painful, often times funny, always revealing and poignant process of Álvarez getting to know and embrace her estranged sibling.

The text is comprised of a series of vignettes, perhaps taken from her journal entries during her travels that detail she and her husband, Bill's journey from Vermont where they live to Santiago, Dominican Republic where her parents who suffer from Alzheimer's disease live, to a town outside of Bassin Bleu in Haiti where Piti and Eseline, his fiancé, with their baby girl, Loude Sendjika, nicknamed Ludy by Álvarez, in attendance, are to be married. The reader learns that they make the journey because several years before ("circa 2001" (p.3)), Álvarez made a promise to the young man whom she and Bill had met and befriended when he was just a boy and who worked for them at the time, that when he got married she would attend the wedding. Several years later in 2009 Piti calls her home in Vermont from Haiti to invite her to his marriage ceremony.

Although the narrative is linear there is a striking and persistent tension that varies between a push and pull, backward and forward movement, paralleling or doubling throughout the text. Álvarez sets up this tension from the beginning when she calls Haiti the sister she never knew. She continues in different ways at different times both in the content and the form of the text to reinforce, but also trouble the sense of familial connection between not just the countries but their inhabitants. For example, the narrative swings between stories of her parents' younger lives together and their current state of mental and physical decay (pp. 18-25), there are short history lessons about the complex relationship between Haiti and the D.R. sprinkled throughout the text, upon her return to the D.R. she compares the dark-skinned

people (perhaps Haitians, she wonders) doing the hard work in the back of a cassava bread-making operation to the lighter skinned workers up front (p. 124). These are just a few examples. There is also the haunting sense that the author is marking a "time before" and a "time after" in the book's form. This is achieved partly through the division of the book into two sections that are marked by a seemingly hand-drawn map of Haiti and the D.R. that span two pages, complete with the route and stops that Álvarez and her fellow travelers made during their first journey across the border pre-earthquake and the route they take during their second trip post-earthquake. The arrows that point out different spots on the map actually look penciled in, enhancing the intimate feel of the text.

The work is painfully honest, perhaps exposing the author to criticism. For example, when she relates Bill's comment that the passengers traveling with them are not going to protest the decision of the guy who is giving them a ride home, the reader may read into the remark evidence of all-too-familiar trope of the white male exerting his power over the indebted subaltern. While this may, indeed, be a valid reading of his words, his words and actions before and after that moment reveal a human being with his own foibles, fears and ego who goes above and beyond to protect those whom he obviously considers part of his family. This is made most clear when he insists on visiting Port-au-Prince after the earthquake so that Piti can see it because it is part of his country, but also that he and his wife be there to support him when he does. By now, the reader who has come to know Bill through his wife, understands that it is because he wants to support Piti and share the experience with him as someone who is an important part of his life (pp. 158 and 280).

Perhaps because the text is so revealing that the reader may come away wondering what Álvarez leaves out. After all she is a storyteller and the work of weaving an effective and entertaining story is deciding what to include and what to omit. But because she is such an effective storyteller the reader may forget this fact—until she reminds him or her, reflecting on the stories she and her fellow travelers will tell. She asks, "What will the rest of us edit out? How to convey what we have seen? One thing is certain. Like the Ancient Mariner we will feel compelled to tell the story, over and over. As a way to understand what happened to us" (pp. 128-129). Because the text reads like a journal or scrapbook of memories from her travels (partly because of the "hand-drawn map and the inclusion of personal photos"), with her conversations and emotions so vividly relayed, this reminder adds yet another layer to the back and forth or doubling that threads its way through the work. Whereas until now the couples involved in the exchange have been Álvarez and her husband, her parents, Piti and Eseline, the D.R. and Haiti and their populations, now the reader—presumably abroad in an English-speaking

country—is also drawn in.

The memoire is a triumph in the way that it forces those who think they know Haiti to see it through someone who is discovering it for the first time's eyes. The text is enhanced by the abundance of photos that Álvarez snapped during both trips. But there is an added surprise for the reader who digs a little deeper. As Álvarez explains on her website, she was disappointed when she found out that the photos would be printed in black and white. Therefore, in order to allow the reader to get a better sense of what she describes (including a red dress that she spots being sold by a vendor on the street), she has posted all of the photos in color. In addition, her husband and stepdaughter produced a compilation of Piti and his band's music, which is for sale through the site and at Álvarez's speaking engagement with all of the proceeds going to Piti.

The title, *A Wedding in Haiti*, is deceptively simple, for this text is much more than a recounting of a trip across a border to a neighboring country. It is a story of transformation, mind and body, as Álvarez remarks (p. 108, p. 280). The reader comes away with the sense that Haiti will stay with Álvarez and her husband for a long time. The stories that she weaves will stay with the reader for a very long time as well.

Note

[1] In an interview with Mark Kurlansky she talks about not wanting to call the book a "ME-moir…but an US-moir, a story about many of us", but the publishers did not think that readers would recognize it as a genre. Author One-on-One: Julia Álvarez and Mark Kurlansky. Amazon.com. <http://www.amazon.com/gp/feature.html/?docId=1000799231>