

ABSTRACTS

- **The Emergency of Trinidad: Late Colonialism and the Work of the Sovereign Mimic – Glenn A.E. Griffin**

Abstract:

In August 2011, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago declared its fourth political state of emergency since colonial independence in August 1962. “Black criminal violence” has engendered a ‘state of exception’ that is increasingly indistinct from normative ‘governmentation’. This violence is interpreted as a contest between sovereign governmental power and the internecine fighting of black gangsters insensible to law and incapable of self-governance. This problematic interpretation receives its paradigmatic formulation in the Trinidad writings of V.S. Naipaul. Discernible in Naipaul’s fictions and histories is a redeployed narcoanalytic colonial discourse of Negro “mimicry, servility, and lunacy” by which contemporary Trinidadian government reproduces an Afro-Trinidadian subject who can be killed with impunity, both by the government and by his semblance; a Caribbean *homo sacer*. Discoverable in the coterminous gang and emergency violence is the necrotic construction of postcolonial sovereignty as the right to kill your fellow/self. A critical application of Giorgio Agamben’s analytics, one that recognises its colonial complicities, makes discernible the unwitting sacralisation of the Negro in Naipaul’s racist work and locates the insovereign Afro-Caribbean mimic at both the originative formulation and limit of sovereign power in the West. Excessional and unkillable, this Afro-Caribbean *homo sacer* arrests the transitivity of late-colonial sovereign power and reiterates Aime Cesaire’s recognition that there are no states of exception/emergency; no one kills with impunity.

- **Black Liberation Theology and Its Impact on Garvey and the UNIA/ACL – Dave Gosse**

Garvey scholars, while they agree that religion was important to Marcus Garvey, they differ in the extent to which religion was fundamental to the UNIA/ACL. There was indeed a strong relationship between Garvey’s black theology and the shaping of the UNIA/ACL. As such, Garvey’s theological framework ought to be taken seriously as his theological methodology was very much similar to that of current black theologians. Garvey believed that blacks had to be critical of the traditional understanding of God, as one’s historical context was the starting point for understanding the nature of God. His re-interpretation of God and traditional Christian doctrines provided the philosophical framework from which he could build an organised movement, aimed at uniting all blacks under a unitary umbrella, to lift their self-consciousness and to address their social, economic and political needs.

- **Consuming Slavery? Santiago de Cuba’s El Barracón Restaurant – Rudyard Alcocer**

Abstract:

This article examines the racial, historical, and ideological nuances of ‘El Barracón,’ a restaurant in operation in Santiago de Cuba since 2008. Following a comparative survey of variable, nation-specific approaches to the memorialisation of slavery that focuses primarily on the United States and Great Britain, the paper analyses features of Cuban history, geography, and culture (including its foodways) in describing a restaurant (“El Barracón”) that would be difficult to fathom in the United States, especially, given that it purports to recreate the era of slavery in Cuba. In doing so, the author seeks to explain how a restaurant that openly and nonchalantly commemorates slavery is possible in terms of a Cuban historical and cultural context, and what

such a restaurant suggests about both Cubanness as well as perceived relations on the island between the era of slavery and the present.

Keywords: slavery, food, restaurants, Cuba, identity, memory

- **Resistance through ‘Robber Talk’: Storytelling Strategies and the Carnival Trickster – Emily Zobel Marshall**

Abstract:

The Midnight Robber exemplifies many of the practices central to Caribbean carnival culture: resistance to officialdom, linguistic innovation and disruptive play, parody and humour. Akin to Anansi and Brer Rabbit, tricksters of West African origin in the Americas, the Midnight Robber relies on his verbal agility – his ‘Robber-talk’ – to thwart officialdom and triumph over his adversaries. This article begins by examining the cultural history of the Midnight Robber before exploring his journey from oral to literary form in the late twentieth and twenty-first century. It demonstrates how Caribbean writers Earl Lovelace, Nalo Hopkinson and Keith Jardim have drawn from his revolutionary energy to challenge authoritarian power and corruption in the contemporary Caribbean through linguistic and literary skill.

- **Ladies Dressed as Men Dressed as Ladies: Collective Memory, ‘Repertoire’ and Innovation in Post-Volcano Montserrat Masquerade – Linda L. Sturtz**

Abstract:

Collective memory within communities simultaneously preserves knowledge about the past and creates cohesion among groups who share that memory. In the aftermath of the volcanic disaster in Montserrat, a significant cultural practice, the Montserrat Masquerade continued to serve both these functions, albeit in new forms. Although Masquerade bands were organised in new ways, they continued to provide a form of national collective memory, pride in Montserratians’ common past and a symbol of continuity for a new generation facing a complicated future.

- **Literary Festival Tourism in Montserrat – Gracelyn Cassell**

Abstract:

Festivals are becoming increasingly popular as a means to enhance, enliven and inject greater resilience into a relatively mature Caribbean tourism product. Festival tourism capitalises on the cultural wealth and heritage of the archipelago as well as creates space for infusion of new entertainment genres within the tourism offering of the islands. The British Overseas Territory of Montserrat is heavily dependent on tourism as a contributor to GDP and within the last decade has chosen to focus on festival tourism as a means of marketing the island as a destination of choice for the discerning traveller. In 2009, Montserrat launched the Alliouagana Festival of the Word, a literary festival, following on from the establishment of the Tourism Challenge Fund the previous year; an initiative intended to support and encourage inter alia heritage and cultural activities and thus breathe new life into the island’s traditional concentration on residential tourism. The experience of the Alliouagana Festival of the Word will be examined in an attempt to assess the economic and social value and challenges of festival tourism.