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Editorial

Beyond History: Rise of a New World

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Writing in *Culture and Imperialism* in 1993, fifteen years after *Orientalism*, the book widely seen as having launched the practice of postcolonial theory, Edward Said situates Caribbean literature and ideas within his later thought on European empire and colonialism in the world beyond the Middle East. In this phase of his thought, Said elaborated what writing from the Caribbean and other colonized spaces had brought irresistibly to his attention: "What I left out of *Orientalism* was that response to Western dominance which culminated in the great movement of decolonization all across the Third World" (Said 1993, Introduction, xii). Among Caribbean theorists and writers such as Walter Rodney, C.L.R. James, Aimé Césaire, and Frantz Fanon, it is Fanon who most extensively influences Said's thought about the power of critique that functions as resistance and cultural store.

In like manner, Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (*The Empire Writes Back*, Ashcroft et al. 1989) see Caribbean writing as essential to the project of defining postcolonial studies in the midst of the controversies of the time about what exactly postcolonialism is and what its origins are. Drawing on a different group of Caribbean writer-theorists than those cited by Said—Jacques Stephen Alexis, Kamau Brathwaite, George Lamming, Wilson Harris, Denis Williams and others—Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin assert that "It is the Caribbean. . .which has been the crucible of the most extensive and challenging post-colonial literary theory" (p. 145). Since then, numerous critics have gone on to highlight the Caribbean input within postcolonial discourse. Among the wariest of these is Shalini Puri (*The Caribbean Postcolonial*, Puri 2004) who excoriates what she sees as a tendency to appropriate the Caribbean's multiple formulations of hybridity while applying them indiscriminately across postcolonial discourses and "post-colonial" spaces. Such appropriations, Puri contends, flatten, or negate the fine nuances of historical context that allows postcolonial discourse to retain an activist intention and critical edge (pp. 2, 3).

One instance in line with Puri's claim might be Kamau Brathwaite's tidalectics, which circulates in blue humanities discourse, particularly in relation to issues of climate change and global warming, without any necessary awareness of Brathwaite as the originator of the concept. It is indeed ironic that Brathwaite is widely used in globalized discourses of which he is deeply critical: for example, his explosive 1995 essay " A Post-cautionary Tale of the Helen of Our Wars" critiques postcolonialism as a Western imposition in which "we hear about the natives, but . . .don't hear them" (Brathwaite 1995, p. 70).[1]

The permeability—as well as opacity—of the Caribbean as the location of global diasporas (based in its founding as the first conflictual meeting place of Africa, Asia, and Europe in the Americas) and as a place that crosses multiple other diasporas through continuing processes of migration, means as well that Caribbean literature crosses into and is often subsumed into African American, Black British, African diaspora, Latin American, American hemispheric, archipelagic, global, and of course postcolonial literatures. Criticism in each of these fields

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carries its own political urgencies, geopolitical hegemonies, ellipses, lacunae, and erasures that highlight the ways postcolonialism, and postcoloniality for that matter, in none of its guises or relationalities is either a singular trajectory or a level playing field.

From all of this, two paradoxes, one of which Puri's book interrogates, are evident in the field of Caribbean literary (and, by extension, cultural) studies. Firstly, Caribbean studies is a field of high visibility and marginality in academic and indeed postcolonial discourse. Secondly, within Caribbean discourse itself, the wide global reach of its circuitries and connections is acknowledged as integral to the region's identities, yet at the same time there is a history of active resistance against being identified by any globalizing moniker, including postcolonialism.

Generally speaking, of course, theorists do not name themselves or their ideas by the names of fields into which their ideas are folded—that is the work of critics and meta-critics. Partly for this reason "postcolonial" and "postcolonialism" are not terms one finds in the work of foundational Caribbean writer-theorists such as Brathwaite, Carpentier, Césaire, Harris, Lamming, Price-Mars, Walcott, or Wynter. One could note in further explanation of this relative absence of postcolonialism as a claimed sphere of discourse, that these writer-theorists produced their founding ideas in the colonial era, before the "post" had entered history as a prefix to colonialism. Even so, however, their works written after the colonial period also do not feature the term in any significant way, nor do later theorists such as Édouard Glissant, NourbeSe, or Dionne Brand frame their thought with reference to this field. And while postcolonialism has proved fruitful as a synergetic discourse for scholars in the field of Caribbean studies—a field that lends itself irresistibly to eclectic theorizations and practices—alliances with the fields of Black and diaspora studies, and more recently hemispheric studies, have seemed more productive, as a consequence of closely shared genealogies and contemporary dynamics of location.

The fact is that, as we noted in the Call for Papers, Caribbean literary thought, theory, and even much of the criticism[2], lie aslant postcolonialism (and other theoretical positionings). The history of this both instantiates an understandable resistance to the jeopardy of new forms of cultural and discursive imperialism, and points to a habit of digging down into the culture to find and make indigenous[3] pathways of self-fashioning, beyond the resistance that Said and Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin highlight. Nowhere is the paradox of being "postcolonial"[4] (in the sense of enacting or instantiating a critique of colonialism) while refusing the historicist label more apparent than in Wilson Harris' mythopoetic vision and Derek Walcott's ([1974] 1998) excoriation of "the muse of history" which for him is impossibly mired in a poetics of recrimination and despair. The sticking point seems to be a history in which the Caribbean begins with Columbus, metonymic of what Harris calls "the accidents" or "ornamental stasis" that inhabits history as a conceptual frame (Harris 1999, p. 153). Lamming too, though perhaps in some ways an arch-historicist, paradoxically calls for a future sovereignly imagined via a return to "original homes of spirit" (Lamming 1995, "Coming, Coming Home", p. 24) which are effectively sourced not so much through history-as-the-past, as through mythic gateways rooted in cultural memory (Lamming 1960, *The Pleasures of Exile*, Introduction).

Through Lamming's and Harris' formulations we see vividly Maya Deren's ([1953] 2004) definition of myth as "the facts of mind made manifest in a fiction of matter" (*Divine Horsemen*, p. 21). Jean Price-Mars and the other Haitian thinkers of the 1930s, and Sylvia Wynter in the 1970s building on their ideas, rework the concept of indigeneity outside of Western epistemes, in ways that track osmotic and crucible relations among origins, rift and diaspora. In such conceptualizations, indigeneity is accruable beyond traditional definitions in History. The point is that, as Edward Baugh allows us to see through his seminal essay "The West Indian Writer and His Quarrel with History" (Baugh 1977), these thinkers and writer-theorists,

responding to and within their colonial and post-colonial encounters, engage the history of colonialism without making history their endpoint or their hermeneutic positionality. More recently, Kezia Page (2024) interrogates temporalities like those inherent in a term such as postcolonialism through her use of the term "inside tenement time" to posit time as a psychic, interiorized experience in the Caribbean's long encounter with colonial and neocolonial surveillances. Refusals such as those signaled by Baugh and Page are perhaps the major reason postcolonialism as a conceptual term, with its focus on history as "during" and "post"—time markers of reality, sits uneasily within Caribbean literary discourse.[5]

In the present moment, in which Caribbean criticism is diversified across global spaces, "postcolonialism" as a theoretical or metatheoretical naming gains more traction than in the past, yet that traction remains questionable, for all the reasons we outline above. We may see in the self-conscious separation from such globalized namings the (productive) unease of the formerly colonized, and this is not surprising: in some instances colonization is a mere 70 years or less in the past; in others the status of dependency or overseas province became the political status that replaced the status of colony; and in almost all instances, including that of Haiti 200 years after self-freeing by revolution, the threat or reality of neo-colonialism by "the big neighbor to the north" is ongoing.

In some ways, the Caribbean approach is akin to Zora Neale Hurston's (1928) cautious embrace of theoretical eclecticism—going '"a piece of the way" with them' ("How It Feels"). But, perhaps more accurately, we discern a privileging of reflexive voice in which the Caribbean subject speaks not to the [colonizing] Other but to themselves. Increasingly, but also from its first emergence, the theorists and writers (often one and the same) engage in discourse that, even while it is often a response to and against empire and the successors of empire, does not so much resemble opposition and reply, a contention with the Other (the Empire, the West) as it resembles an inner colloquium that the Other (the Empire, the West) may or may not (wish to) overhear. Carol Bailey's description of Caribbean literary poetics as an "inward turn" (Bailey 2014, p. 10) speaks to this endemic way of seeing and speaking. In contemporary times, this speaking primarily *to* the Caribbean *from* the Caribbean ("from", like "to" being a subject positionality) is exemplified in a particular way in the work of many of the region's writers who, living in metropolitan centers, situate their work and declared inspiration within the region and/or its vernacular arts and legacies. These writers, conscious of having inherited a legacy, a creative tradition laid down by previous writers within less than a hundred years, are without the "nervousness" of their predecessors who had grown up under colonization.

Postcolonialism often appears in the wider context of current discourse as a[n] in/convenient catch-all that seeks to expand its fluidity quotient by incorporating its aftermaths such as globalization and global studies. Yet here precisely we approach the original problematic—that issues such as globalization, the global noir cityscape, global refugeeism and the new rise of white, religious right and neoliberal supremacies starkly question the "post" in postcolonialism (and post-imperialism for that matter) and return us to the original quarrels from the "Third World" about who gets to name what, and how. For the editors of this special issue, "postcolonialism" in relation to Caribbean literature is a diachronic and diacritical marker that speaks, in reverse symbolization, to what has not taken place—the end of colonialism as a historical or political event complex. Diachronically, what we see rather is colonialism's large capacity, as one of imperialism's many branches, to morph, self-replicate, shed, and acquire new skin. The evidence of this is open and clear in the kinds of events we daily experience and see on our daily television screens. Diacritically, "postcolonialism" functions as a marker at the intersection of disparate concepts of history—in one concept, colonialism ended with the independence of most colonies, the subsequent/consequent formation of nation states, and the absorption

into the imperial state of those micro ex-colonies that were thought not capable of becoming independent and so were retained as dependencies or overseas departments. Within this concept, time moves backwards and forwards with a discursively seductive nonlinearity, as the critique and the literatures deemed "postcolonial" began long before colonialism was over—it was radical resistance right from the beginning. In the other concept, a more fundamental "quarrel with history", the critique and writing that respond to the condition of being colonized or living in societies marked by that condition, mobilize another epistemology altogether. Such an epistemology eschews colonialism as a beginning—though colonialism's historical meddling may be the "accidental" stimulus, in Harris' sense of history as "accidental". Both of these epistemologies contend in the essays presented here.

For the most part, contrary to our expectation, the scholars who responded to the call for papers do not engage postcolonialism directly. Rather, the essays, written by scholars from different parts of the region and the globe, almost all affiliate implicitly to that ethos of asymmetry, of going aslant, that we have discussed. They engage texts and take critical approaches that exhibit deep-digging within indigenous theoretical and cultural frames; and they present relation (in the Glissantian sense) in terms of intra- and cross-regional synergies, Indigenous presence, and expansive (Afro) diasporas. While some of postcolonialism's thinkers appear, most of the essays use foundational Caribbean theories to read contemporary works from the late 20th century to the present; in some cases to bring older literary works into conversation with contemporary ones, highlighting continuities in the morphologies of empire, resistance, and literary, cultural, and imaginative agency. The authors highlight issues of our times such as the precarities of inheritance, tourism, and travel; language loss and substitution; food insecurity; genealogies of expatriation; and the long reach of the white supremacist project. These are issues that resonate in global and globalization discourse everywhere. At the same time, the local cultural practices and positionalities such as foodways, tidalectic envisioning, matrilineal spirit work, and cross-cultural mythologizing that the writers mobilize serve to illuminate how in these contemporary works the Caribbean is uniquely mirrored. Overall, by drawing on localized terms that emerge from within the literary texts themselves or from within Caribbean cultural theorizing, the essays exemplify a praxis of critical indigenization, or elucidating literary indigeneities within these works. (There is a paradox in the oceanic range of this indigeneity, which emerges from a region shaped through cultural syncretism, hybridity, and the massive scale of multiple migrations, forced and otherwise).

Given the ways the region's writing and thought lie aslant the field of postcolonialism, and the direction most of these essays have taken, it is apposite to speak, in introducing the essays, not so much about postcolonialism as about the post-colonial moment, the hyphen here signaling a historical moment supposedly after the ending of colonialism. If we are to *imagine* Caribbean writing within the compass of such a moment; that is, a moment of a particular construction that we espouse for discursive purposes, several things stand out about the essays in this Special Issue. One is that colonialism features in all of them and a sense emerges of colonialism as an ongoing reality to be faced and contested in the 21st century. The post-colonial moment that the essays and by extension the contemporary works that they address reveal, is marked by new morphologies of colonialist-imperialist practice. Colonialism in these essays has a very long arm that has not shrunk its reach nor has it become a phantom limb.

This is highlighted in Conrad James' "Nautical Desires: Tourists, Stowaways and Other Travelers in Caribbean Fiction" which brings into conversation two texts from two different eras and two different global and Caribbean spaces: Claude McKay's posthumously released novel *Romance in Marseille* (McKay 2020) which depicts the hazards of ship travel for Black men in the early 20th century—the "brutal impediments" (p. 2) out of which they snatched

restorative sexual and intellectual intimacy, and Mayra Montero's erotic novel *La última noche que pasé contigo* (1991), depicting the rabid forms of sexual exploitation, economic racialization, and ecological devastation wrought through cruise ship tourism. James' essay, invoking past and present colonialisms as cataclysm, invites dialogue with Michael Niblett's "Everyday Apocalypses: Debt and Dystopia in Nicole Dennis-Benn's *Here Comes the Sun*", an examination of the stark relationship between tourism, debt colonialism and the economics of (poor, Black) women's bodies in Dennis-Benn's searing novelistic critique.

All three novels produce writing as resistance around discourses of the sea and the ocean, which in the Caribbean are not only lived and living environment, but history (Derek Walcott) and a "matrix metaphor" (Baugh 2006) through which Caribbean writers often shape narratives of colonial trauma and self-reflexive epistemes of (paradoxical, entrammeled) transfiguration. Seaways and/or sea lore also figure in the texts discussed by Leighan Renaud and Antonia McDonald; seas and oceans may be thought of as a symbolic echo in the essay by Hannah Regis. Where James addresses nautical travel as a site for desire, race trouble, and politics, and the cruise ship as a zone of excess that "make[s] fanciful and fun the historical tragedy of the Caribbean" (p. 4)[6] Renaud points to "the aquatic both a site of innovation that opens the future and a site of history that is characterized by trauma, fragmentation and rupture. . ." (pp. 1–2). Her essay "'I Have Seen the Sea": Caribbean Aquatic Poetics in Monique Roffey's *The Mermaid of Black Conch*" explores the mermaid trope in Roffey's (2020) marvelous realist work, deploying Brathwaite's tidalectics theory to chart the crucial role of sea spaces in the Caribbean imaginary and life-world. Renaud takes note of Roffey's engagement with indigenous genealogies—a long line of practices of self-fashioning from Indigenous Taino through to African spiritualist mythologies, yet the conclusion is telling: the mermaid, harbinger of a Caribbean possibility of equal dwelling (across genders, diversities of being, etc.) recognizes that, in the post-colonial setting, the fulfillment of such dwelling is delayed.[7]

In "'Tell Me: I am Listening": *Ocean Stirrings* and the Creole Vocalization of Nelson's *Royal Readers*" Antonia McDonald is interested in the way Merle Collins' *Ocean Stirrings* is invested in muted stories rising out of their silence "with the capaciousness of the ocean" (p. 4). McDonald's essay centers a Caribbean practice of sea-changing through rewriting colonially imposed master texts. As explored in Hannah Regis' "'Conjoined Destinies": The Poetics and Politics of Black Migration in Jason Allen-Paisant's *Self-Portrait as Othello*", Allen-Paisant's 2023 poetry collection is in similar vein. McDonald shows how Collins' use of poetic form that rewrites the colonial *Royal Readers* represents not only "the mental unravelling" but more so the "restitching" and "self-reclamation" of the protagonist, Collins' figure of Malcolm X's Grenadian-born-and-raised mother, incarcerated in a US lunatic asylum in the age of Jim Crow, at the end of a series of hemispheric, trans-oceanic journeys. Engaging a Caribbean poetics of spirituality that is also a subtle resource in McDonald's essay, Regis excavates within Allen-Paisant's work "the duppy manifestations of an unburied past in the pervasive precariousness of Black life and the perpetuity of anti-Black systems in the modern Western world" (p. 3). Yet, she argues, "the poet-narrator situates himself in an interstitial zone where each crossroads [of voyage, or travel] leads to new possibilities of affirmative energy" (Abstract).

Part of what strikes us in this contemporary moment when global visions of apocalypse are writ large in earthquakes, pandemics, wars, deportations, tsunamis, microplastic poisonings, cycles of refugeeism, and fears of a melting or inundating planet is that, for the writers whose work is treated in all seven essays, apocalypse is, as Niblett suggests, an everyday Caribbean reality, not so much spectacular as creeping, incremental, even relentless. Incremental apocalypses, the resistances they unleash, the self-fashionings that negate their hegemony, and the interstitial, often submerged spaces where agency and

resistance are situated and encoded, heighten our sense of perils more insidious because so easily invisible in the long, accustomed "march" of colonialism's fabrications. Niblett's situating of Dennis-Benn's tourism dystopia against the alarms of an "existential threat" urgently sounded by scholars and theorists in the wake of catastrophic regional hurricanes, serves not only for contrast between two forms of apocalypse—the quotidian and the spectacular, but also to focus the specifics of the close continuity between the looming future and the past that is not past. We are returned to Sylvia Wynter's (1971, 1990) discourses on market capitalism, the fictions of History, and the epochal invention of race

Equally we are struck by the ways several of these essays offer, within Regis' "interstitial zones", what Ben Etherington has referred to as a process of "daily decolonization" (Etherington 2021), a quiet, equally incremental strategy and technology of mind (and spirit) that sets limits on colonial encroachments. Such habit/ations of mind/spirit function as matrilineal legacy in Collins' novel, in which it is the grandmother who, along with the elementary school teacher's subversive use of the imposed *Royal Readers*, fosters the sense of self, subconscious deposits of language and structures of feeling through which Oseyan is able to access inner resources of freedom within the entrails of the asylum. Allen-Paisant's expatriated poet-narrator makes journeys of psychic return, in which his grandmother's nurturance provides retrievable anchorage. Matrilineal legacy, especially as a form of spirit work, is the subject of Rachel Mordecai's "What Is Heritable: Power, Magic and Spirit in Marie-Elena John's *Unburnable*". Studying John's (2006) representation of women's historical trauma and their generational strategies for recuperation, Mordecai asserts that "worldly and magico-spiritual power [is presented] as inhabiting the same material, political and psycho-social plane of Caribbean reality: as mutually entangled, co-constituting, reciprocally illuminating and, above all, dually heritable forces". John, she argues, "i[nvites us] to rethink questions of power in the shadow of the Caribbean plantation and consider anew the ways in which it is, on the one hand, hoarded, bequeathed and weaponized against the vulnerable and, on the other, fluid, arcane in its sources and workings, and susceptible to insurgent counter-deployments." (Abstract).

Kaja Valens' expansive cultural study, "Cassava/Yuca/Manioc", brings Caribbean literary writing on foodways into conversation with cookbooks across the colonial, pre- and post-colonial Caribbean. Where other essays probe radical rifts between the colonized and colonizer, Valens' study educes the paradoxical synthesis of creolization as a decolonial strategy (her three-term title implicitly referencing the contiguous terms métissage and mestizaje and their weight of trans-Caribbean diversities). Valens posits: "...cassava recipes offer a Caribbean creolization... that neither relies on nor excludes the European in the mix of materials, techniques, and tastes that nourish Caribbean postcolonial and decolonial praxis" (Introduction). This reading as well as the attention to ground space rather than the protean sea/ocean that takes center stage in several of the other essays, brings "Cassava/Yuca/Manioc" into conversation with the essays by Regis and MacDonald, which reflect in different ways on Caribbean writers' creolizing modification of European text.

Finally, it hardly escapes notice as we think about matrilineal legacies that six authors chose works by women writers. While the "feminization" of Caribbean literature that the 1990s anticipated due to the large outflow of publications by women writers that began in the 1980s has turned out to be more fiction than fact, inevitably we reflect on two factors. One is that women and children remain among the groups rendered most vulnerable by global upheaval; perhaps not coincidentally, Caribbean women writers (Edwidge Danticat, Rita Indiana, Myriam Chancy, Karen Lord, Alexis Pauline Gumbs, the late Maryse Condé, among others) have paid acute attention to the millennium's environmental cataclysms. The other factor is the seismic shift that took place between writing after 1980 and the writings engaged by Said, Baugh, and Ashcroft, Griffith, and Tiffin. Jean Paul Sartre heralded the

dawn of the post-colonial era with the famous words that begin the preface to Fanon's (1963) *The Wretched of the Earth*: "Not so very long ago, the earth numbered two thousand million inhabitants: five hundred million men, and one thousand five hundred million natives. . . A new generation came on the scene, which changed the issue" (p. 7). Sartre's reference to natives who became "men", like Baugh's West Indian writer and "his" quarrel with history, exemplify the gendered language of a generation but also the gender-perspective of a literary practice; post-colonial liberations in the writerly sphere were perceived as being wrought by men, the proliferous voices of the time. At the dawn of the millennium, Lamming, whose consequential debut novel *In the Castle of My Skin* famously had no girl characters, evinces a discomforted awareness of the gender anomaly in the precedent literary history when he declares, rather largely, that the Caribbean women's movement (and women's literature) "has become a major challenge to all established orthodoxy in the contemporary Caribbean" ("Sovereignty of the Imagination", p. 34).

Since then, in addition to the work by scholars such as Alison Donnell (Donnell 2025) and Anthea Morrison (Morrison 2021), the retheorization of the literary history away from its beginnings in a visible male authorship to its beginnings in the oraliterature of the plantation plot and the yard (rural, urban, or balmyard) is evident in publications such as Kei Millers' meta-discursive 2010 novel *The Last Warner Woman*, Carol Bailey's *Poetics of Performance* (Bailey 2014), and NourbeSe Phillip's (1998) ruminations on "the mother tongue" (*A Genealogy of Resistance*). All of these in different ways excavate a "feminine" genealogy of Caribbean authorship. It is fitting that this Special Issue makes its contribution in the short wake of the 50th anniversary of *Out of the Kumbla*, the landmark volume on Caribbean women's writing that chronicled the emergence of this wave of the Caribbean "postcolonial".

The opening phrase in the title of this Special Issue is, of course, troubling. We understand the adjective "new" before "world" to have been first used to describe what was not the East Indies, but the West Indies (though this was no "Indies" at all). It was an adjective that, from the beginning, was skewed and inadequate, an imposition that was more a comment on the namer than the named. The moniker "new world" then holds the Caribbean in the snapshot of a bold but limited perspective. "Rise of a new world" is a corrective. It signifies on the region's habitat of crisis and the necessities of response to and within this habitat. The literary-discursive response, we have indicated, arises from the vantage point of a radically enabling subjectivity. Further, then, "rise of a new world" suggests the confidence to be inward, to talk of oneself to oneself, to abide the process of new interventions towards decoloniality. The process limned is incremental (deposits on a shore), and tidalectic, moving in cycles of retrieval and return, submersion and lift, that may be readily discernible (the lens of "history"), or hidden except by other ways of reading. According to Kamau Brathwaite, "tidalectic" references "[a] continuum across the peristyle.[8]

and so we have submerged again: and yet the nam[9] remains waiting towards its crisis for a new explosion" (Brathwaite 1983, p. 42).

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Notes

[1] Brathwaite was responding to Peter Hulme's criticism of his 1988 essay on Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea*. Producing his rebuttal essay in his famed Sycorax video style, Brathwaite declared Hulme's critique to be an exemplar of postcolonialism on several objectionable indices, including its lack of understanding of "Caribbean cultural psychology and 'history'"[sic] (p. 73. Hulme's critique (in the essay "The Place of Jean Rhys") had appeared in the issue of *Wasafiri* preceding the issue in which Brathwaite's rebuttal appeared.

[2] It is instructive that Edward Baugh, writing in 2006, points to the longstanding wariness of the West Indian academy in this regard. Baugh notes that the academy (referred to by Glyne Griffith as the UWI school of thought) hesitated over the ramifications of the term "theory" even as they engaged in a most radical meta-critical practice driven by indigenous cultural studies and imbricated in the theoretical ideas of the region's writer-theorists—ideas that were being propagated in academies elsewhere under different ideological rubrics (Griffith 2021).

[3] Here we are using "indigenous" to mean 'belonging to or arising within the Caribbean'. Where "Indigenous" with an upper case "I" is used, we are referring to the first peoples (traditionally misnamed "Amerindian').

[4] We use "postcolonial" to refer to the critique, and the hyphenated "post-colonial" to mean "after the official end of colonization".

[5] To be sure, the Caribbean's tenuous relationship with postcolonialism conceived as a term in and of itself is not unique nor can it be, given the huge scope, spread, and myriad orientations, phenomenologies, epistemes, cultures, and concerns that have been brought or implied under this heading. We recall the explosive 1995 double issue of *Ariel*, "Postcolonialism and Its Discontents", with Stephen Slemon's searing comment in the "Introductory Notes" (Slemon 1995):

a. "[W]hatever coherence the term 'postcolonial' might have promised in its earliest moments—as an intellectual field or academic discipline, as a critical methodology for social analysis, as a pedagogy, or a cultural location, or a stance—the attributes of postcolonialism have become so widely contested in contemporary usage, its strategies and sites so structurally dispersed, as to render the term next to useless as a precise marker of intellectual content, social constituency, or political commitment" (p. 7). Slemon went on to quote the essay by R. Radhakrishnan, in which he questions the "urgent currency" that the term "postcoloniality" had found in the First World while being "hardly ever used within the ex-colonized worlds of South Asia and Africa" (p. 8).

As indicated, for example, in Denise deCaries Narain's (2010) essay "Affiliating Edward Said Closer to Home", the controversies remain ongoing.

[6] Here James is quoting (Shields 2014, p. 40).

[7] One is reminded of the "Not yet!" that forms the ending of E.M. Forster's reflection on post-colonial bridges between the colonizer and the colonized in *A Passage to India*.

[8] Peristyle: literally, in Haitian vodun, the open-sided building where communal worship takes place and the lwa (divinities) enter.

[9] Brathwaite's term for spirit/ual energy—soul essence, which is irreducible.

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